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THE NEW WASHINGTON.

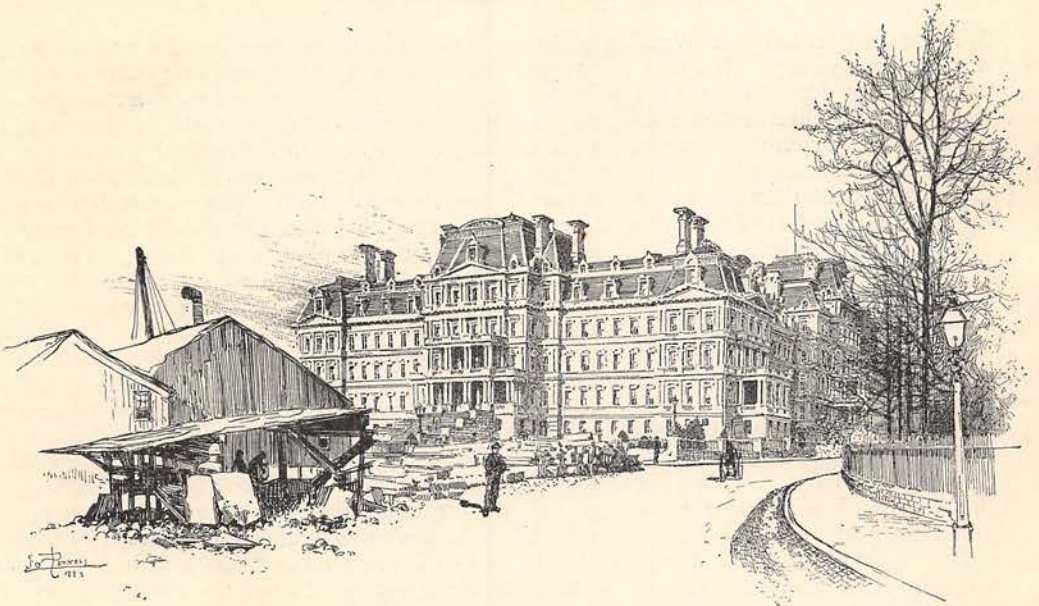
WITHIN the past ten years Washington has ceased to be a village. Whether it has yet become a city depends on "the point of view." It has no elevated railroads, no palace hotels, no mammoth elevators, no great commercial establishments; it has no opera and but indifferent theaters, and for a park it borrows the grounds of the old soldiers of the army. In short, it has none of those evidences of commercial prosperity which are proudly shown to the traveler in every thriving town, all the way from New York to San Francisco. On the other hand, it has large public buildings and monuments and numerous statues; it has a mild climate, clean, well-paved streets, and no "local politics"; its chief inhabitants are those persons who guide the action and control the interests of fifty millions of people—so far as they are guided or controlled at all in a nation which so largely governs itself. Washington is thus a place quite out of the ordinary run; whether city or no, it is certainly unlike other cities. Its origin and inception were novel and unusual in character. Other cities have originated in the necessities of trade, and have grown in proportion as that trade increased. Washington, on the contrary, was made to order on a map; and so far from extending its limits as its population increased, its population has not yet grown up to the limits which were originally laid out. It found its origin in the rivalry existing among the various States after the Revolution, all being jealous of the increased importance which would result to any one of them from having the federal city established within its limits. This feeling was increased by the mortifying spectacle which occurred at Philadelphia, in 1783, when Congress was insulted in its own halls and driven across the river by

a handful of mutineers from the army,—the State and local authorities being either powerless or unwilling to protect them from injury. Many of the members of that Congress were delegates to the Constitutional Convention four years later, and the recollection of this indignity was so fresh in their minds that they determined that Congress should itself make the laws for the place where it met. The result was the well-known clause in Section 8 of Article I, of the Constitution, which conferred on Congress the power "to exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever" over such district as might be ceded by the States and accepted by Congress as the seat of government. The selection of such a district was one of the very first questions which arose in Congress. As soon as laws had been passed organizing the various departments of the government and putting the new machinery in motion, the question of the location of the government came up, and it gave rise to long and acrimonious debate. Not only was it claimed by the large cities, like New York and Philadelphia, but each of the middle States, from New York to Virginia, inclusive, was ready with a piece of territory on which to found an entirely new city. It was finally settled by a curious compromise—the first recorded instance of "log-rolling"—in this manner. Hamilton was then (1790) engaged in his projects for funding the debt, all of which had passed except the final one assuming the debts of the States. This was a popular measure in the North, but somewhat unpopular among the Virginians. He needed some votes from the South in order to carry the measure through. Jefferson had then but lately returned from France, and, as he claimed, was not very familiar with the funding projects, which he subsequently opposed

so violently. He was, however, greatly interested in locating the new capital in the vicinity of Virginia. Hamilton was a foreigner by birth, accidentally settled in New York by reason of his marriage, but quite devoid of any feeling of local or State pride. He cared nothing for the location of the capital, but was anxious concerning his financial projects, which he considered of vital importance. It was therefore arranged—at a dinner-party—between himself and Jefferson, that the latter should persuade the Virginia delegation to vote for assumption, while Hamilton was to induce the New York delegation to yield their preferences concerning the capital. The two measures were thus carried, one on the 16th of July and the other on the 4th of Au-

lots were to be sold and the money applied to opening and improving the streets and erecting the public buildings. With these commissioners there was associated, for the purpose of making plans and surveys, a certain French engineer named L'Enfant, who had served under Washington's notice during the Revolution. His plans were as comprehensive and far-reaching in their way as was the Constitution itself. He planned for centuries, and for a population of half a million of people.

The plan was simple in its general outline, though its details were very elaborate. Three principal points were selected for the legislative, executive, and judicial buildings respectively; from two of these points ave-



THE STATE, WAR, AND NAVY DEPARTMENTS.

gust, 1790. The former prescribed that the permanent seat of government should be in the district ceded by Maryland and Virginia on the banks of the Potomac, and that the Government should be moved there in the year 1800. President Washington had remained neutral during the discussion, but he was much pleased at the selection made; and he gave his personal attention to the matter with unflagging interest throughout his administration, and, indeed, to the day of his death. Commissioners were at once appointed to acquire the land, which was obtained on the most liberal terms, the owners giving to the United States the fee of all ground necessary for streets and public buildings, and one-half of all the building lots in addition; with the understanding that these

venues radiated like the spokes of a wheel, affording short lines of communication to all parts of the city and forming numberless little parks at their intersections; a rectilinear system of streets was added, running north and south and east and west, the first being designated by numerals and the second by the letters of the alphabet. The avenues were named after the States of the Union, with much care and discrimination in guarding their respective susceptibilities by giving to those which were intended to be most important the names of the principal States. Everything was on a scale of large proportions, the avenues being grand boulevards of one hundred and fifty to one hundred and sixty feet in width, and even unimportant streets being ninety or one hundred feet wide.



