

## The Men who made TOLEDO

### James M. Brown And The Humane Society

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**T**HE ONLY food on the bare deal table was a big platter of fried mush and a dish of boiled potatoes, but the dock-worker and his wife and the six children at the board, were busily spooning it on their plates, and making way with it.

The woman poured coffee from a battered pot into tin-cups for her husband and the older children. Four of the children were fairly clean and well-dressed, but the two on one chair at the bottom of the table, were dirty, ragged and thin.

As soon as their plates were cleared the children disappeared, and the dock-worker, rubbing his hand over the stubble on his chin, remarked, "I see them Miller tykes is still here."

"Well, what in tucket are we goin' to do with 'em, Jim?" demanded his wife, testily. "We can't let 'em starve, kin we?"

"Ain't nothin' been heard of their trollop of a mother?" asked her husband.

"Her?" sneered his wife, "She'll never be back. She went off with that carnival feller, and if he gives her the sack, she'll git a job with the



your home. I'll try to get these children of yours into the Protestant Orphans' home, by hook or crook. There's no law to make the parents take care of them, but we'll get organized and see what we can do. I'll write to New York at once about this Humane Society movement." And Miss Candace Mott fastened her fur-trimmed pelisse, and climbed into her carriage with the feeling that she had put in a profitable afternoon.

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**ONE SNOWY DECEMBER** night the neighbors decided Mr. Richard Mott and his daughter were having a party, as carriages rolled up to the residence on Monroe St., and a number of well known citizens and their wives entered the house. But while the couples were all friends, it developed there was serious business on foot. Young Clarence Brown, the attorney, made a witty speech, presenting James M. Brown, who proceeded to tell his friends the object of the meeting. He told them the history of the American Humane Society, and brought up so many tales of child neglect in Toledo, that many of the ladies were using their handkerchiefs before he was through. E. W. Lenderson, who had done some investi-

show. "I knowed when Bill went to the penitentiary, she'd never stick to 'em."

"I dunno how I kin feed two more," said her husband, discouragedly.

His wife smoothed her apron. "Well," she said, "Mis' Johnson and me wuz talkin' today, and she's got a sister that's a hired girl for a rich lady up town, that's got somethin' to do with an orphans' home. We aim to go and see her."

"But they ain't orphans," objected the man.

"I know, but we're goin' to try it anyways. None of us kin afford to feed 'em this winter."

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**SO THE NEXT** afternoon, the two dock-workers' wives in the best bonnets and shawls the Row could contribute, trudged two miles up to Monroe and Nineteenth Sts., where the rich lady lived.

Mrs. Johnson's sister received them in the kitchen. "I told Miss Cannie all about it, and she says you're to come right in the sittin' room."

Miss Cannie Mott greeted the two women kindly, and put them at their ease while they told the story of the children, whose father was in the penitentiary for horse-stealing, and whose mother had gone off with the carnival man. "Of course," said Miss Mott, "our little home was started to take care of orphans, and I don't suppose anyone has thought about the children whose parents neglect them." Her brow wrinkled. "I really don't know what to tell you."

"Well, they's plenty of 'em," said Jim's wife. "Anyone who wants to come down to the Row kin find lots of young 'uns, whose fathers are drunk, and their mothers traipsing around and the young 'uns not gittin' anything to eat."

The banker's daughter shuddered. "I'll start this very afternoon to see what can be done," she said. "I know a gentleman who can help us with advice. He is very kind-hearted, and is in a position to get things done. In the meantime I will give you some money to help feed the children. I think it is wonderful for you to come and tell me about them." And Miss Mott got in her carriage and drove downtown, while the champions of the Miller children had tea with Mollie in the kitchen.

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**MISS CANNIE MOTT** swept into the office of the



**JAMES M. BROWN**

*A sketch by Blade Editorial Art Director Ray Bloch from an old photograph*

are going to have to do something, Mr. Brown. I am on the board of the Orphans' Home, but something has come up I don't know how to handle. What are children when their parents desert them? They are not technical orphans. I want some expert legal advice," and Miss Mott smiled at her father's friend and told her story.

