

PLACES IN NEW YORK.



ONLY the newest comers or the dullest dwellers in New York are chiefly impressed by its size. If you know it at all, and really see it and feel it, you must marvel more at its union of individuality and heterogeneity. It is this that makes its character, and it is this that makes that character unique. Other cities are also very big, and some of them have grown to bigness with even greater speed; but no other in the world is so big and so complex as New York, yet so distinctively itself.

I.

MORE than seventy-six per cent. of those who people New York to-day were born of foreign mothers; more than forty per cent. were born on foreign soil themselves; and many of these aliens, brought from many different lands, continue here to live in clusters with their own kin after their own kind. Yet while each of these clusters, and each of their wandering offshoots, modifies the New-World metropolis, all of them together do not destroy its cohesion; they simply intensify its curious composite sort of personality. They make it multifariously diverse, but they leave it an entity. They touch every portion of it with pungent exotic flavors, but as flavoring an American whole. They play their several parts in a civic life that is cosmopolitan beyond the belief of those who have not studied it well, but they do not turn New York into a cosmopolitan town; for this means a town which, overwhelmed by its strangers, has lost, or has never possessed, a character of its own.

In the same way the architectural body of New York is a patchwork thing, structures of every size and form and color crowding together and defying all laws of harmony and concord. Yet this patchwork thing has a personality peculiar and distinct, engendered by its station on a long and narrow river-girdled isle, where land is incomparably dear, and where structures for this purpose and for that have been segregated into well-marked groups succeeding one another in a longitudinal line.

Moreover, New York is not really a modern town, although its mood is as modern as that of the youngest. And this fact, and the contrast between the fact and the mood, have helped to make it individual, and have helped to make it heterogeneous too.

The Island of the Manhattoes sent beaver-skins to Europe soon after Queen Elizabeth died. In 1626, only one year after the death of the first King James, a permanent town was established upon it. And the first great chapter in the story of this town was closed in 1664, only four years after the second Charles picked up his father's battered crown. Then New Amsterdam passed from Dutch into English hands, and was rechristened for the Duke of York twenty-one years before he began to govern it as the second James. Thus the silver tankard owned by the Schuyler family, and given to their ancestor by Queen Anne when he took five Mohawk chiefs to visit her in 1710, is by no means a relic of early New York. Who thinks of St. Petersburg as a typically modern town? Yet in 1710 St. Petersburg had been founded only half a dozen years.

Huguenots came in with our first Hollanders, and more and more of them in succeeding years. A large proportion of the so-called Dutch themselves were Flemings or Walloons of Gallic blood and speech. Englishmen, Scotch, and Irishmen arrived before Great Britain officially arrived; Portuguese, Swiss, Danes, Spaniards, Swedes, Germans, negroes, West Indians—in short, so many scraps of nationalities that in 1660, when Peter Stuyvesant ruled over some fourteen hundred people, they conversed, we are told, in eighteen different tongues. Do you wonder that in the year 1895 the pupils of a certain public school on the East Side of New York should have acknowledged a quondam allegiance, personal or parental, to twenty-nine different lands?

But very long before the war of independence we had solidified into a true English-voiced community. Our Americanism was enhanced, our personality unimpaired, by the steady immigration from New England which began soon after, and was called the «Connecticut invasion.» And all the American, European, Asiatic, and African invasions that have since been poured upon

us have not left us any the less decidedly ourselves.

So it has been with our architectural body. It has never been let alone. The «progressive» builder has always worked hand in hand with the aspiring immigrant to augment the complexity of New York, and the cause of his activity has been the grandeur of our waterways. Securing our commercial supremacy, at the same time they have cramped us so upon our island that its sands have grown to be more golden than those of the richest Californian gulch; and in the struggle to get all the gold out of them our city has, season by season, rent and renewed its garments of brick and stone. Not to go back again to beginnings, it may suffice to quote Philip Hone, who wrote in 1839 just as we might write to-day: «The whole of New York is rebuilt about once in ten years.» The pulling down of houses and stores in the lower part of the city he declared to be «awful,» exclaiming, «It looks like the ruins occasioned by an earthquake.» And a little book of memoirs published by a well-known merchant, Nathaniel Hubbard, in 1875, informs us that «the city of New York has been built over two or three times during the past eighty or ninety years.»

All these foreigners could not be at once absorbed, nor could any rebuildings destroy all things of earlier dates. Thus New York has ever been a heterogeneous town, although, I must insist, it is not a truly cosmopolitan town or a mere characterless piece of architectural patchwork.

It is impossible, however, to do more than thus assert and thus insist. It is impossible to explain New York's peculiar union of the old and the new, the native and the foreign—to convey its personality or to picture its complexity. You must live within it before you can apprehend it, and even then comprehension will be long delayed. What I have written is simply meant to serve as a basis for the statement that New York is astonishingly full of places; for, of course, to be counted and remarked upon as such, a place must be something more unlike its neighbors than a cell in a honeycomb. Not only because New York is so immense, but because it is so immensely diversified, are its places impossible to count. And as for knowing them all, Mr. Bunner, who was as wise in local lore as any one may hope to be, declared that no one may hope even to know the whole of the Bowery.

