

FIFTH AVENUE.

WITH PICTURES BY CHILDE HASSAM.



FIFTH AVENUE AT WASHINGTON SQUARE.

ENGRAVED BY S. G. PUTNAM.



FIFTH AVENUE begins at Washington Square, and thence runs northward for two miles and a half until it finds Central Park; for two miles and a half, again, it forms the eastern boundary of the Park; then it traverses Harlem and some last remains of shanty-town; and it ends at the Harlem River.

This is what the map says. But a street has real vitality only in so far as it is flanked by the ordered habitations of men; and considering Fifth Avenue thus, I hardly know where to place its northern termination. Along the up-

per portions of the Park it pauses, architecturally out of breath; and although it gets its "second wind" in Harlem, ere long it lies down again amid dust and goats, in so forlorn a plight that, near the river, its best friend would be slow to recognize it. But even if I could say, Here Fifth Avenue practically ends to-day, the words would not be worth writing. Fifth Avenue never remains long out of breath, and so the truth of to-day might be an insulting falsehood to-morrow.

My canvas is not big enough to contain a sketch of the whole of this elastic street. As choice is needful, I naturally select the parts



THE WASHINGTON ARCH.

ENGRAVED BY E. H. DEL'ORME.

which I really know rather than those which I have merely seen. I really know only those below Central Park; best of all I know those nearest to Washington Square; and as these are the oldest portions, with them our little survey may fittingly begin.

I.

LET us take the first step amid pecuniary facts.

In the year 1790, one Captain Robert Rich-

ard Randall paid £5000 sterling for twenty-one acres of good farming land lying to the north-eastward of what is now Washington Square. In 1801 he died, and his will directed that a "Snug Harbor" for old salts be built upon his farm, the produce of which, he believed, would forever furnish his pensioners with a sufficiency of vegetable and cereal rations. Such, in truth, has proved to be the case. But the product has been in the secondary, not the primary, fruits of the soil—in round dollars of gold and oblong ones of green paper. Randall's trus-

tees were farther-sighted than he, and, with legislative sanction, they leased the urban farm in building lots, and set Snug Harbor on Staten Island. Leasehold property the farm still remains, and its value has certainly been much impaired by the fact. Yet hear how this value has increased. When the captain died his land was yielding \$4000 a year; by 1848 the income was tenfold greater; and to-day it amounts to \$350,000. No food is grown by their trustees for the snugly housed sailors of to-day; but although much is bought for them, the coffers of their home bulge fatly with the moneys that remain.

Looking a little farther up-town, I may remind you that last spring the site of the house in which Mr. Belmont had lived, on the northeast corner of Eighteenth street, was sold, with the site of its neighbor, and its stable for \$615,000; and every one knew that only the site—the actual soil—had determined the price, for the buildings were instantly reduced to potsherds and powder. Compare this price with Randall's \$25,000 for twenty-one acres, and you will see how the worth of ground in the lower parts of Fifth Avenue has increased during just a hundred years. Notice then that the Mr. Belmont of to-day intends to build his new house on the northeast corner of Eighty-first street, facing the park, and you see how rapidly Fifth Avenue people are going up-town; for it was only in the earlier 'fifties that his father built, and he was counted almost as a pioneer. As against the \$615,000 taken in on the corner of Eighteenth street, say the newspapers, only \$285,000 have been paid out at the corner of Eighty-first street for a site of somewhat similar size. But it was the intrusion of that greedy yet lavish monster called Business which determined the former sum. To understand how the value of Fifth Avenue ground as a foundation for dwelling-houses has advanced, you would have to know what the Eighteenth street corner was worth in the 'fifties, and compare that sum with the \$285,000 paid this year at Eighty-first street. I am told that it was about \$40,000, but the statement may be only approximately true.

Although I was born but half a mile from the starting-point of Fifth Avenue, and in a house which had just been built, I cannot quite remember Captain Randall, or even his first trustees; nor can my mother. But my mother can remember when, in the thirties, those marble-trimmed red houses were finished which stand on a part of his land, and front on Washington Square. Into one of them moved her parents with their children, coming up from Beekman street; and into another moved my father's parents and their children, coming from the corner of Chambers street and Broadway,

where the Stewart Building now stands. Thus, if Randall's farm had been farmed as he decreed, some one else might now be telling you about Fifth Avenue; but as things actually happened, I have good cause to feel that no one else could consider it more sympathetically.