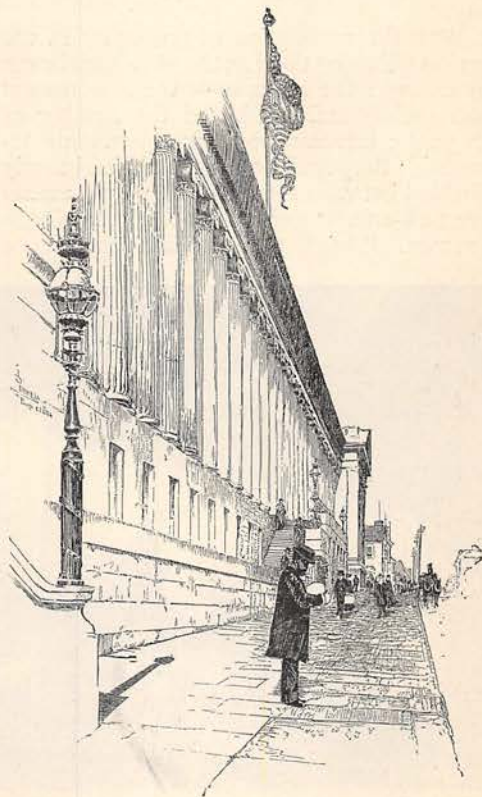
STATUE OF GENERAL
GEORGE H. THOMAS,
BY J. Q. A. WARD.

The proportion
of streets and

open squares, which in most cities is about one-fourth, was thus laid out in this capital city at more than one-half of the whole surface. It was to be the capital of a mighty nation, and no one was to be pinched for space in it.

The plan was thus drawn on paper, and nothing remained but to fill up the uninhabited fields through which the imaginary streets ran. This was not so easy. The Government came there in 1800, and great expectations were formed, but they were not realized. For more than half a century the place remained a straggling Southern village, giving rise to much ridicule as a "city of magnificent distances." The diaries and chronicles of the first third of the century give curious accounts of the uncomfortable and dreary life in such an uninviting place; it was particularly amusing to the members of the diplomatic corps, and the contrast to London and Paris and Vienna must certainly have been very great. It was originally intended that the city should grow to the eastward on the broad, high plateau beyond the Capitol, and that the President's house and other executive buildings should form a sort of suburb like Versailles. But the lots on Capitol Hill were all bought up by speculators, and held at such high prices that people were forced to turn in the other direction, and the city thus took a course which it has never been possible to reverse. Its growth, however, was

extremely slow. The commercial advantages which were expected to result from the navigation on the Potomac and the transportation routes to the westward proved to be delusive. Commerce went to other cities. It was a city of office-holders simply, and at first these were not numerous. Gaunt rows of "six buildings" and "seven buildings" were erected here and there, principally as boarding-houses to accommodate the members of Congress and those who had business with them during the winter. But no one came there who did not have urgent business, nor did any one stay longer than was necessary. Its character changed but little down to the period of the war, and at that time—sixty years after it had been founded, and when the country had grown to contain thirty-two millions of people—it had attained a population of only sixty thousand inhabitants, who were scattered over a territory of several miles; its streets were so filthy and ill-kept that they were a by-word of contempt; none of its citizens were rich, and there were no handsome dwellings or other indications of private wealth; it had the usual government of a mayor and council, which had neither the means nor the disposition to beautify the



THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT—FIFTEENTH STREET FRONT.



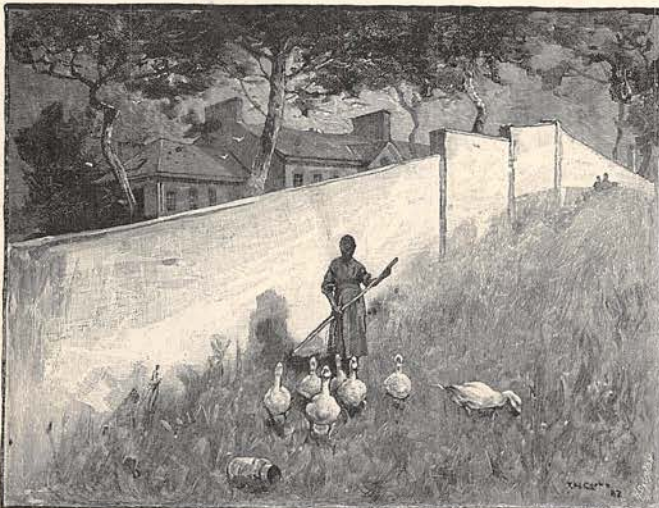
THE U. S. POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

city; the General Government had neglected its godchild, and while it spent lavishly for its own public buildings, it paid little or nothing to improve the general appearance of the city.