Early New York has bequeathed us no architectural relics, and colonial New York only

a few. Yet their spirit survives in the names of our down-town places, often in their shape and disposition, and sometimes, with modifications, even in their aspect and their uses.

I cannot tell you just how this has been effected, nor speak at all about the thousand other interesting places which have been wholly wiped off our map. I cannot venture into that fascinating region known as Old New York. My present commission bids me merely cruise for half an hour amid the places of modern New York, sketching their present coast-lines and contours. But I can heartily advise you to study elsewhere the chronicles of Old New York, for they are much richer in incidents dramatic and adventurous, patriotic, picturesque, singular, and amusing, than those of any other American town. And here, now, are two bits of good advice, to be digested before we look at a few characteristic places in modern New York.

This is the first one: Never say Manhattan Island when you mean the Island of Manhattan. The briefer term was properly applied in such a way that now it cannot be applied at all. The place that bore it is no longer discernible. Manhattan Island was a knoll about an acre in extent which lay near Corlaer's Hook, surrounded by marshes and partly submerged by high tides. Later on it became the center of a place which did us noble service, but again has been obliterated, save for the lingering nickname of «Drydock Village.» Here were built most of our ships in the days when no one could build them quite as well as we.

And this is the second lesson: Do not study our historic places in what you may think the logical way, beginning with their beginnings. If you do, you will often be sorely disappointed. So many New York places have been changed beyond the reconstructive power of the nimblest fancy that it is better to familiarize yourself with their present aspect, and then hunt up their histories. Thus you will protect yourself against the chill of disappointments, while securing innumerable chances to feel the pleasurable glow of surprise. Look, for example, at our pseudo-Egyptian Tombs and our pseudo-Italian Criminal Court-house, set up on second-rate commercial streets. It may pleasantly astonish you to find that they occupy the site of a once famous and very lovely lake. But if you read first of this lake, of its size and its fabulous depth, and the picturesqueness of its hilly and verdant shores; of the Indian who was murdered beside it in

the first Dutch governor's time, and the wars his murder provoked; of the rural amusements it afforded, winter and summer, to many generations of Manhattanese; of the good water with which it supplied them; of the park which only a hundred years ago was imagined about it, in the interests of real-estate values, but was never decreed because the place lay so far out of town; and of the triumphant spectacle it presented when John Fitch sent his little steamboat around and around it ten years before Fulton sent the *Clermont* up the Hudson River—if you read all this, and then discover that the Collect Pond cannot now be discovered at all, or traced or imagined or believed in, why, then you may say that you would rather read fictions which do not profess to be true.

II.

AMONG all the places in New York, which is the one that, putting thoughts of the past out of mind, best typifies to-day?

The center of the Brooklyn Bridge, you may suggest, where a miracle of modern science is stretched beneath our feet, while under our eyes lies the sweep of our all-creating harbor, and on the one hand the limitless panorama of the roofs of New York, on the other, apparently as limitless, the roofs of Brooklyn, New York's tributary twin.

Or you may declare that, as ours is the type of a commercial town, its typical place must be a place of trade; and if Wall street is too complicated to be looked upon as a single place, you may point to the Stock Exchange just around the corner, on the street which is still called Broad because it was made so to accommodate a Dutch-beloved canal.

The Stock Exchange is certainly the heart of the business life of New York. Yet there are stock exchanges in every big city in the world, and a generic likeness must pervade them. Something more distinctively American, more specifically local, we find in our towering office-buildings. There is nothing like these to be seen in Europe, and though they have spread all over America, and Chicago has taught us to build them in cleverer ways than we had found for ourselves, their birthplace was New York. They were inspired by that costliness of soil which has modified our lives and deeds in so many ways, and were made possible by the invention of the steam-elevator. Year by year they grow taller and taller, and, as rapidly growing in numbers, they are once more

entirely changing the countenance of New York. Many of its down-town streets now look less like streets than like cañons cut by patient rivers between stupendous cliffs fretted and carved by a hand as vigorous and ingenious, though hardly as artistic, as the hand of Nature herself. These, I think, are our most characteristic, our most typical places.

If you enter one of the largest and go up and down and around in it, you will see that it is not a mere house, but almost a town in itself. It nearly covers the space of an entire city block. Thirty-two elevators serve the persons and the wants of its denizens and their visitors, and they carry some forty thousand passengers each day. The great business concern which owns it fills a whole floor, with halls as big as churches, and regiments of clerks. On the other floors live many another big company, and many an individual doing a big business of this sort or of that; and their number will not amaze you as much as the luxury with which prosaic tasks of money-making now surround themselves. I wonder sometimes what my grandfather would have thought of it. No one in New York did business in a bigger way than he, sending his famous clipper-ships to encircle the world and traffic in a score of ports. Yet when my father began to «clerk» for him, the first of his duties was to sand his office floor; and I can remember how small and plain was this office, even at a much later day, with the bowsprits of vessels almost poking themselves in at the window as they lay along the border of South street.