My mother's newly transplanted childish eyes gazed from the back windows of the Washington Square house upon a stretch of green fields dotted with real live red cows. And the neighboring avenue must have grown slowly at first, for I am told that my own freshly opened baby eyes saw, from one of its new houses near Seventeenth street, only a few others marking out its further course. I will not say precisely when this was. Dates are precious things, but when so sharply cut as to be available for home-thrusts, indifferently attractive to the feminine mind. I shall not juggle with chronology while making this little personally conducted tour through the not-far-away past, but I shall mix a gentle vapor of vagueness with my notes of time—naming, for instance, a decade or a luster instead of a definite year. Thus I may explain that such of my recollections as are clear enough to be quite trustworthy date from the days when the cruel war was very nearly over. Earlier ones are picturesquely blurred, and the earliest of all I venture to doubt myself. Can it be true that I dreamily remember a canvas hippodrome where the Fifth Avenue Hotel stands, and kids curveting in idiotic pride over imaginary mountain peaks on the rough ground of what is Madison Square? Can it be true that when we looked from our nursery windows toward Sixteenth street we saw, on a lot foolishly called vacant, the most interesting of all possible homes—an abandoned street-car fitted with a front-door and a chimney-pot, and inhabited by an Irish family of considerable size? This last—shall I say fact?—has been told me by my elders. I rejoice to say that I do not remember it; but I am sure that if it is a fact, hot must have been our envy of the little Paddies so romantically housed.

II.

LATER on, the material world in which I generally moved was bounded by Sixth Avenue and by Washington, Union, and Madison squares, although, of course, we sometimes walked farther up the avenue, and farther down Broadway where all the shops were congregated, and made veritable picnic excursions to far-off Central Park. I doubt whether any small girls who live on Fifth Avenue now are permitted to "play around the block." But this was our constant after-breakfast recreation, with not even a nurse to keep eye upon us. When we got too old to trundle



A WINTER MORNING. (FIFTH AVENUE AND SEVENTEENTH STREET.)

ENGRAVED BY E. H. DEL'ORME.

hoops and fly red balloons, we "roller-skated," plied the daring bean-shooter, or played tag or "I spy," with a lamp-post for goal and areadoors as hiding-spots. There was much amusement also in watching for the people who daily passed up and down, with less frequent resort to public vehicles than the longer distances or more hurried occupations of to-day compel. They were young men and old going down to their business, school-boys and maidens going up to their desks; all were sure to come every morning; and those whom we did not actually know by name soon had names and characters invented for them. Private carriages were few in the mornings. But there was a line of stages which turned into the avenue from Broadway at Thirteenth street, and stopped finally at Forty-second. These stages were gaily colored, and had big pictures on each side—pictures of Swiss landscapes, prairie fights, foaming steamboats, and flying trotters; and part of our morning's interest was to watch for the ones which we had severally "chosen" as the most attractive. The trotting-wagon gave Fifth Avenue its afternoon character in those days. Of course my lady's carriage was not rare, but it appeared once where we see it a hundred times to-day. The high "trap" was

but just beginning to be brought, or copied, from England, with such horses as thereunto pertained. There were no hansoms, or tandems, or four-in-hands; and as for equestrians, Mr. Olmsted has told me that in the later 'fifties not a dozen saddle-horses were kept in New York, except by the riding-school, and that his first scheme for Central Park included no bridle-paths at all.

But I think that there must have been more trotters in the 'sixties than there are now. At all events, there seemed to be many more; and Harlem Lane, which now lies obliterated under the new street-lines north of the Park, was crowded with drivers, each eager for a trial of speed with whomsoever chance might bring up beside him. Of course, to get to the lane every one had to drive up the avenue, and so it was gay of a springtime afternoon, although not in the fashion of these current years. Many pretty girls trod the sidewalks, but they were rarer in vehicles; nor had the fashionable young man-about-town yet largely developed. The trotter, the sporting man, and the mature citizen of "horsey" tastes, were the figures one watched for. Most elderly citizens, however rich and staid, seem to have had these tastes when a horse always meant a trotter. It was

wonderful to behold how fat they could be, and yet find comfort in such spidery wagons. But the most amazing of all was Commodore Vanderbilt, who regularly passed behind an alert, nervous team—he looked so little alert or nervous himself, and so very saintly, with his serene, fine profile, his snowy hair, and his voluminous clerical white cravat.

On winter days the scene was the same, with a difference. There was much more snow in those years, and, as I remember, no effort was made to cart it away, although it might be partly thrown aside to the curbstone, for the sake of the laboring stages. Every man who

which protected vacant lots were ragged with his declarations, and long, narrow slips were liberally pasted against the curbstones over the gutters, in the neighborhood of the crossings, especially when election-day was near at hand.