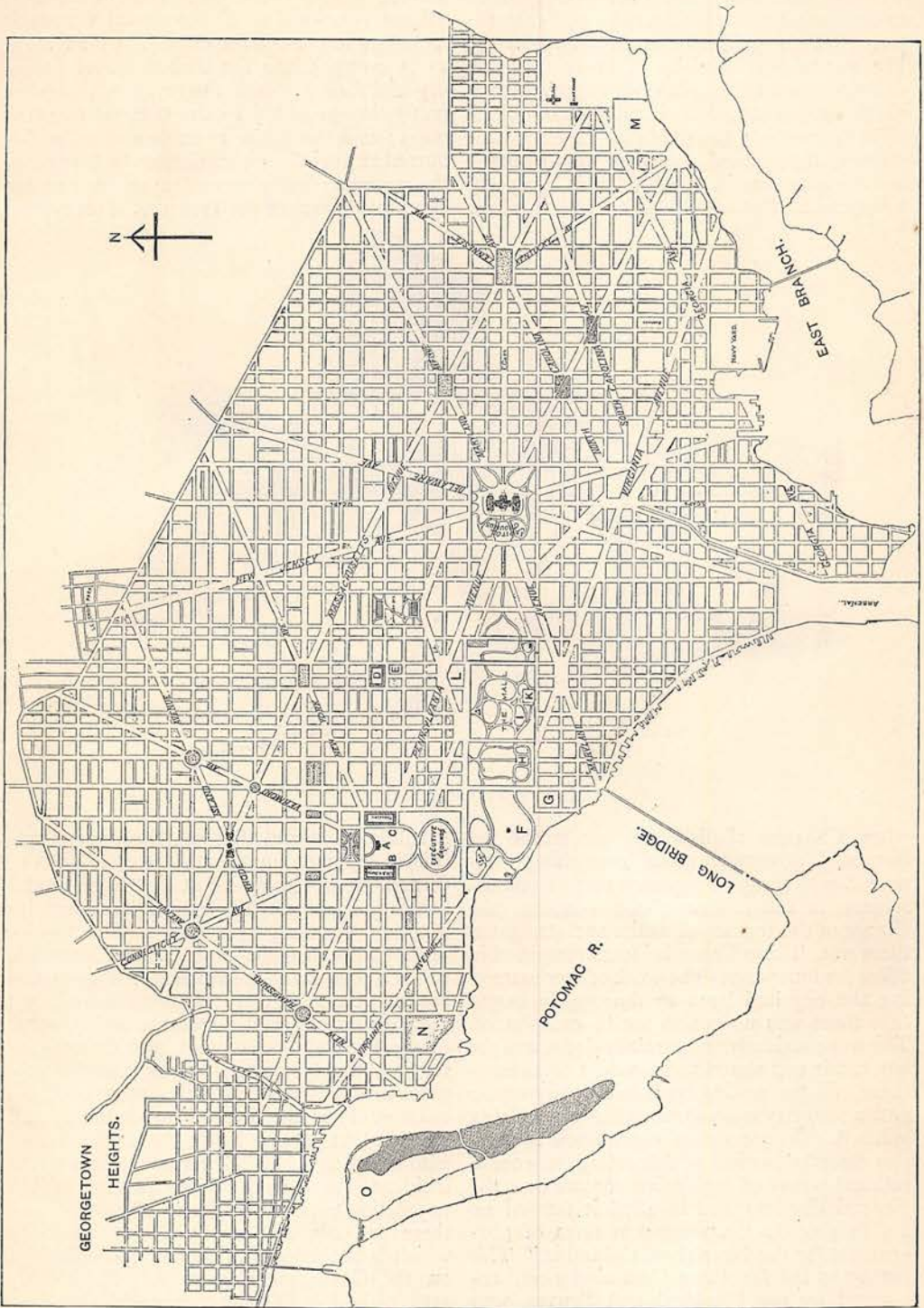
With the resumption of prosperity in the period following the war, the place first began to change; the business of the Government had greatly multiplied, and the number of its public servants had correspondingly increased; the population of the city had nearly doubled between 1860 and 1870, and among the new-comers were many energetic Northern men. It began to be realized that it was a

disgrace to have such a city for a capital, and that the General Government and the citizens must all unite in efforts to improve it. The result was the formation, in 1871, of a territorial government, with a Governor and Legislature and a Board of Public Works. The master-spirit of this government was Alexander Shepherd, a native of the city, who, though still young, had raised himself by his energy and talents from the apprenticeship of a manual trade to a position of means and importance in the community. The results of his government are too recent and too well known to call for fresh comment. Vast plans

were again matured, founded, as in the past century, not on the actual necessities of the moment, but on the requirements of a generation hence. Costly improvements were undertaken and prosecuted far beyond the limits of habitation. Miles upon miles of expensive pavements and other works were laid across swamps and streams, and through waste places where nothing but frame shanties and government stables of the war period had as yet penetrated. In less than three years Shepherd plunged the city into a debt which, for the numbers and wealth of the population, has no rival in all the world. No



THE OLD CARROLL MANSION ON CAPITOL HILL.



PLAN OF THE CITY OF WASHINGTON.

A. Executive Mansion. B. State, War, and Navy Department Building. C. Treasury. D. Patent Office. E. Post-office Department. F. Washington Monument. G. Bureau of Engraving and Printing. H. Department of Agriculture. I. Smithsonian Institution. K. National Museum. L. Market. M. Congressional Cemetery. N. Washington Observatory. O. Analoatan Island.

personal dishonesty has ever been proved against him, but the recklessness and extravagance in the expenditures were extraordinary. The streets were torn up in every direction on a "comprehensive plan" of improvements, which was estimated at six millions of dollars and cost twenty; the rights of property-owners were disregarded, and they were assessed for "improvements" when their property was ruined. The result was a crash in 1874,

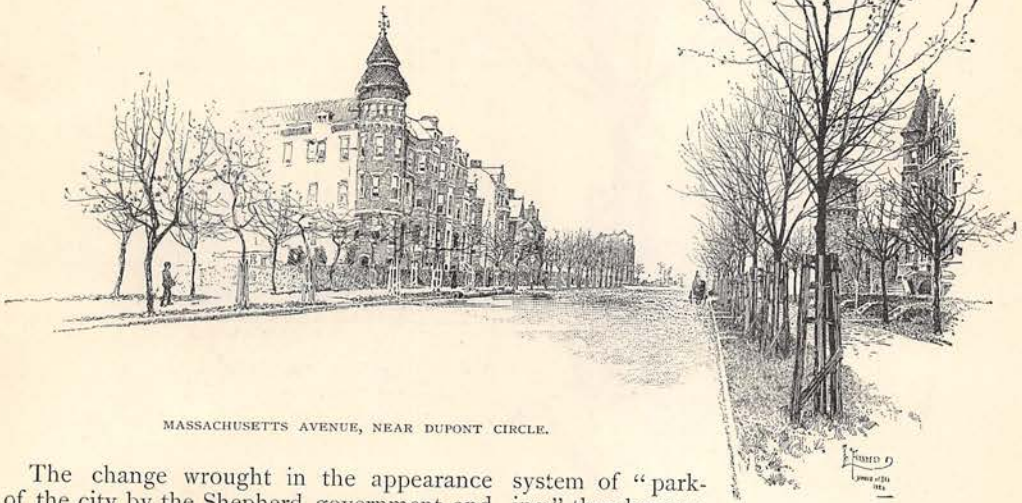
maintained wholly with Congress, which also assumed one-half of all the annual expenses, including interest on the debt. The taxes were to be covered into the United States Treasury and form one-half the revenue, the other half being provided by the General Government; and the entire revenue was to be disbursed on specific appropriations by Congress, the accounts being passed upon by the accounting officers of the Treasury. This system