"Well, it all seems to be coming at once," said Mr. Brown, "and it is something I have been thinking about for months." He reached into a pigeon-hole in his desk, and came up with some papers. "Lenderson just told me about cruelty to animals, you tell me about cruelty to children. As far back as 1825

there was a society in England for the Protection from Cruelty for Children and Animals. In 1866 such an organization was started in New York, called the Humane Society. It was started for animals, but the children soon got into it. It has now spread to 24 states. Don't you think, Cannie, it is about time we had some such organization in Toledo?"

Miss Mott beamed. "I just knew you would think of something," she said, gratefully.

"Well, we'll see about organizing the society," said James Brown. "I don't suppose we can expect any help from the city. We'll just have to go out and beg the money, the way you ladies did with

gating, also spoke, and the result of the social evening was that on Jan. 29, 1884, the Toledo Humane Society was organized with James M. Brown as president. The purpose of the organization, as set forth in the original constitution drawn up by the founder read:

**"To provide for the care and support of innocent children; for the protection of helpless children from the brutal-minded; for the care and comfort of aged parents; for over-worked, underfed and abused horses; and for the protection of all dumb animals."**

It sounds very touching in this day and age, and one feels that if James Stevens had been writing in the '80s, Mr. Brown would surely have added his lines:

*"Little things that run and*

*quail*  
*And die in silence and*

*despair.*  
*Little things that fight and*

*fail*  
*And fall on earth and sea*

*and air."*

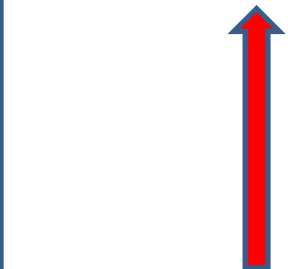
For that seems to have been the original aim of the Humane Society—for little things. Mr. Brown was interested in all the departments, but the children came first.

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**MISS CANNIE MOTT** swept into the office of the family lawyer, just as he was ushering a friend out of the door. "I'm glad you told me about the sheep, Lenderson," he said, "I am going to do something about it." He shook hands with Miss Mott. "Gruesome story I just heard," he said. "Over 300 sheep frozen to death on a siding, on a train going to Chicago, and there is no law to take care of neglect of animals."

"No, nor neglect of children," said his visitor, as she seated herself. "You and I



# Brown

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The society got under way in a building at Orange and Erie Sts., and the description of the early days is very quaint. There was a Department of Children, a Department of Animals, "The Lodge" and the "Woodyard." The latter was a wood-pile, where men "temporarily" out of work could saw wood for their keep at the "Lodge," and it soon had many patrons who were "chronically" out of work.

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IT WILL BE a surprise to many people to learn that this organization, which Mr. Brown started over 60 years ago, has functioned all these years without city, county or Community Chest aid, being supported entirely by private gifts, the principal income being from rents and income from property left it by civic-minded citizens. It is truly a great tribute to the humanitarian instincts of early Toledoans that this fine work got under way. Mr. Brown had plenty of help in the early days. Miss Cannie Mott and Mrs. R. G. Bacon were among the women officers, and E. W. Lenderson and J. W. Erwin were active in the organization.

Miss Mott's original little waifs, who helped start the whole thing, found asylum in the Protestant Orphans' Home, as did 12 others the first year, while five more needy children went to St. Vincent's Orphanage. The little agency was manned almost entirely by volunteers, and Mr. Brown gave so much time to it, that a Democrat, who had crossed swords with him, said, "He forgot the Republican Party for the first time in his life."

The first year the society had only 153 animal cases, principally abuse of horses and mules, but could those pioneers look down the years and see the herds of 4-footed beneficiaries that profited along with the children, they probably wouldn't believe their eyes. For in the year 1949, in addition to the children's work the society handled cases involving 3,815 dogs, 1,956 cats, 75 chickens, three horses, two goats, an opossum and an owl!