"The block," I say, was our early morning play-ground; fortunately its farther side faced the shady, quiet precincts of Union Square, which were not positively forbidden to our unguarded feet; and a little later in the day we always took a decorous walk, now with due nursely protection, down Fifth Avenue to Washington Square, to visit our Quaker grand-



CAB-STAND AT NIGHT, MADISON SQUARE.

ENGRAVED BY E. H. DEL'ORNE.

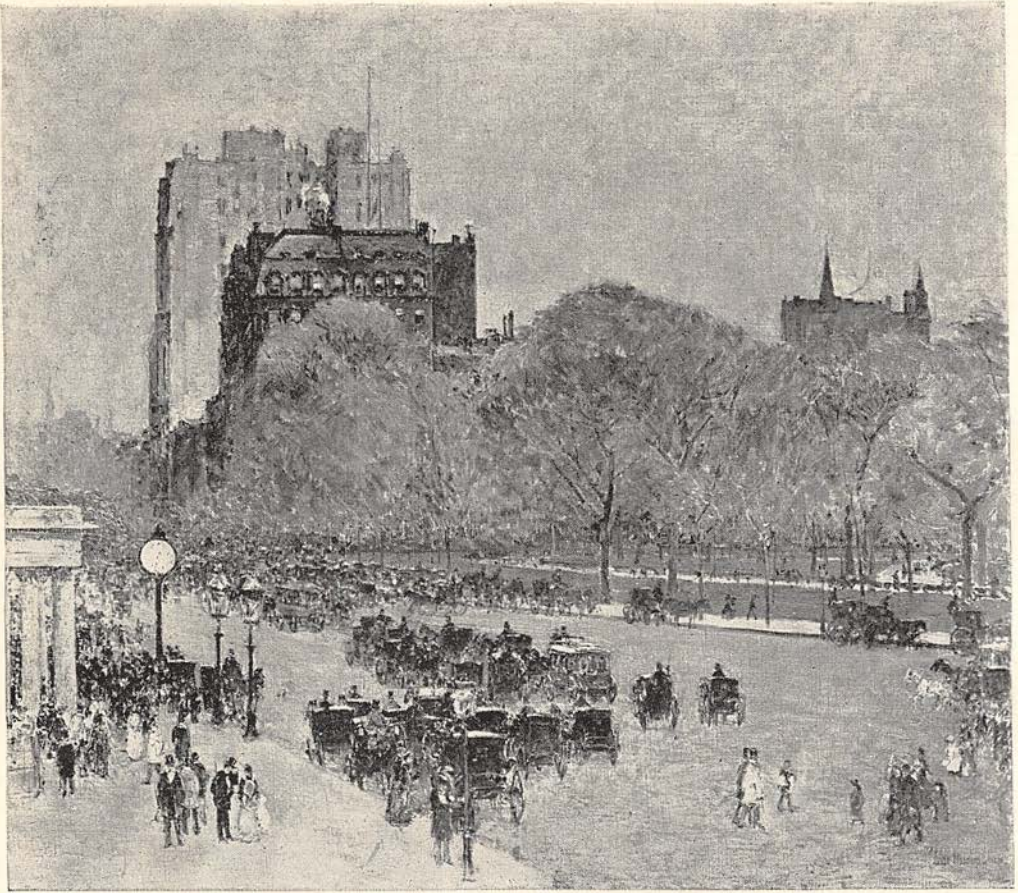
owned a trotter owned a cutter, too, and the trotter was even faster with runners than with wheels behind him.

You should have seen the streets of New York in those days if you think they are dirty now. I cannot recollect the traditional predatory pig, but I remember how long the dirty snow remained, gradually changing into frozen dirt, and how ubiquitous, how necessary, was the crossing-sweeper when its melting seemed to flood the world. Great herds of cattle were then driven through the streets at midday on their way to the shambles. We were always on the watch for them on Tuesdays, so that we might seek refuge on some stoop which could be shut off by a gate. To-day, moreover, the bill-sticker sticketh not wherever he listeth: then he did. The frequent boards

mother, whose "thee" and "thy" I remember as not less sweet than her gingersnaps.

I have already told how Union Square looked when the war was drawing to a close.¹ And Washington Square (our elders called it Washington Parade-ground) was even more quiet and shadowy. It, too, had then a high wooden paling, and only children and very peaceful, decorous loiterers filled its paths and benches. Here, too, there were pop-corn and cake-venders, and old Irishmen who sold ballads. I wonder whether any ballads are sold in New York now? They were printed on little sheets of very bad paper, strung with clothes-pins on lines against the palings, and sold for a cent apiece. And as the middle of February drew

¹ "Picturesque New-York," CENTURY MAGAZINE, December, 1892.