"ABOVE THE GRADE."

when Congress abolished at one stroke the territorial government and everything connected with it, and appointed three Commissioners, in the nature of receivers, to take charge of the municipal affairs and straighten them out. These Commissioners remained in office for four years. The work of reconstructing the city had been so thoroughly begun that there was no option but to complete it. This was cautiously and carefully done, and the net result was stated to be a debt of twenty-three millions, resting on a community whose entire property was valued at less than eighty millions. Congress then determined to exercise directly, instead of delegating, its constitutional power of legislative control over the Federal district; and in 1878 it framed an act to provide "a permanent form of government for the District of Columbia." This act provided for three Commissioners, appointed by the President and Senate, who were to exercise all the executive functions necessary for the city, and who were to appoint and remove, and be responsible for, their own subordinates. The legislative power re-

is still in force, and after nearly six years' trial it is, in the main, quite satisfactory to all concerned. It would appear at first to be fundamentally opposed to the spirit of American institutions, for the people have no direct voice in the choice of their public officers. But while this is true as far as the citizens of Washington are concerned, it is to be remembered that the Federal city is the creature and protégé of the Federal Government, and that the interests of that Government are overwhelmingly great in comparison with the interests of the citizens. It is the seat of government, and the fact that persons reside there who are not connected with the Government is a mere incident. As a fact, a large portion of the population retain a residence elsewhere, and there is only an inconsiderable minority which is not directly or indirectly dependent on the Government. Were its official character to be lost, Washington would sink into utter insignificance. The city thus exists for the people of the whole country, and the people govern it through their elected representatives in Congress.



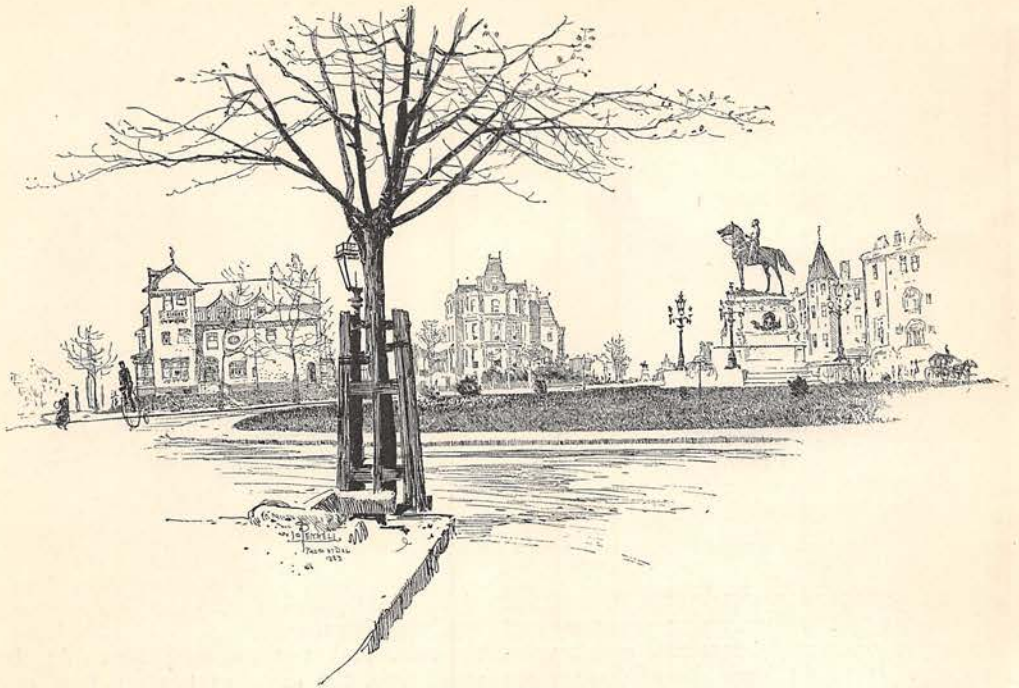
MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NEAR DUPONT CIRCLE.

The change wrought in the appearance of the city by the Shepherd government and its successors was fundamental and revolutionary. It might have been done more cheaply, but it was better to have it done extravagantly than not at all. Possibly, it never could have been done at all but by some man of Shepherd's intolerant energy, which sacrificed individual rights for the future benefit of the whole community. Had it been attempted prudently and cautiously, these individual rights would have defeated the whole scheme, for the community was not wealthy enough to compensate the injury done to them.

Fortunately, during all the years that the place had remained a wretched village, its grandiose plan had never been entrenched upon in any way; and when the work of development was taken in hand in earnest, it was at once manifest what immense possibilities the plan contained. The great boulevards, or avenues, were three times as wide as was necessary for purposes of communication; it was determined to use a portion of them only for a roadway, another portion for foot-walks, and to devote fully half of the street to lawns in front of the houses. The idea was not novel, for it had been carried out to a limited extent in many cities of Europe and America, where, on a few streets, the houses are built well back from the front line of the lot; but, as a general rule, city real estate is too valuable to allow such a luxury. In Washington, however, the streets were wide enough to permit this without sacrificing any private property, and the

system of "parking" thus became the rule, and not the exception. At the same time, the city was torn up from one end to the other, and regraded, filling up here and cutting down there, without regard to the existing positions of houses. Many were banked up to their windows, others were left high in the air; but the general result was a system of streets with such gradual slopes that there is hardly a place where an ordinary carriage cannot proceed at a trot.