The people who dwell in the typical office-building of to-day walk about on polished marble floors; the government has given them a post-office just for themselves; a big library and a restaurant exclusively serve the lawyers among them; another restaurant generously serves whomsoever may wish to eat; there are rows of shops in the huge, barrel-vaulted main hall; there are barbers' rooms and boot-blacks' rooms, and so forth and so on. You can almost believe that a man might live in this building, going forth only to sleep, and be supplied with pretty much everything he need desire, except the domestic affections, a church, and a theater. It seems rather surprising, indeed, that a missionary chapel has not been started in one of its corners, and a roof-garden for daytime performances up on the hilltop called its roof. But on this roof was till lately the bureau which breeds our weather for us, and

down in its underground stories, in the very entrails of the earth, you may confidently leave it your wealth to guard.

Truly, the steel-clad burrows of a great safe-deposit company look capacious enough to contain all the wealth of New York, and whether your share of it be large or small, your needs can be exactly met. You may hire a safe so little that a diamond necklace would almost fill it, or so big that it is a good-sized room, and its rent means the income of a good-sized fortune—seven thousand dollars or so per annum. Narrow lane after lane is walled by tiers of these safes, as streets are walled by house-fronts; there is a second story below the first, and there are other places where other things than gold and silver, precious papers, and jewels may be stored. There are rooms full of trunks, and I remember a big one with the sweat of steam glistening on its walls and ceilings, which was filled full and heaped and piled with bales of a shining cream-colored stuff—raw silk, costly and also perishable, needing to be kept perpetually moist lest it lose its pliability.

When in this treasure-house of uncountable riches we see marble floors which can be lifted by levers so that they lie against the bases of doors impregnable without them, and vents which can throw curtains of scalding steam down upon the head of any one who may try to tamper with them, it seems as though the days of Oriental magicians had returned, with conspicuous modern improvements. Of course there are rows and rows of little cabinets where Cæsar may handle his wealth very privately, and fine large waiting-rooms, too, all shut in by gates and bars and pass-words. «The ladies' waiting-room is a great convenience,» said the gray-coated guardian, one day. «When gentlemen bring their wives down town, and have business to do elsewhere, it's a nice place to leave them in.» So it is; but if it is much used for this purpose, I hope that its niceness, not its terrific security, determines the fact.

Of course almost all the labors sheltered by these architectural colossi die down as the day dies. Even early in the night they are empty and at rest, save for the few which harbor such craftsmen as dare make no difference between night and day. Chief among these exceptions are the homes of our morning newspapers. Here it is nearly midnight before the huge presses begin to rush and roar in concert, and human activity does not reach its most strenuous point until the small hours are striking.

Even on Sunday these newspaper buildings seem alive, and, with Trinity Church and the entrance to the Brooklyn Bridge, they are almost the only things in the business part of New York which do. Its streets have not the gloomy, plague-stricken look that the City's streets in London present on the Sabbath, our air and sky are so much more cheerful, and our buildings are so much less dimly monotonous in color and in form. Yet they are almost as empty as the City's streets, and therefore this time is to be recommended if you wish to study our down-town architecture. Should you go about on a week-day, staring, and stopping, and craning your neck to look at sky-scraping cornices, you might quickly gather a throng about you, wondering whether you had lost your wits, or whether, perhaps, some one else had set off a fire-balloon.

III.

YOU have heard so much of the costliness of the soil which underlies the places in New York that perhaps you may like to know what it really signifies, and how it has increased since the phenomenal development of our city began about eighty years ago.

Probably the most valuable spots on the face of the earth (as the burial-sites in Westminster Abbey cannot be bought with gold) are the four corners where Wall street touches Broad, and the two where it meets Broadway. I cannot guess how large a price any one of these might bring in the market now; but a million dollars and half a million more were recently paid for five lots on Broadway opposite Bowling Green. This was the value of the land alone, as the old buildings it bore were at once to be torn down; yet, says Philip Hone, a lot in just this place sold in 1829 for only \$19,500. As late as 1840 lots on Cortlandt street could be had for \$1000, or even for \$700. But a year or two ago the corner of Liberty street and Nassau, measuring 79 feet along the one, 112 along the other, and about 100 feet in depth, brought \$1,250,000, and this, again, for the sake of the land alone.