MADISON SQUARE AND THE HOTEL BRUNSWICK.

near, their place was taken by comic valentines which, despite their gaily-tinted pictures, were disposed of at the same temperate price. It was usually for our governesses and tutors that we purchased these valentines.

III.

NOT until some time after 1870 was the driveway opened across Washington Square, and the ill-reputed street beyond irreverently re-baptized as South Fifth Avenue. Since then a few tall apartment-houses have been built, the beautiful yellow church on the southern side whose crowning cross shines out electrically at night, and the snowy arch which says, Here the real Fifth Avenue begins. Also, the dignified monotony of the red-brick, white-trimmed block where my grandparents lived till they died has been scandalously broken by a change in one façade; and a good deal of traffic now passes through the square. But it can hardly be called one of traffic's highroads, except at dawn, when farmers' carts rumble plenti-

fully through on their way to Jefferson Market; the streets which encircle it have not been widened, and are still places for residence, not for business; and when I think how things have happened elsewhere in New York, I am ready to affirm that Washington Square has thus far led a reasonably conservative life.

So, too, it has been with the lowest part of the avenue and its adjacent streets, thanks partly to Snug Harbor's leasehold grasp. They are not the fashionable streets they were in my childhood; but "good people" still live in them, and the number is now increasing again year by year, desecrated dwellings being restored within and without, and a belief steadily gaining ground that, whatever may happen a little farther up the avenue, this quarter-mile stretch will remain a "good residence neighborhood." We who live in this part of New York recognize its inconvenience as regards visiting many of our friends, and enjoying Central Park when the buds begin to swell. But we maintain its exceptional convenience in almost every other respect, we are proud of the

aroma of fifty years' antiquity which we breathe, and we delight to maintain that this is the only part of New York, outside the tenement districts, where a "neighborhood feeling" exists. Sometimes, down here, we even call upon a newly established neighbor whom we know only by name. Perhaps, up near the

and is gradually creeping up and up, until who can say how soon the whole of Fifth Avenue, as far as the Park, may be a commercial street? I cannot remember the time when Dame Fashion was quite as content below as above Fourteenth street. The avenue above this point, the cross-street blocks quite near it (with a



A MAY AFTERNOON ON FIFTH AVENUE.

ENGRAVED BY J. W. EVANS.

Park, you do not do this, because people with such nice names are not so apt to settle near you.

But as we come within sight of Fourteenth street the changes are many and rapidly growing. Business has got a firm foothold here, has spread its tentacles to the east and west,

preference for Fourteenth and Twenty-third as wider streets than the others), and Union and Madison squares — these were her chosen domains; but it is only their upper portions which she now has the courage to dispute, half-heartedly, with King Business. By the time that the war was well done with, she had carried up

her dwellings in solid blocks as high as Forty-second street; but above this there were very few of them. There were open cattle-yards on the site of the Windsor Hotel; and in certain sunken lots near by were skating-ponds, provided with comfortable huts, lunch-counters, and admission-fees, where all the fashionable world, in its younger generations, skated valiantly.

When this region began to clothe itself with brown-stone and brick, the regions lower down were already beginning to alter their garments as commercial activity required. Union Square and the avenue itself were first in this act. Fourteenth and Twenty-third streets, now so radically changed, were hardly touched by trade until the elevated railroad brought them within reach of shoppers from the suburbs. No one much younger than I can realize what a wail went up in New York when the first shop-window was cut on the avenue—if I am not mistaken, at the southeast corner of Seventeenth street. The pride the city then felt in this street was something quite provincial and superb. I was often told in my small years that it was the finest street in the world. I had imagination enough not to believe this, but I thought it tremendously fine; and when the shopman camped upon it, I too put ashes on my head, and believed that what Mr. Wegg would have called the "Decline and Fall Off" of New York had certainly set in.