The roadways being narrowed and the streets graded, the next step was the planting of trees, forming miles on miles of shade. This was systematically done, the trees being carefully selected by experts, certain varieties for certain streets, planted with great care, and protected by boxing. They have been wonderfully successful, fully ninety-five per cent. having thriven. The quick-growing maples and poplars were principally used, but there are large numbers of elms, lindens, box elders, and buttonwoods, besides other varieties, amounting to more than twenty. One feature of the tree-planting project was a continuous drive of several miles under lindens; a part of this extends for over three miles on Massachusetts Avenue, where there are four rows of the lindens, two on each side of the roadway, already of sufficient size to unite with their summer foliage in an arch over the sidewalk. In this matter of trees, Washington is unrivaled among all the cities of the world. Other cities have trees in their parks and here and there on



THOMAS CIRCLE.

a few streets, but nowhere else has it been attempted to plant trees systematically and thoroughly on every street, except those devoted exclusively to business purposes. Nowhere else are there one hundred and twenty miles of shaded streets. The effect of this planting is not yet fully developed, the elms and other slow-growing varieties being still quite small; but the quick-growing maples and poplars are now seven and eight inches in diameter and forty feet high. The view in the spring and early summer of the streets thus shaded, and flanked by lines of lawn or terrace or flower-garden, is novel and beautiful. Its beauty is increased by the flowers and vegetation of great numbers of little triangular spaces, which have been formed by the intersection of the avenues with the streets, and which have all been tastefully laid out, according to their size, either as simple lawns or flower-beds, or as parks, with walks, fountains, etc.

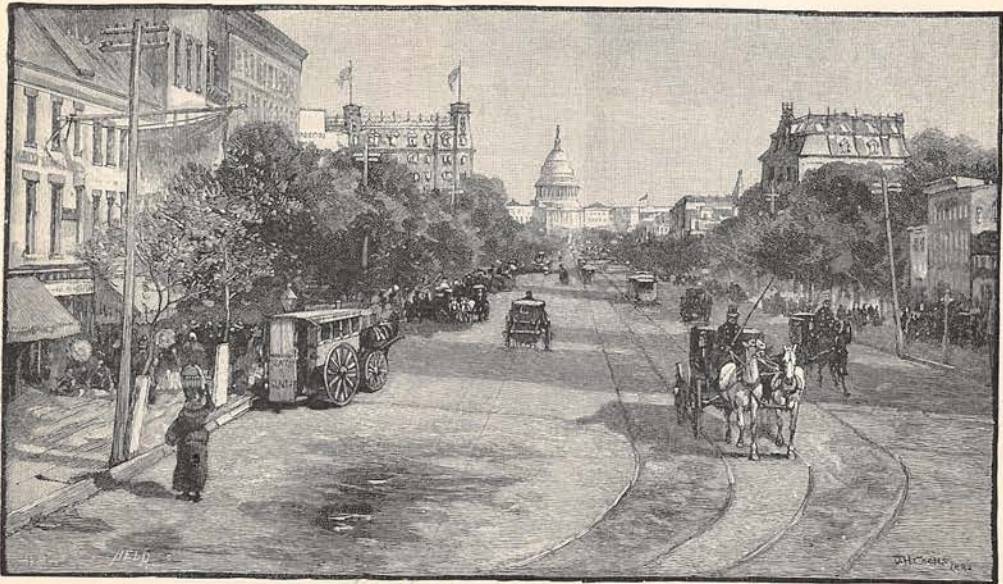
As the trees were the most successful and the most inexpensive of all the works of the Shepherd government, so were the pavements the most costly and the most unsuccessful. They were principally of wood, and they went to pieces very quickly, leaving the streets for some time almost impassable. Year by year the wood has been replaced with asphalt, which now covers a length of fifty miles, and is a great luxury for all who

use the streets, whether with cushioned carriage or heavy express wagon. By far the greater part of the streets used for residences are covered with these asphalt pavements, which are somewhat similar to those in Paris, but cover an extent three times as great.

It was but a short time after the city had been thus remodeled, when the natural result came in a new class of houses. And here again the French engineer's plan was found to be full of possibilities which hitherto had not been thought of. In a city laid out like New York and most other cities, in monotonous parallelograms, all the lots are of the same pattern. What can an architect do with the unvarying 25 x 100 feet? He may double it, and make it 50 x 100, and he may expend vast sums upon it, but it is still the same. The streets of Washington, however, with its various intersecting avenues, afforded building lots of every conceivable variety of shape; and the architects were not slow to cover them with every conceivable variety of houses,—square houses and round houses, houses with no two walls parallel, with fantastic roofs and towers and buttresses and bay windows and nameless projections. Some of them were good and some bad, but hardly any two were alike. Even after making all deductions for the mistakes and failures, the result of this variety is certainly pleasing. The two miles of Fifth Avenue in New York between Washington

Square and the Central Park present an imposing manifestation of wealth; one may visit many cities without finding its equal. But in the whole length—excepting a few recent structures—there is not a house which has any individuality. So similar are they that they might all have been made on a machine, and one cannot but be oppressed by the interminable monotony of the long vista of brown-stone walls on either side, with gray-stone flags underfoot, and very little sky overhead, and no trace of vegetation of any kind. In Washington there is no such wealth—and no such monotony. As the eye wanders along

handsome avenues. Everywhere there are superb residences looking out upon fields of red clay and weeds, and flanked on either side by such shanties as perch on the rocks in the upper part of New York. This incongruity reaches its height on the principal street of the town, Pennsylvania Avenue, which is of unrivaled width, beautifully paved both for vehicles and pedestrians, flanked at either end by the magnificent Capitol and Treasury buildings, and possessed of every requisite for a famous boulevard—except buildings. There are, perhaps, a dozen large structures in its length of more



PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE.

the street, it constantly finds some new shape, some odd design, some strange combination in color. Many of these alleged "Queen Anne" houses, with their rooms cut up into all sorts of angles, are reputed to be most uncomfortable places to live in; but they serve an admirable purpose in street decoration. With streets, however, laid out for more than double the actual population, one has a wide range in which to choose a lot. This option has been freely availed of, and there are, consequently, three vacant lots to one which is built upon. The new buildings have clustered about the Scott Square and Dupont Circle, and the other little squares and circles, forming small settlements, separated from each other by long distances of vacant fields, unbroken except by the asphalt roads and the lines of trees. This scattering of the new building forces has given a very incongruous and ludicrous appearance to some of the most

than a mile, which tower high in the air, and are suited to the character of the thoroughfare. All the rest are dilapidated and wretched little houses of ancient date, which look singularly out of sympathy with their surroundings.

This is naturally to be expected in a place which was first planned, and subsequently improved, out of all proportion to the requirements of the moment. It grows in spots, which, like the settlements in the Far West, form each a little center of development, radiating and extending toward its neighbor, until finally they will all join and form a civilized whole. When this process is completed in Washington, it will be, among cities, the wonder of the world.