In 1836 Philip Hone regretfully moved from his dwelling-place at No. 235 Broadway. «I am turned out of doors,» he wrote. «Almost everybody down town is in the same predicament, for all the houses are to be converted into stores. We are tempted by prices so exorbitantly high that none can resist.» The price that tempted him was but \$60,000; yet it is not strange that he thought

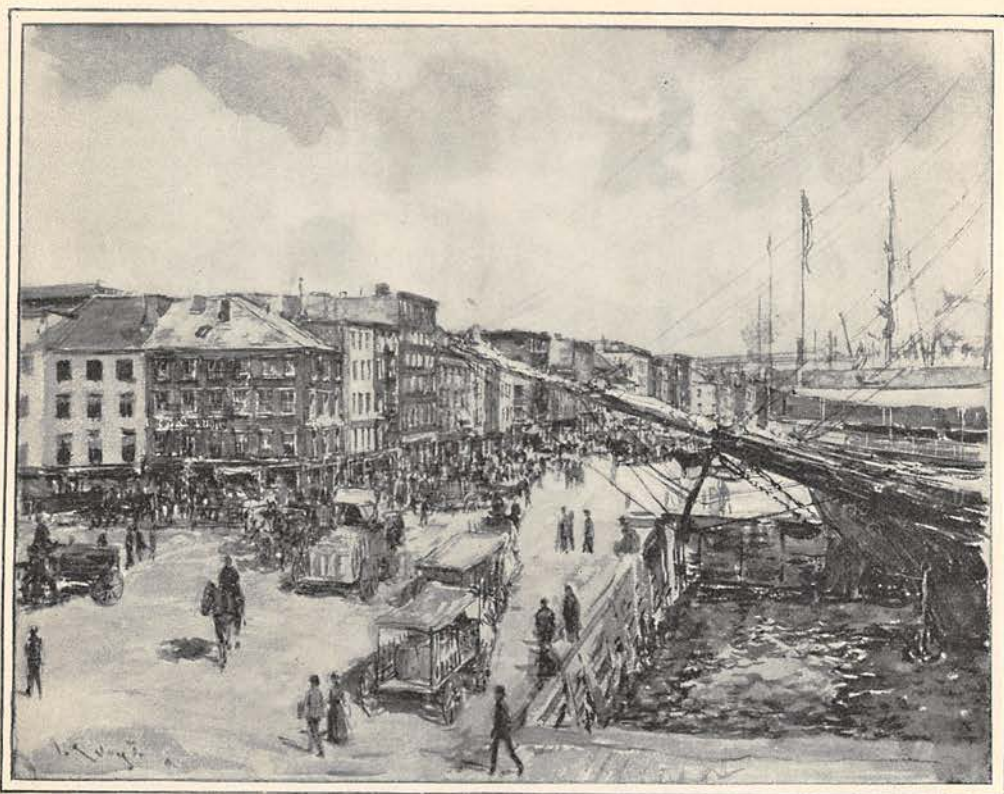


DRAWN BY F. H. LUNGREN.

A CITY CAÑON.

it high, for fifteen years before he had bought his dwelling-place, house and land together, for \$25,000. «Everything in New York,» he wrote again, «is at an exorbitant price. Lots two miles from City Hall are worth \$8000 or \$10,000.» And on the corner of Broadway and

Great Jones street he himself paid \$15,000 for a lot 29×130 feet as a site for his new home. When he was choosing it he walked about in this rather remote region with his friend Mr. Swan. The latter made his purchase on Lafayette Place, and I know



FROM A WATER-COLOR BY LOUIS C. VOGT.

SOUTH STREET AT THE FOOT OF WALL STREET.

very well what a big and comfortable house he built there, for one of the best-remembered tragedies of my childhood was the drowning of my doll in one of his bath-tubs by one of his grandsons. But need I say that its aspect is no longer the same? Lafayette Place, in its turn, has become a down-town and a business street, and Mr. Swan's almost suburban residence is now the see-house of the Episcopal diocese of New York.

Two miles from the City Hall? Very much farther away than this stands the new «Herald» building, where Broadway and Sixth Avenue intersect. In 1845 the city owned its site, and sold it for \$9930. The «Herald» now pays rent for it—for the land alone—at the rate of \$60,000 a year. At the same sale fifty years ago a corner lot on Fifth Avenue and Forty-second street brought \$1400, and in 1840 four hundred lots on Fifth Avenue above Twentieth street were sold at prices ranging from \$200 to \$400. Within twenty years some of these were resold for \$15,000 each, and you may guess their present worth for yourselves, remembering that business and business values have now moved into this region also.

Less than twenty years ago a much more northerly district, between Fifty-ninth and One Hundred and Tenth streets, west of Eighth Avenue, would have shown you little but rocks and puddles and predatory goats and boys. Now much more than half its surface is covered with buildings, all of a very good class, and their estimated cost has been \$170,000,000. Land up here is more precious than was land two miles from the City Hall in the days of Philip Hone. And it is just as easy now as then to grow greatly richer in New York if you are already rich enough to buy little bits of its soil and to hold on to them for a little while.

IV.