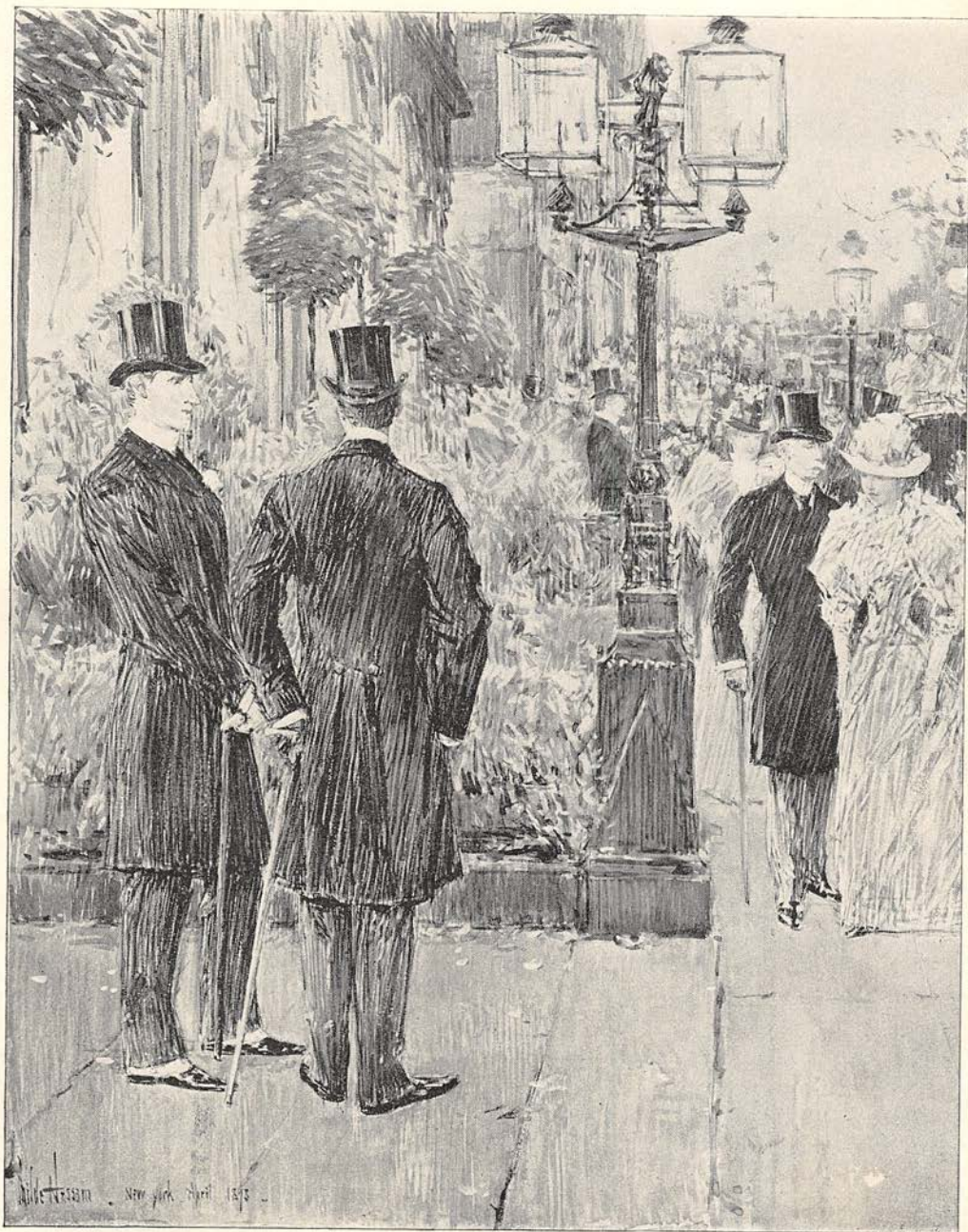
Delmonico's was then on the northeast corner of Fourteenth street. I was allowed to visit it only once or twice, but I remember that its chocolate ice-cream was quite as good as that which, possibly, the young men in Mr. Hassam's picture of its present entrance have just absorbed. On the next corner was the New York Club, then more fashionable than its younger rival, the Union, which still lives where it did then. The Manhattan Club lived opposite the New York, and the big white Stewart mansion where it lives now did not yet exist; the site was occupied by a brown-stone building—the Spingler Institute for young ladies. A riding-school stood where the Union League Club stands to-day—stands with those great columns above its door which, says one of my friends, she always likes to contemplate, because they are the only things in New York that are big and strong and have nothing whatever to do. The Century Club had then no gorgeous creamy façade, visible from Fifth Avenue; it was hidden away in a street beyond Union Square. And as for the Knickerbocker and the St. Nicholas, the Calumet, the Reform, the City, and any other clubs which now supply safe places, not only for gossip and political wire-pulling, but also for the study of the

lovely ladies on the avenue—not one of them had been born.

Most people must remember the Belmont house—even in New York we do not quite forget things in six months, nor in a year or two; so, probably, the churches which stood on the corners of Twenty-first and Thirty-fifth streets are remembered also—ghosts behind the visible big business buildings. But who recollects how recently, opposite the Belmont house, on the site of Chickering Hall, there stood two low, pretty dwellings of white marble with bits of lawn in front of them? They were a great delight to us in our infancy; for infancy loves variety, and there was nothing like them elsewhere in New York.