Such is the outward appearance of the Federal city. What sort of people live in it? It has no commerce, no great merchants, no powerful corporations, none of the classes



LONG BRIDGE.

which form the controlling elements in other cities. Its one hundred and eighty thousand inhabitants are, roughly speaking, the families of office-holders, or of persons who supply office-holders with food, clothing, shelter, and the other necessities of life. It is hard to realize to what extent the Federal business has grown. The official register contains the names of nearly fifteen thousand persons, beginning with President and ending with "cuspadorians," who serve the United States in the city of Washington. Perhaps one-half of these are clerks and writers, busy in settling accounts and claims; nearly one-fourth are employed in mammoth establishments like the Printing Office and Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Others are engaged in the various scientific departments under Government control. Finally, a number, small in amount but large in importance, comprise the prominent men in public life—the Senators and Representatives in Congress, the great lawyers on the Supreme Bench, the members of the Cabinet and chief bureau officers, the most prominent officers of the army and navy, the representatives of foreign governments. These form the ruling element in what is called "society" in its restricted sense. But they do not form the whole of it. Every year Washington becomes more and more a winter residence for

persons of leisure and moderate means. Its mild climate, its quiet streets, free from the hurried bustle and noise of a commercial center, and the character of its society, prove more and more attractive to certain classes. The merchant who has acquired a fortune in the fierce struggles of trade goes there to build himself a house and quietly enjoy with his family the results of his labors in a place where there is no business talk. The retired army or navy officer finds nowhere else so many friends or so much consideration,—in fact nowhere else can he live on his pay with any comfort. The man of science goes there because he can find nowhere else so many men engaged in his own specialty, no matter whether it be in the domain of physical or biological investigation, and nowhere else can he prosecute his studies to such advantage. The man of letters finds there more than one distinguished author, and a library which has no equal on this continent. Other cities have probably more scientific and literary men, but they are relatively insignificant among the vast numbers engaged in commercial pursuits. They form their little societies apart, and are almost unnoticed in the great current of affairs; but in Washington they form an important part of the whole. Finally, during the winter all the world and his wife goes there for a visit—some for sight-seeing, to see what Congress and public men are like; some because it is the fashion to go to Washington in winter as to Newport in summer; some because they have cases to argue in the Supreme Court; some because they have their little measures to look after in Congress. The society is thus ever changing and kaleidoscopic; it is perforce completely revolutionized every four years, and partly so every second year, while every winter brings its fresh supply of mere temporary

residents. The "old-resident" element which, in the days of Southern supremacy before the war, ruled Washington society, is becoming every year more and more in a minority, buried out of sight in the avalanche of Northern wealth and numbers. It is this thoroughly cosmopolitan character which gives to Washington society its characteristic feature. It is the common meeting-ground of people of different tastes and different habits, representing communities and ideas as wide apart as

and, although they figure in the police court more numerous than the whites in proportion to their numbers, yet the offenses are nearly all trivial, most of them being petty larceny and sneak-thieving. Crimes of any magnitude are extremely rare among them, and they are not inferior to the whites in morality or in freedom from the lower vices. They know their legal rights, and are quick to enforce them if imposed upon, but if treated fairly they seldom give trouble. They



OUTSIDE THE MARKET.

the poles, but truly representing them, and all men of mark in their own localities, even though their importance dwindles when exposed to a national glare.

Not the least interesting among the features of Washington is the opportunity which it affords to study the results of emancipation. These results can there be seen at their best, as in South Carolina and Mississippi they appear at their worst. The war brought into Washington a large influx of negroes, principally refugees, who came tramping over the Long Bridge after each successive battle, hoping to find the promised land after they had crossed the Potomac. Their numbers are given in the last census at sixty thousand, or one-third of the whole population. They are as a rule industrious, sober, and orderly;

find employment as laborers in the various public and private works, as household servants (for which they are admirably adapted), as hucksters and purveyors for the markets. Others have improved their condition, and have learned trades as masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, etc. Many are sufficiently educated to carry on a small business or become messengers and clerks in the departments, and a few have held offices of importance, and have discharged the duties of them in such a manner as to gain the respect and esteem of all with whom they are brought in contact. Unlike the plantation negroes of the South, they are provident and economical, accumulate their savings, purchase comfortable homes for themselves, build expensive churches, and conduct a great number of

coöperative and benevolent societies with marked success. Even the poorer laborers are not without food and lodging, for which they are ready to work hard and long, and professional beggary is almost unknown among them. Good schools are provided for their children and filled with thousands of pupils. Those who have the means attach great importance to their dress, and although fond of gaudy colors, they are usually neat in their appearance.

Altogether, the negroes, as seen in Washington, form a very useful and unobjectionable portion of the community, incomparably superior in every respect to the low foreign element which forms the dregs of Atlantic cities. When one sees the intelligence and prosperity of those who have been educated, and the industry and good order which characterize the uneducated laboring class, it instills new hope for the future of their race. The dark past of the ante-bellum period, when slaves were herded in pens on the grounds now used as a botanical garden at the foot of the Capitol, and when the voice of the auctioneer, as he sold them, could almost be heard in the halls of Congress—these days seem to be separated from the bright present by centuries rather than years.

The society of Washington has of late years been the subject of much discussion and not a few novels. It was cleverly satirized three years since by the author of "Democracy." His book was hardly noticed in his own country, save by a few who imagined that they identified the originals of the types so baldly presented, and were amused to see the faults of their acquaintances thus made sport of. But in due time the book traveled to England, and was there gravely considered as an analytical thesis upon the results of a century of self-government. The "Quarterly Review" moralized at great length upon the remarkable spectacle thus presented of a mighty people rushing to self-destruction for lack of a ruling class. People at home then began to inquire for a book which excited such profound interest abroad, and the demand was met by a cheap edition, which all the world has now read.