THERE are nearly six hundred places of Christian worship in New York, but they would not serve its needs very well were it a church-going town, for all together they can hardly seat more than three hundred thousand persons. None is as famous as Trinity Church, four times built afresh on its present site; and not long ago it was the most conspicuous object in the city's silhouette.

Now it is scarcely discernible from afar, for many worldly structures have been carried up in their full proportions almost as near to heaven as the 284 feet achieved by its diminishing spire; nay, in very recent days many have far outstripped this spire.

But Trinity's green graveyard keeps it from being crowded very closely by examples of «Chicago construction.» Seen near at hand, it does not look (as many a church looks elsewhere in New York) like a bonnet with a slim aigrette, set comfortably down in a bonnet-box. Beheld through the sloping cañon of Wall street, it still makes a charming and a dignified effect; and no other interior that I have seen in the New World so happily suggests the general aspect and the emotional atmosphere of an old English parish church. In fact, no one since Upjohn's day, half a century ago, has built us such good Gothic churches as he. There are two more on Fifth Avenue just above Washington Square, and another on University Place near by; and small and simple and brown though they be, they have much more beauty, and much more of the true Gothic feeling, than the big elaborate white cathedral on upper Fifth Avenue.

When you have seen all the grand and gorgeous and «exclusive» or semi-exclusive places of Christian worship in New York, perhaps you may like to get a glimpse of the humble but much more inclusive conditions under which some of its souls seek their salvation. If so, you cannot do better than visit St. Joachim's, down in one of the shabbiest, most populous streets of the lower East Side. Methodists sat in its respectable pews when this was a highly respectable «residence quarter.» Now they are filled by Italian Catholics, and its plain brick front is shouldered by the cheapest of grocery-stores and lodging-houses, amid a group of all-too-cheap saloons, with only a little cross on the roof to make you quite sure that it is a church indeed. Yet few in the city can be so largely frequented—nine thousand worshipers every week, we are told. And if the largest rag-shop, wholesale and retail, in the city occupies an entire floor beneath the raised floor of the church itself, who, we may ask, more sorely need some proof that heaven at least is no respecter of trades and grades than the rag-pickers of New York? They appreciate the hospitality that is shown them. On week-days, when scores of men and women and children are bringing in and sorting their endless bundles of rags, lifting them and shifting them with great cranes and chains,



DRAWN BY F. H. LUNGRÉN.

AN EAST-SIDE STREET.

their voices often join in the service that is going on overhead; and no one who wishes to profit by this service in the church itself is asked to leave the tools of even a dirty trade outside its doors. The true spirit of Christianity sends up sweet incense from St. Joachim's, mingled though it may be with the smell of garlic, of cast-off rags, and of those that still cling to unwashed humankind.

As for the Jews of Manhattan, who can count their places of worship, ranging from

the gorgeous synagogue which looks over Central Park, with its ugly but showy big gilded dome, to innumerable little ones hidden away in the grimy upper rooms of tenement-houses?

Then, our hospitals, homes, societies, nurseries, shelters,—the charitable, benevolent, reformatory institutions which, under public or private control, try to care for the bodies and souls of our poor and forsaken, our sick and aged and crippled, our criminals and moral weaklings, and our desolate children,—they are also counted by hundreds. Some of them are enormous places, «handling» thousands of «cases» each year; and some are modest corners where only a few afflicted mortals can be tenderly entreated. The work that they do is vast in amount, and much of it is beneficial beyond the fancy of the pessimist. But even the most radiant optimist knows that much must be wasted, for many of the methods of work are patently ill-inspired. Not yet have we learned on any large scale that real help means laboring with, not laboring for, those who need assistance. But this truth has at least been perceived. There are places in New York where it is being put in practice after admirable fashions. And some day, perhaps, our civic methods will be preventive as well as punitive, while the rich and «respectable» citizens of New York will bestow charity, not in the modernized meaning of the word, but in that true meaning which the pen of St. Paul so long ago underscored.

One of the teachings of St. Paul's kind of charity is that «doing good» to our poor means sharing with them those rational pleasures which cost much money from the public or the private purse. To be made better, they must be made happier. They need not only rest and instruction, but refreshment, renewal, inspiration; and this means that they need pleasure. The fact is proved by the literal meaning of the synonymous word *recreation*.

Therefore there are no places in New York more cheerful, to the prophetic eye of the soul at least, than the little parks recently opened on the East Side in spots until lately covered by teeming tenement-houses; and it is a cheering thought that their number will soon be increased. Exhilarating, too, on a bright spring day was the sight of a great room in the Hebrew Institute, where a loan collection of excellent pictures had been gathered from far up town for the free delighting of impecunious old and young. Old and young together, more than one hundred