Mixed with the fine, big yellow bulk of the "Judge" Building, I likewise see something very different—two plain but dignified "English-basement" houses, and, on the edge of the sidewalk, a huge paulownia-tree, covered every spring with a burden of large purple blossoms. A very dear and poetical aroma exhales from the ghosts of these blossoms as they clothe the specters of gnarled branches, or thickly bestrew the stones beneath; for they bloomed in sight of our own windows, and year by year were the most patent proof I had that summer was really coming, holding in her lap for me, far away on the Connecticut shore, flowers of a less exotic aspect, of a more companionable charm.

At least as late as 1870, I think, it was still good form to walk on the avenue. I do not mean when one needed to, but just for amusement. Its pavements are pretty full now of an afternoon, but every one looks as if a definite goal were in view; no one is simply "promenading." Twenty-five years ago promenading was not merely allowable—it was the fashion. The eastern side of the street was then altogether preferred: no matter how crowded it might be, the other would be empty. And the stretch especially beloved was between Fourteenth and Twenty-third streets. Here, on a bright winter afternoon, or, at a little later hour, on a shining one in spring, there were troops and troops of young women who, by no means old women yet, now drive in the Park instead: discreet, if still pleasure-loving, matrons who would no more let their daughters spend a couple of hours walking with young men up and down a bit of Fifth Avenue than they would let them go unchaperoned to the theater. But New York was a comparatively small place then, and its "society" was actually so small that everybody knew everybody else. There was less room for misconceptions as well as



DELMONICO'S.

less likelihood of disagreeable encounters; and so the most carefully nurtured girls were permitted, as children and as maidens, to do many things which their daughters do not even wish to imitate.

On Sundays, after church-time, the sauntering was very general. If you knew any one worth knowing in New York, you were pretty sure to find him on the avenue then. Farther

up town there are still crowds of pedestrians at certain hours on Sunday. But they look as though they had been recruited from every part of the city and its suburbs, and from many of the forty-four States as well; and if you know only such people as to know argues that "society" knows you—why, you may walk all day and not meet a dozen of them.

Apartment-houses had not then been thought



THE MANHATTAN CLUB-HOUSE.

ENGRAVED BY E. H. DEL'ORME.

of, except to say that Americans would never consent to live in such cramped, unhome-like, and Frenchified things. When the Hotel Brunswick was evolved out of certain modest dwelling-houses (with the help, by the way, of Henry Hobson Richardson, then an unknown beginner), it was counted very tall. But Mr. Hassam shows you that it now looks modest itself against the cliff-like back-ground of the Knickerbocker apartment-house; and you will find many rivals of the Knickerbocker as you pass farther up the avenue. The whole scene, for at least a mile above Madison Square, has radically changed; and turning traitor to my childhood's faith, I confess that I do not regret the fact. This part of the avenue is not beautiful now, and I do not suppose that it ever will be. But it never was beautiful in its monotony of dull brown-stone, unintelligent architectural design, and clumsy ornamentation. Now it has, at least, more variety, more picturesqueness, more interest—gained often by the aid of exaggerated proportions and ugly forms, but often through pleasing masses of color and bits of excellent architectural detail; its widened pavements, abolishing the old ladder-like stoops, give its general perspective more dignity; and I am

afraid that I have so childish a love for fine shop-windows that I can excuse many “dese-crations” for their sake. At all events, the change has now been carried so far that one can only wish to see it speedily carried out to the end.

But by the end I do not mean the end of the avenue. I should like to see a consistent shopping-street below the Reservoir, but a consistent street of dwelling-houses above. And it does seem as though the stretches just below the Park can never be abandoned by those who have built themselves such comfortable, such enormously expensive, and sometimes such very beautiful houses. Perhaps even this portion of Fifth Avenue is not really beautiful. But it shows us some things of which we need not feel ashamed, no matter what kind of foreigner may be looking at them with us; and few streets in the world are gayer, brighter, more attractive than is this part of our best street when it is seen at its best. To begin with, it has such a wonderful atmosphere,—such a crystalline splendor of thin, bright air, and pure brilliant light, such a canopy of transparent sapphire, such a perspective, toward sunset, of clear amber and roseate hues. And one quite overlooks the trotting-wagons now, amid



THE UNION LEAGUE CLUB-HOUSE.

the throngs of slower but more stately steeds pulling stately and glistening coaches, filled with charming faces and satisfying silken gowns. In London you may see, I think, more faces of surprising beauty, and in Paris more gowns of astonishing delightfulness; but nowhere else such a steady stream of faces all of which you are pleased to contemplate, and of gowns with which no one can find fault. And certainly the now ubiquitous hansom adds greater picturesqueness to a street panorama than the low, open cabs of Paris and Vienna.