It was the Humane Society that first brought Mr. Brown into prominence in Toledo, and his name soon became so synonymous with work for children's welfare, that this attribute clung to him all his life. Born in Delaware, O., in 1835, James M. Brown was educated at Ohio Wesleyan

University, and started life as a printer on the Delaware Gazette. For some reason he went out to Iowa, where for a time he edited the Osceola Herald, but in 1858, he returned to Ohio, and studied law in the office of Lee & Brown in Tiffin. He came to Toledo and opened an office, with Gen. John Lee as his partner. The heretofore unheard of problems that presented themselves daily to the Humane Society, once the poor of the city learned of its existence, roused Mr. Brown's legal mind.

"Good heavens," he said to his partner, "this state hasn't got laws to take care of anything. For instance, children of criminals. I don't know how many the society is taking care of. They can't be allowed to starve, just because their fathers are in prison. It's time the state did something about it."

"Well, if a man commits a crime, he has to be shut up," said the other lawyer.

"Yes, but he works," said Brown. "Let the state or the city pay for the work, and the money go to the children."

"Rather a radical idea," was his partner's observation, but James M. Brown went to Columbus, with a bill he had prepared, and almost before anyone knew it, it was through the Legislature, and the state was obligated to pay around \$25 a month for each convict's labor to help maintain his children. Even the Toledo Workhouse paid 40c a day for the father's labor.

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IT WAS PROBABLY this success that spurred Mr. Brown on to what was possibly his most significant contribution to the life of his community and the state. The cases that came up in the Humane Society of the abandonment of children by callous fathers aroused the president to a righteous indignation. Up to 1890 a man could walk off and leave his wife and half-a-dozen children, and there was nothing to do about it. But in 1890 all that was changed. James M. Brown had sat him down, and drawn up another law. He was a power in the Republican Party by this time—President Harrison had appointed him postmaster of Toledo—and he was known to Republicans throughout the state. He took himself and his bill to Columbus, and whether it was politics that helped him or not, it was the children of Ohio that profited.

For the bill was passed by the Legislature making it a prison offense for a parent to abandon children, the first legislation ever to be enacted in Ohio. Out of this grew

the law requiring fathers, divorced or not, to pay approximately \$10 a week for the support of each child. Did it amount to anything? Last year the Humane Society, handled and paid out, \$1,099,000 on 4,100 accounts, some from men in prison, but most of it from fathers, who just went away. And the state of Ohio might never have had such a law had it not been for Mr. Brown.

Each year after it was founded the society's work became more involved. It had been operating nine years when the panic of '93 came along. The poor, the neglected, the down-trodden of the city had learned it was a place to go in time of trouble.

One day Mr. Brown had a call from a frantic worker. "There are 200 hungry people over there," she said. "What shall we do with them?"

"Get in more help, and feed them at the Lodge," said Mr. Brown. "If you need money for food, I'll go out and raise it." And that winter over 7,000 people were fed by the Humane Society. One of Mr. Brown's most zealous workers down the years was Charles H. Ware, who spent 35 years of his life with the Humane Society.

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AMONG THE EARLY active members was Dr. John V. Newton, whose interest ran more to the 4-footed clients. He was a veterinarian, who had come to Toledo in 1878, and founded the first animal hospital. Mr. Brown was in the habit of referring all animal cases to Dr. Newton, and they got expert attention. In those days they had mostly to do with horses and cows. Quite a friendship sprang up between the two men through their common interest. Dr. Newton made a great deal of money in investments, and upon his death left \$50,000 to the Humane Society, which everyone said was due to his great admiration for Mr. Brown.

In any event the society took Dr. Newton's bequest and built their fine 5-story building at 418 Erie St. This is their home today, and other floors are rented out to Probate Court agencies.