and five thousand persons passed through the turnstile in the doorway of this room during the thirty-three days that it was open, not counting, I suppose, the many babies in arms, or the somewhat older infants who without stooping could run underneath the wheel. Conscientiously they appraised the pictures, making their hands into funnels before their eyes, after a fashion which is now out of date up town, but was still affected by elderly connoisseurs when I was a child. Accurately they knew which ones they liked, and eagerly they voted for the one that they liked best of all. A large majority of their votes was given to a picture of a mother sleeping with her babe; and in general it was sentiment, more than a sense for material beauty, that determined preferences. I cite this fact lest there be some who, disagreeing with St. Paul, doubt whether «good» is done our poor by affording them pleasures not definitely «moral,» «instructive,» or physically beneficial—who fail to see that the mere affording of innocent pleasures to people who have very few is its own sufficient excuse. Perhaps they may realize that «good» even of the strictly conventional sort must be done when pure and tender feelings that already exist are confirmed and fostered by the ministering hand of art. Send your best in the way of painting if ever you are asked to lend pictures for an East Side exhibition; but send your best in the way of sweet meanings and gentle sentiments as well. Nothing else is good enough to be shared with our poor.

V.

To see how some of our different nationalities and our different kinds of buildings are jumbled together, you may take a street-car at the western foot of Twenty-third street, and cross the town diagonally in a southward direction to the East River. For a while you will travel through Greenwich Village. Many writers have told about this part of New York because, at first an independent place, it preserved its local character long after it lost its autonomy. To-day its most distinctive traits are the crookedness of its quondam village streets, and a larger proportion of native American residents than is claimed by any other really poor quarter of New York.

When you have crossed Sixth Avenue and, rounding Washington Square, turn southward into West Broadway, and then eastward again into Spring street, you will see a more polyglot region. On the corner of the square is the Hotel Mazzini and Garibaldi;



DRAWN BY F. H. LUNGBEREN.

A MISTY NIGHT ON THE BATTERY.

the name of the *Restaurante del' Union* is loyal both to the old home and the new; and so are certain sign-boards of Italian wording which proclaim that only wines of Californian making are sold within. French restaurants are frequent, and the *St. Galler Hof* and the *Tyroler Hof* bid for Swiss and for Tyrolese patronage. *Produits français* are offered by a gentleman with an Italian name, and *charcuterie de Paris* competes with sausage-meats of German extraction. Truly American is a «*Temperance Coffee-house,*» elbowed by a «*Pool for Drinks*» announcement, and surrounded by soda-water fountains and appeals to partake of beer from Pilsen or Milwaukee, from Bohemia or Bavaria, from Jersey City or Vienna, as you may prefer. Wah Hing will wash your clothes in Chinese, and an *École Française Laïque* will teach your children in French if the public school is overcrowded and you do not approve of parochial instruction. Italian schools can also be discovered; more than one *Banca Italiana* will take charge of your money if, like many a new arrival, you have been informed that American savings-banks «*alway bust-a*»; and a *Pharmacie Française*, a *Farmacia Italiana*, and a *Deutsche Apotheke*, reduplicated on almost every block, will variously try to preserve you from the American patent medicines gaudily advertised in their despite.

All these humble places of sale are sandwiched in among shabby tenements, factories, and warehouses, while here and there a brand-new colossus shows that wholesale trade is creeping into this nondescript region, and that after a little its character will be entirely changed. And this prospect of change is what has made some of the tenement-houses in New York so vilely unfit for human habitation. What is the good of cleaning or repairing them if any day they may be sold simply to be torn down?

Cross the Bowery now, and you will enter the famous Tenth Ward—a true tenement-house district, forming part of the most crowded city quarter in all the world. As a whole, the city of New York below the Harlem River (the Island of Manhattan) is more densely peopled than any other city in the world, counting 143.2 persons to the acre, while Paris counts 125.2. Then one sixth of the entire population of all New York (reckoning now with the parts above the Harlem too) is concentrated upon 711 acres of ground. Here, on the lower East Side of our town, in the summer of 1894, there dwelt some 324,000 souls, averaging 476.6

to the acre; and a certain section of this great area—the Tenth Ward—showed a local acre-average of 626.26. The most thickly peopled spot in Europe is the Jew quarter in Prague; but it is only one fifth as large as our Tenth Ward, while it shows a density scarcely greater than that of the whole of the 711 acres in which the Tenth Ward is contained—485.4 per acre. Nor is this the worst that our 711 acres can reveal. Sanitary District A of the Eleventh Ward (bounded by Avenue B and Second street, Columbia, Rivington, and Clinton streets) contains 32 acres, and in the summer of 1894 each of them bore 986.4 human beings. This is the very thickest, blackest coagulation of humanity in all the known world. No European place of anything like the same size even approaches it, and its nearest rival is a part of Bombay where the average population over an area of 46.06 acres is 759.66.

Yet it should be remembered that, while our acres are thus more heavily burdened than any others, places can be found in European, as in Asiatic, towns where people are more uncomfortably crowded within doors. There the houses are low. But New York tenements are very lofty, and thus our floor-space to the acre is much more extensive. Moreover, although we are now more crowded than ever before, our sanitary state steadily improves. During the decade which closed with 1874 our death-rate was 30.27 per thousand; during the one which closed with 1894 it was 24.07.

