

# **SYBARIS AND OTHER HOMES**

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Sybaris and other homes by Edward E. Hale

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AND OTHER HOMES.

BY

EDWARD E. HALE.



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## DEDICATION.



I DEDICATE this book to the

### SUFFOLK UNION FOR CHRISTIAN WORK.

At the meeting which formed that Society the provision for better homes in cities was publicly declared to be the first work of Christian reform. At every meeting since some person has enforced the same necessity.

EDWARD E. HALE.

SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, BOSTON,  
September 18, 1869.





## PREFACE.

THE reader will see that the papers in this book have a single object, whether cast in the form of fiction, or whether statistical narratives of fact. If I should classify them as the papers were classified in an earlier volume of this little series, the account of Naguadavick is the account of what ought to be; the account of Vineland is the account of what is; and the account of Boston is the account of what ought not to be. In the narrative of Sybaris the reader will find something of "it," something of "yes," something of "perhaps"; some possibility, much fact, and some exaggeration.

I have, perhaps, a right to explain the earnestness with which I try to enforce the necessity of better homes for laboring men by stating a single circumstance in my own history. For nearly twenty-five years I have been constantly engaged in the Christian ministry. About half that time was spent in Worcester, Massachusetts; about half of it in Boston. When I went to Worcester it was a town of about eight thousand people; when I left it, it had three times that number. Boston is a crowded town

of a quarter-million inhabitants. It is impossible for me not to notice, in every hour of my life, the contrast between the homes of the working people in these two places. I might almost say that there is no other difference of importance between the social opportunities of the two places. They are not far apart; both are active places of business, employing in about equal proportions people of enterprise and energy, in the varied work of manufacture, commerce, and transportation. But in one of these places almost every man can own his house, and half the men do. In the other hardly any man can own his house, and half the people are crowded into quarters where no man should be compelled to live.

To watch over and improve the charities of any town is the special duty of the Christian ministry in it, — to feed its hungry and clothe its naked, to open the eyes of its blind and the ears of its deaf, to make its lame walk, to cleanse its lepers, and to preach good tidings to its poor. Will the reader imagine to himself the position of the man engaged in that duty, when he finds his sick in such tenements as they must live in in our present system, — his blind, for instance, born so, perhaps, in rooms with no window, and all his poor in such homes that the only truly good tidings are tidings which send them away from him? Where a considerable part of the people live in such homes our best devised charities, either for moral culture or physical relief, work at terrible odds. Your

City Missions, your Ministry at Large, your Industrial Aid Society, or your Overseers of the Poor are all working against the steady dead weight which, as we all know, presses down and holds down the man who is in an unhealthy or unhappy home.

The contrast in my own life between life in a small manufacturing and commercial town and life in a large one makes me feel the bitterness of these odds the more. I am sure that the suffering thus involved is unnecessary, as I am sure the labor which tries to relieve its symptoms must be in large measure thrown away. With an intense personal interest, therefore, have I attempted to show in this book how these evils may be remedied.

I do not know but Colonel Ingham's suggestions as to his imagined Sybaris may be thought too roscate and ideal for our Western longitudes. They have been already published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, and, in his absence in Siberia, I have been once and again favored with criticisms upon them. It is but fair to him to say, that, so far as the paper refers to ancient Sybaris or Thurii, it is a very careful study of the best authorities regarding that interesting state, — a study which I wish might be pushed further by somebody. And I incorporate the paper in this volume because it seems to me that we have a great deal to learn from the ancient cities and from their methods of government, were it only the great lesson of the value of training in administration.