The society represented in this book centers around a widow of an "assured position in society," who, having traveled everywhere and exhausted everything, comes to Washington in search of a new sensation; to whom court is paid by two men intended to form an antithesis—one a Senator from the West, distinguished as a leader in his party and a Presidential candidate, and the other a Southern gentleman ruined in fortune by

the war and now practicing his profession as a lawyer. Incidentally, there is a President who is a mere puppet in the hands of the Senator, a cynical diplomat, a historian who clamors for a foreign mission, a young miss of startling freedom of manner, and a host of constituents who throng the gaunt lodgings of the Senator, spitting tobacco juice on his floor and pressing their "claims" for office. The slender thread of the story hangs upon the rivalry of the two suitors for the heroine's affections, and the climax is reached after the Southern gentleman is disposed of by sending him off to Mexico as counsel for some sort of claims commission, and the Senator is about to win his suit—when the heroine discovers that he had formerly sold his vote in Congress on a bill for a steamboat subsidy. He tries to explain this, while admitting the fact, by saying that he used the money solely for political purposes in the crisis of an election on the result of which he believed the safety of the country to depend. But she scorns his sophistries and flies a place where no one is free from corruption.

The story is full of hits which, though local in their character, are cleverly made, and it is altogether an amusing little satire; yet no one but a ponderous reviewer would ever find in it any adequate justification for its comprehensive title of "Democracy."

It cannot be denied that certain measures in Congress have been tainted with corruption; the *Crédit Mobilier* and other investigations have distinctly proved it. But neither can any one deny that cupidity is the ruling vice in the nature of most men the world over; nor that in a place where the public business of fifty millions of people is planned, enacted, and conducted, there should be manifold opportunities for dishonesty of every shade, from open bribery to the most remote indirect benefit. But in spite of cupidity, human nature is not wholly bad; and in spite of its temptations, Washington society is not wholly, nor even principally or mainly, corrupt. There are professional lobbyists who go there in numbers every winter; their doings and their methods, with their restaurant dinners, their hotel life, their intrigues, and their secret conferences, can be traced by the aid of a detective reporter; and the spectacle is by turns exciting and repulsive, instructive and indecent. But the lobbyist and his companions are no more to be found in good society than the social outcast among decent people. The most that is known about the lobby and corrupt bills is derived from the principal newspapers, and one may live in Washington for years and never meet a live lobbyist. It

is highly probable that the amount of legislative dishonesty is at least not greater in Washington than in London or Paris. The difference lies in the amount of publicity given to it in America, and to the public craving for that sort of news which stimulates the supply of it, to an extent far exceeding what is warranted by mere truth.

Nevertheless, the lobby and corruption are legitimate subjects for satire. But the satire

ton are the prominent men of the country at large, and their morals and their character, their honesty and dishonesty, are a faithful reflection of the tone of public sentiment in regard to morality throughout the country. Those who believe that the people in general are corrupt will believe the same of their representatives; and those who believe that the prevailing sentiment in America and elsewhere throughout the world is in favor of



ENTRANCE TO NAVY YARD.

must not be accepted as a well-proportioned picture. If one should write a book and call it "Commerce," in which the principal character should be a notorious stock-jobber who amassed a great fortune by assiduously circulating lies which affected the value of the property he bought and sold, and in which the other characters should be a chief municipal officer and a judge who were mere hirelings of the stock operator, a minister of the Gospel who was a gross libertine, a merchant who made false returns of his income and false invoices of his goods, and a host of idle young men who scorned the trades in which their fathers gained the fortunes they were spending, and whose principal occupation was to assemble every night in a club to talk scandal and play cards—who would accept it as a faithful picture of New York society? and what would be thought of the foreign philosopher who should gravely discourse upon it as showing the inevitable result of engaging in commercial enterprises?

The prominent men of society in Washing-

honesty will find the same sentiment in public men.

Leaving aside the question of political morality, few people who have passed a winter in Washington will deny the charm of its society. Acknowledging all its faults, its crudeness—narrowness, perhaps—and its lack of form, it must yet be acknowledged that it differs from all other American society in the fact that it is not founded on wealth. It is the only society which is really republican, though it has little resemblance to the "republican court" of the first administration,—the only one in America which has a well-defined basis. And that basis is public station, temporarily conferred, whether directly or indirectly, by the expressed wishes of fellow-men. The holding of such public station necessarily implies intelligence, and thus it is intelligence, as distinguished from lineage or wealth, which is the fundamental basis in Washington society. Such a society does not feel obliged to adopt certain customs because it is reported at second hand that they are

good form in London. Its opinions are robustly independent, its information is extensive, and its subjects of conversation are many and varied.

It is not to be imagined that such a society is well defined, or that its rules are clearly es-

President, where the doors are thrown open that every person in the street may enter them in a crush, and stand in a slowly moving procession for two hours, in order that during half a minute of that time the President may be seen and his arm may be wrenched.



STREET SCENE NEAR NAVY YARD.

tablished—though it is true that the “Etiquette of Social Life in Washington” has been most elaborately formulated in a little pamphlet, of which a fresh edition is perennially produced, and which is said to sell in great numbers. It is, undoubtedly, open to the criticism of being raw, to the same extent—but no more—that society in London is subservient and snobbish, and in New York illiterate and commercial. Nothing can be more ridiculous than the public levees of the

But this is not peculiar to Washington alone. Such “public receptions” are inflicted upon presidents in all cities which they visit. Hardly less incongruous are the Wednesday afternoon receptions of the wives of Cabinet officers, when their doors are also thrown open and hundreds of strangers tramp through their parlors “to pay their respects.” The wives of Judges and Senators and Representatives have to endure the same thing on other afternoons of the week. It has come



ST. JOHN'S CHURCH.

to be considered as part of the price of public station. But, no matter what office a man may hold, no one may come to his dinner table without an invitation. And it is in dinners that Washington society excels. Diplomats and travelers from every part of the world; men distinguished in political life, on the bench, and in war; men of science and men of letters; women of intelligence and culture, with the native grace and beauty for which American women are justly celebrated — there is no such wealth of choice in any other American city, and there are no other dinner-parties so entertaining as those of Washington.

Of great balls there are not many. Few people have the means, and still fewer have the disposition, to incur the expense and domestic nuisance of a ball at home. But those who think that society exists only for dancing have ample opportunities for their amusement in the constant number of balls given by the different german clubs in public halls.

Of evening parties, where there is occasionally dancing, but which can hardly be dignified as balls, there is an incessant round night by night, from Christmas to Ash Wednesday. There are perhaps two score of houses where people are at home one or two evenings in every month. As the society is still so small that there is but one set in it, one meets everybody, *i. e.*, some four or five hundred

persons, at these different houses. It would be absurd to say that these affairs are the equals in brilliancy of the salons of the famous French women of the last century, but they are of that type, and will gradually approach that ideal. A considerable minority—often a majority—of the company is composed of distinguished men and brilliant women; and it is the constant reunion of such people at dinners and small evening parties which makes up the most agreeable part of Washington society.