God and the angels know, and the devil is quick to see, that there is room for improvement still in our tenement places, and not only room, but a bitter, crying, desperate need. But we are beginning to know it too, and to act upon our knowledge. And although it is hard to make New York look ahead at things which lie outside her money-making and pleasure-seeking routines, she does not often move backward once she has been impelled to set her shoulder solidly to any wheel.

VI.

THE Tenement-House Commission of 1894 taught much by the «*density maps*» from which I have just quoted, and much, again, by a big colored map that showed—contrasting the sanitary districts established by the Board of Health—in just what places in New York the people most numerous sent us from foreign lands have chiefly established themselves.

On this map our 403,784 Germans, our 399,-



DRAWN BY F. H. LUNGREN.

MUSIC NIGHT IN A HUNGARIAN CAFÉ.

348 Irish, and our 334,725 Americans are distinguished respectively by bands of red, green, and blue; and other colors represent our 80,235 Russians and Poles, our 54,334 Italians, our 25,674 negroes, our 16,239 French, our 12,287 Bohemians, and our 60,835

¹ The calculations upon which this ingenious map (drawn by Mr. Frederick E. Pierce) was based counted among our foreigners all persons born on our own soil of foreign mothers—the easiest way to reckon with a population as mixed as ours. For many purposes it is a very instructive way, yet it is not a veracious way if one

«foreigners of other nationalities,» leaving «unclassified» the 111,285 remaining persons who, when the census of 1890 was taken, completed the tale of 1,515,301 inhabitants of New York city.¹

Of course it was not possible to show on wants to appraise the real Americanism of New York. A foreign-born mother does not mean as much in regard to an American-born child as foreigners who have never seen America might think. In one of the most foreign parts of New York—in the heart of the Teath Ward—I taught last winter at the University Settlement a club

this nationality map all the places where the people of a given race may be found; there is too much mingling and mixing in New York for any approach to such precision as this. In each sanitary district only those colors appear (arranged in contrasted stripes) which represent the nationalities that help to compose the most homogeneous two thirds of its population, the relative width of the stripes being determined by the numerical relation of these dominant nationalities to one another.

For example, our most crowded spot—District A in Ward 11—is striped to show that Hungary has contributed to form the characteristic two thirds of its population, that Germany has contributed more largely, and also more largely (but collectively) those foreign lands to each of which the map-maker could not assign a special color of its own. The Irish, the Americans, the Russians and Poles, the negroes, Bohemians, Frenchmen, Italians, who may reside in this district are swamped, from the statistical point of view, by the Hungarians, the Germans, and the foreigners otherwise born or mothered.

Near by there is a district where Germans and Italians mingle on almost equal terms; another where Germans mingle with Americans but exceed them in numbers; and another where Germans again predominate, but Russians and Poles stand next on the list. Then, not far away, in Ward 17, is a district that is not striped at all, but covered by a single color; and in Ward 10 is another of the same sort except for a difference in the color. These are the only sanitary districts in New York where two thirds of the population belong to the same race; and in the former it is the German race, in the latter the Russo-Polish Hebrew race. Indeed, all over this East Side elbow of New York, between the Bowery and Corlaer's Hook, the Russo-Polish Hebrews are conspicuous, chiefly mixed with Germans or, near the river-front, with Irish or Americans. The Italians live mostly to the southwestward of them, between the Bowery and Broadway, in the Ninth and Eleventh Wards, and beyond Broadway in the Eighth.

We have more French people than Hungarians, and many more negroes; but the Hungarians herd together so that their color

is conspicuous in two districts of the Eleventh Ward, while the French and the darkies are scattered all over town. Not a single stripe, but only one small spot on the nationality map shows a dense little knot of Gallic people to the westward of Broadway above Madison Square; there are more of them here than on West Broadway, where to the superficial eye they seem so numerous. And only two narrow stripes show clusters of black folk: one near the Gallic spot, and one to the southwestward of Washington Square, within the borders of Greenwich Village. Then, right in the heart of the Italian region, just off the lower end of the Bowery, is another little spot, which marks the Chinese quarter—Mott street and Pell street—of which you have heard queer things, and which are also curious to see and singular to smell.

And our twelve thousand and more Bohemians? To find these you must go up town; they dwell chiefly by the East River opposite Blackwell's Island, between Sixtieth and Seventy-fifth streets. Here they have been fixed, with a considerable quantity of unspecified "other foreigners," by the location of the breweries, where, as we might suppose, their labor is in request. But, except for this small region, the nationality map declares that above the beginning of Central Park, New York is chiefly peopled by Americans, Germans, and Irish, with Americans in the majority.

