

HOBOS' HOME.

NIGHT SCENES AT THE CENTRAL POLICE STATION.

A Practical Use Put to the Pile of Brick and Mortar at 4th and Main—Homeless Wanderers Housed.

Charity is a blessing, at least a great many of the unfortunate stragglers of Kansas City think so as they file into police headquarters nightly to avail themselves of the privilege of sleeping in a warm room.

About 9 o'clock every night Captain Flahive prepares to receive his night lodgers. Night Jailor Tom Christopher acts as house keeper. The march of the hoboes begins early in the evening as these wanderers do not care to remain on the streets any longer than they can help.

The start is easy. The big outer doors slam and a dilapidated specimen of humanity shambles up to the desk and mutters "evening. Cap, I'm ready for bed" and down he goes to the big warm drill room.

"That man is a regular" observed Captain Flahive. "The regulars all come early."

"They have no fear of being refused and do not hang around until the last minute as many strangers do."

Slam! A gray haired, wrinkled old reprobate who answered to the name of Pat and who would have answered to any other name just as well, shuffles in to give his evening salute.

The old man glanced at the clock and then turning a bleary eye on the reporter asked him what time it was.

9:15, answered the reporter.

"Thank'ee", answered Pat, I didn't know whether it was 9:15 or a quarter to 3.

After he had disappeared the captain turned to the reporter and remarked that "Pat" had been a regular winter lodger with the police for the past three years. "And he never fails to ask what time it is as he says he wants to know what time he goes to bed."

Now that the cold weather is coming on, between eighty and ninety men sleep at police headquarters every night. It is interesting to stand near the captain's desk and listen to the various forms of greeting. Old and young, but all alike no one respects their poverty—some grave, some gay, but all in their hearts thankful to secure a bed in a warm room instead of shivering in a cold doorway or hanging out in some Battle Row saloon until kicked into the street.

The police of Kansas City, Kan., are also caring for those who have no bed to go to, but their charity is tempered by the searching process. Every applicant for a night's lodging is searched and should anything suspicious be found he is locked up and appears in police court next day.

Here, a more charitable view is taken. A man does not apply to the police station unless it is a necessity. He is allowed to have his night's rest if he be a crook. The chances are that some wideawake member of the force will have him in limbo on the next day.