Between Fiftieth and Eightieth streets is now the part of Fifth Avenue where Dame Fashion is best pleased to build. But even socially the most interesting spot on the avenue is still where it breaks into the breadth of Madison Square. This, indeed, is the true center of idle New York, as Wall street is the center of busy

New York. Delmonico's is the best touchstone for the testing of this fact; and although it is so plainly housed, so plebeianly cramped by the want of proper waiting-rooms for its crowding guests, Delmonico's gives no sign of moving from the corner of Twenty-sixth street. The hotels which cluster near it are as full as ever, though so many more gorgeous ones have been built up-town; the neighboring theaters are as highly favored as ever; and now the Madison Square Garden has come to assure us, wherever the fine people of New York may live, in future they must keep on coming back to this spot to amuse themselves.

I have drawn you no clear picture of Fifth Avenue, and not even a fairly comprehensive sketch. But who could briefly describe such a heterogeneous, such a perpetually changing,



SUNDAY ON FIFTH AVENUE.

street? I want to explain, however, that, although we rail much against its unreasonable variety, its giddy changes of costume, I think these very things endear it to the typical New Yorker. The trait which he likes best in everything, human or inanimate, is vitality; and what could be more alive than a street whose most familiar corners he may fail to recognize if he leaves New York for three short summer months? If there is a building which he likes especially, his enjoyment of it is augmented by his sense of insecure possession—next year it may be gone. If there is one which he especially hates, he bears the sight of it with patience—if it does not disappear, perhaps something truly beautiful may spring up beside it. If New York owned any consistently beautiful, harmoniously peaceful, nobly architectural streets, we should learn to prize them, I am sure, with the quiet contentment a Parisian feels in his Paris. But meanwhile the harlequin gaiety and bustling architectural inconsequence of Fifth Avenue perpetually feed our curiosity, sometimes awaken our more serious interest, and often give excuse for that semi-political, semi-esthetic kind of grumbling about his town which is among the true New Yorker's favorite recreations.

VIII.

FOR US who have long lived on or near it, Fifth Avenue is haunted by the wraiths of many crowds and of many passing shows, trivial or serious, dismal, brilliant, or impressive. Often, when the troops were going to the war, fresh regiments passed down it. I remember thus, very mistily, regular uniforms and Scottish kilts, negro recruits and the Irish Sixty-ninth, and "Billy Wilson's Zouaves"; and then, more distinctly, the worn regiments which passed up in after years, so sadly small, with colors so pathetically torn and soiled, amid greetings far less hearty, I thought with childish wrath, than their godspeeds had been.

Thus I am brought back to speak of the great, the vital, difference between my childish days and those of the little Fifth Avenue girls of to-day. It was not merely that the architectural and the social backgrounds were different. Behind these backgrounds, mingled with them, pervading every part of my life within and without my home, I see the tremendous, glorious shadow of the war. Shadow and glory are over Fifth Avenue still to all who remember as I do. You who are younger do not know how a national disaster makes a city look; you did not see the faces one met on the morning when Lincoln died; you did not watch his funeral-train pass up the avenue between the black ranks of his heart-broken children. Grant's funeral, Sherman's funeral,

were impressive, truly. But the nation was safe then: who could doubt it that saw the Confederate generals bearing the great Union general's pall? When Lincoln lay dead, and just because he had died, no one felt sure that the nation was really saved; the end of the war looked to most men like the possible beginning of a worse—an anarchical—strife. And although you have heard Fifth Avenue shout for joy in recent years,—over Columbian parades, and Washington Centennial processions, and the serried sailors of friendly foreign powers,—you do not know how a city feels when it breathes the breath of a new life, if you cannot remember how people's faces looked when Sherman reached the sea, when Lee surrendered.

Thus there are parts of Fifth Avenue which are dear to me, which are tragic, festive, significant, picturesque, as no part of New York ever can be to my son. But one does not want to dwell too much upon things of tragic intermixture, even though they are seen dimly with childhood's eyes. I like best to close my vagrant little tour through yesterday and to-day in a part of the avenue which is essentially to-day's, and with a thought of scenes which had only beauty and brightness in them.