With his great interest in the welfare of children it is natural that James M. Brown should be one of John Gunckel's chief aids in founding the Newsboys' Association, and we next hear of him in connection with the Miami Children's Home. This institution for the care of the neglected child grew out of the old Orphans' Home, which had been established under

the aegis of Horace Walbridge and Morrison R. Waite in the late '60s in a house on Lagrange St. It isn't exactly clear how the lovely tract of land on the river road came to be purchased for the Children's Home, but Mr. Brown had a good deal to do with it, and nobody cared how many political strings were pulled, when it was for the project nearest his heart—children.

The Miami Children's Home was opened in 1890, and many fine men and women have come out of it down the years, who might never have had a chance had it not been for the great early humanitarians.

Mr. Brown received national prominence when he was asked to address the Humane Congress at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in October, 1893. His speech on the "One Hundred Thousand Children in the United States, whose Fathers are in Prison," brought great applause and favorable comments from the press. He told what the state of Ohio had done to remedy the condition, but modestly refrained from mentioning his part in it. In 1896 more honors came to him when he spoke at the American Humane Society convention in Cleveland on unwanted children.

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IT IS UNFORTUNATE that owing to the great political battles that were waged in the press in the '80s and '90s, men as worth while as James M. Brown, should come down the years known chiefly as politicians. He was for years a leader in the Republican Party, and served a number of terms on the Board of Elections, and many old-timers remember him only for this phase, rather than for his work as a philanthropist. Politics may come and go, but the record of the Humane Society still stands, and he was president of it all his life. Upon his death his son, Walter F. Brown, succeeded him.

At 418 Erie St. is the haven to which many a disillusioned wife and mother resorts today for the society still collects from the fathers and pays the mothers. Sometimes the roving parent doesn't pay up on time, and the experienced case workers hear many tragic tales—of sick children, landlords waiting for the rent—all the tragedies that come from broken homes. There is no man or woman working for the Humane Society who can't tell tales of the Human Comedy that would rival a Balzac. But anyone who thinks they are a bunch of panty-waists

over on Erie St., should talk to a father, who thought he could laugh off a court order to provide for his children. He is likely to be popped into the Workhouse for 6 months, and if then he can't see the light, he can go to the penitentiary for 3 years. And who fixed all this up for him? James M. Brown. The fathers pay \$5 to \$100 per month according to their earning ability. The percentage of those required to pay for aged parents is small, the average man seemingly being more willing to look after his parents than his children. And for all this service, as stated before, the Humane Society receives nothing. The county doesn't pay them, the wives don't pay them, and certainly the husbands wouldn't pay them. The more one looks into the Humane Society, the stronger becomes the belief that it is one of the most extraordinary organizations in existence.

But speak to the average Toledoan about it and he will say, "Why I always thought it was something to take care of dogs and cats." They do take care of the dogs and cats, along with the children, and strange to say they get a little revenue for this. Half the dog-tax goes to them to keep up the animal shelter, feed the dogs and pay the dog-wardens; the other half goes to the county to maintain the trucks that pick up straying and unlicensed dogs. Some of the ordinances of the Humane Society are unique. For instance they can arrest anyone engaged in cock-fighting, bear-bating or dog-fighting. Trap-shooting with live pigeons is also prohibited, and it's a crime to shoot a carrier-pigeon. Anyone putting out poison for dogs, chickens, horses or cows will find himself in the toils of the society.

Mr. Brown was identified with civic activities to the very moment of his tragic death. In August of 1909, a civic festival was held in Toledo, on the order of a Mardi Gras, called King Wamba's home-coming, with pageants, parades and speeches every day. Mr. Brown, in spite of his advancing years, was chairman of the committee, and had worked hard for weeks to make the event a success. One afternoon he drove in an automobile in a parade to Walbridge Park, with John W. Dowd, who was to speak from the car. Mr. Brown introduced the speaker, and sat down in the back seat, and Mr. Dowd had just started speaking, when Mr. Brown slumped down in his seat—dead. He was 74 years old.