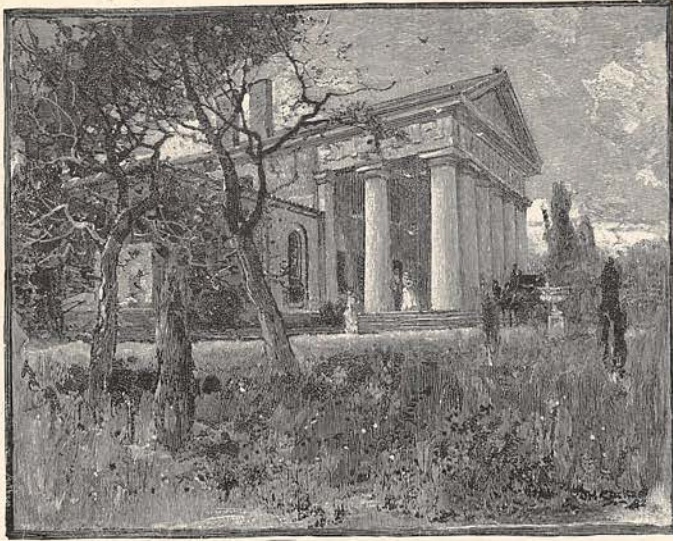
What, then, to sum up, are the attractions of Washington? It has a climate which is mild in winter and unrivaled in spring and autumn. It is a cleanly and convenient place to live in. It has many things to interest the curious. At the Capitol one may see in the Senate the most orderly and dignified legislative body in the world; in the House one may watch a debate of such turmoil and confusion that it seems an unintelligible Babel; in the Supreme Court one may hear the most profound legal argument, and study the proceedings of a court which has no equal in the extent of its jurisdiction and powers. Going up the avenue, there will be seen at the White House a building rich with memories of everything that is prominent in American history for the past seventy years, and in it the curious spectacle of a man performing the chief executive business of the nation in a small office where there is less ceremony than is usual with the president of a bank. On either side of this building is a vast aggregation of granite containing each many hundreds of rooms filled with busy



THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT.

clerks. In the one which is devoted to the State, War, and Navy Departments, there can be seen the original draft of the Declaration of Independence, much correspondence of Washington and others dur-

a quarter of a mile to a new brick building on the banks of the Potomac, under the shadow of the now nearly completed Washington monument, one may see this paper money and bonds and stamps in every stage



GENERAL LEE'S HOUSE, ARLINGTON.

ing the Revolution, and the original draft of every law which has been passed and every treaty which has been made since the foundation of the Government. On the walls of one of the rooms are the photographs of the successive Secretaries of State, and their faces are worthy of study. Beginning with Jefferson, Randolph, Pickering, and Marshall, the collection goes on with Madison, Monroe, Adams, Clay, Webster, Calhoun, Everett, Marcy, and Cass, and ends with Seward, Fish, Evarts, and Blaine. Few offices can show such a famous list of occupants.

Crossing over to the other great pile of granite, one comes into an atmosphere of money and the evidences of wealth which probably no other building contains. Here are between two and three thousand people, men and women, busy with figuring and settling accounts. In the vaults there are a hundred and fifty millions of hard cash; this is not shown to visitors, but must be accepted on the faith of the monthly Treasury statement. But in the safes of the National Bank division there are over three hundred millions of dollars in bonds, deposited there to cover the circulation of the banks. They are piled up in brown paper parcels, and visitors who are properly accredited sometimes amuse themselves by holding five millions or more in one hand. Going down

of its manufacture—the making of the paper, the mixing of the inks, the engraving of the plates, the printing, numbering, cutting, and counting. It is like any other four-story factory, yet even to the most philosophical mind there is a certain interest in the wholesale manufacture of money—or its representative.

Just across the street from this building, in the midst of a park most elaborately laid out, is the Department of Agriculture, where the theoretical farmer can learn all the processes of the latest experiments in agriculture, from the culture of expensive tea to the improvement of the common potato. In the continuation of the same park are seen two large buildings, side by side: one a graceful Gothic structure of dark sandstone, and the other a modern heap of red, blue, and yellow bricks. One is the Smithsonian Institution and the other the National Museum. The latter building covers five acres under one roof, and is the best stocked museum in this country, though it is yet far behind its foreign rivals.

And so the sightseer can go on, inspecting Washington's old clothes and camp chest, surrounded by countless models of machines at the Patent Office; penetrating the mysteries of weather predictions at the Signal Office; looking at pictures in the Corcoran Gallery; examining skeletons at the Army Medical



SOLDIERS' GRAVES, ARLINGTON.

Museum; driving out northward to the Soldiers' Home to get a bird's-eye view of the city from the hills which form its northern boundary; and finally, riding across the Potomac to Arlington to see the beautiful home which Lee left after so long and painful a struggle between his duty to his country and to his State, where now his majestic oaks look down on long lines of white headstones, covering those who laid down their lives in the great war with no reward save that

“On Fame's eternal camping-ground
Their snowy tents are spread,
And Glory guards with solemn round
The bivouac of the dead.”

To such sightseeing there is no limit, so long as curiosity and physical strength remain unabated. But after all it is the people which form the chief attraction of any place. And Washington is the place of all others to study America and the Americans. It has no local types of its own; it is simply cosmopolitan and representative of every type, from Michigan to Texas, and from Maine to California.

Here these types meet every year in closer fellowship, every year broadened by mutual intercourse and a better knowledge of each other's characteristics, and ever more and more mindful of the great destiny which binds them all together into one mighty whole. Here one may gain faith to believe — what is usually disputed — that America has an individuality of its own, not Anglo-Saxon, but distinctly American, as different from that of England as France from Italy; to perceive the slow but incessant process by which this individuality is losing its angularities and its dissimilarities and becoming shapely and homogeneous; to realize that the New World, having risen to might and power, is ceasing to consider

“This Western giant coarse,
Scorning refinements which he lacks himself,”

as its highest type, and is gradually evolving a society of its own, not founded on caste or wealth, yet not lacking in grace or refinement. It is different from other society, and is well worth study.