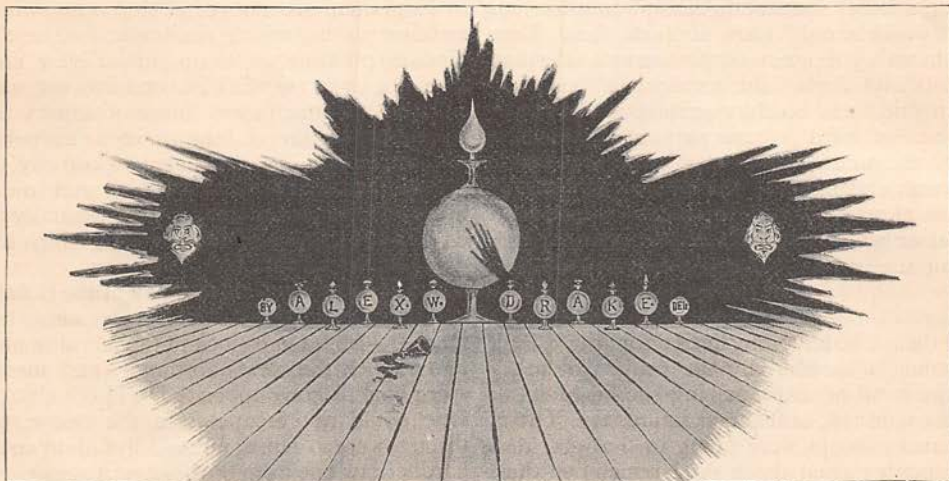
I like best to think of the day of the Columbian parade, only a year ago. It was a long day for me,—from ten o'clock in the morning until two o'clock the next morning,—and mostly spent on a balcony opposite Dr. Hall's church. One could not escape from the house, the throngs were so dense; and deadly fatigue could hardly draw one from the balcony, they were so amusing. So amusing and so pleasing to look upon, with the thought that these were our New Yorkers—born in a dozen different countries, trained amid many sorts of political conditions, but all New Yorkers now, all Americans, all republicans; and so orderly, so self-respecting, so jolly, so appreciative, enjoying even that dull and silly nocturnal procession which followed the fine one of the afternoon.

Fifth Avenue was beautiful on that October day at least, its holiday dress assumed for the first time with artistic skill, and with the invaluable help of Spanish reds and yellows. The sunshine was splendid on the white vine-wreathed pergola below Madison Square, on the canopies of flags which stretched for a mile from Twenty-sixth street up; on the decorated houses which discreetly covered themselves when they were ugly, discreetly accented their good points when they had any. From our balcony we saw the great brown church and the trees of St. Luke's Hospital to the southward, and, very far off, the white Vanderbilt house, gay in its Spanish draperies; and to the northward the big multicolored temporary

arch, and the trees of Central Park. The sunlight gilded them all day, while the myriad flags and streamers sparkled, and the color-speckled black crowds on the pavement swayed and clapped and laughed, and the soldiers tramped sturdily by, under the arch, and out of sight around its shoulder. At night, too, there was one fine moment when a blaze of crimson fire came up the street, flaring high in the air, lighting up this conspicuous architectural point and then that, with the neighboring section of the shouting crowd, while behind and before it was blackness of darkness. And then, at two o'clock in the morning, Fifth

Avenue looked very queer indeed; for its crowds had mysteriously melted away, and it looked as though they had left a wrecked lumber-yard behind them, so thickly bestrewn were its stones with fragments of the boxes and boards and barrels they had stood upon. It was a charming day for those who liked noise and color and sunshine and movement, for those who liked to feel a great city's heart beat in quick gala time. It was a charming day; and no one who lived through its long merry hours will deny that Fifth Avenue's part in its pageantry was charmingly performed.

M. G. van Rensselaer.



THE YELLOW GLOBE.

A MIDNIGHT STORY.

RETURNING from the club at an hour long past midnight, I noticed a peculiar-looking person of medium height, somewhat angular, with sallow, dark complexion, dressed like any other well-to-do person, gazing intently at the large yellow globe of colored fluid in a druggist's window. The streets were deserted, and his whole attention seemed riveted on that particular yellow spot.

A few nights later, about one o'clock, I saw the man again at the same window; so, taking refuge in the shadow of a house opposite, I watched him unobserved. He stood looking earnestly at the bright yellow center of the large globe. Now he held his finger out as though he were trying some effect, or placed his hand in silhouette against the bright background. Then he moved forward and backward, with his head bent first on one side and then on the other, as though he were looking for

something beyond and through the fluid. At last he walked away, casting glances backward at the fascinating yellow light, and disappeared in the darkness.

A week passed, and I saw him for the third time again scrutinizing the yellow globe. When he left I followed him, and as we passed a street-lamp I accosted him. At first I thought he resented it, but after a moment I ventured to say, "I have observed you gazing into the druggist's window, and I must say my curiosity has been excited to know what you find of such interest in a druggist's yellow light."

Then we walked on for some blocks in silence, and I thought I had offended him; but after a while he said slowly: "The hope of my life is to a certain extent bound up in that yellow spot, the center of that globe. But pardon me, you are a total stranger, and no one but—"

Just then I interrupted him by remarking,