

So much is said about the darker side of life in the Italian quarter of the city that the many good qualities of the Italian immigrants seem to have been overlooked. "They improve rapidly," says a physician who has a large practice among these people, "and the second generation make good American citizens. Were it not for the constant arrival of old people, the fathers and mothers brought over to share the prosperity of their adventurous children, who perpetuate the filthy ways they are accustomed to at home, the Italian colony would soon cease to deserve the reproaches that are bestowed upon it. They are thrifty, are anxious for the education of their children and with the better food they obtain here show an improvement in their physical development. Their superstitions stand in their way, but these are weakened and often disappear in the second generation. I have met with many curious incidents in my practice which illustrate the instincts of the people. I was called once to attend a woman who was living with her husband in one room. The only furniture was the bed upon which she lay, a wooden box and a violin. The box, I afterward learned, contained a collection of ancient coins, which the husband, a virtuoso at heart, had brought with him from his native land, and constituted, with his violin, his sole possession."