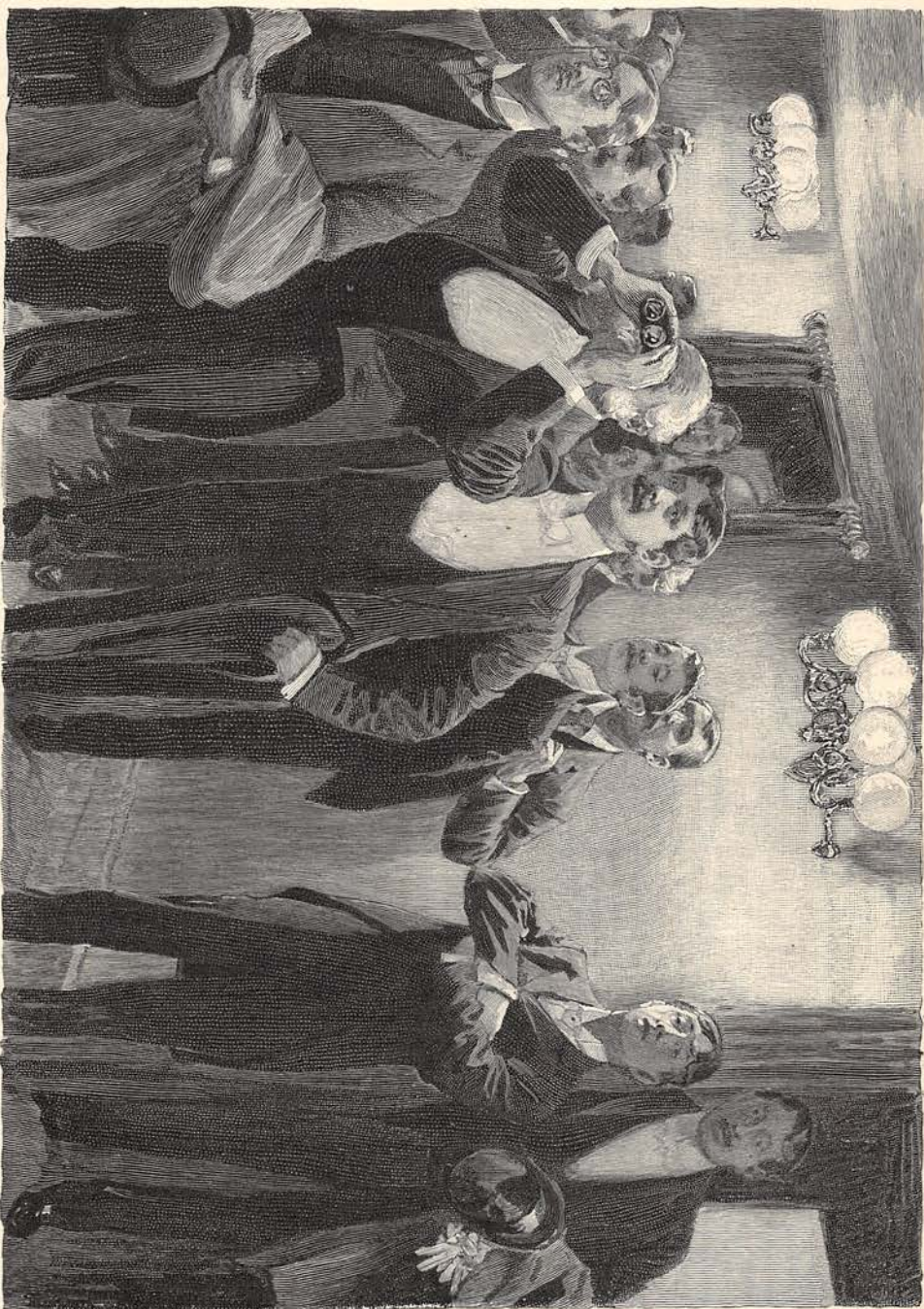
Look now at the seven successive sanitary districts which form a broad band through the very center of the map from Washington Square to Central Park, with Fifth Avenue as their axis. They are striped altogether in blue and green. A semi-American, semi-Irish quarter? Yes; but by no means in an East Side sense. This is the most thoroughly American quarter in New York, but also the richest. The green stripes stand for serving-men and -maids, quite as numerous as their masters, and mostly of Irish blood.

VII.

NOTHING could better reveal the heterogeneity of our people than a tour among our restaurants. There is scarcely a nation upon earth which has not eating-places of its own in New York, with its own viands and

of girls, fourteen or fifteen years of age, who were first-grade pupils in the neighboring public school. Not one of them, I think, could claim an American parent of either sex; yet in language, in manner, and in spirit they were all alike, and all as American as though their ancestors had lived here for a hundred years. German,

Polish, Russian, or English, Protestant, Catholic, or Hebrew, by immediate descent, they were all decidedly, distinctively, unmistakably of New York. And just like these young girls are many thousands and thousands of the so-called foreign girls and boys, men and women, of our town.



DRAWN BY E. ROTHMAYR.

“STANDING ROOM ONLY.”

ENGRAVED BY PETER ATTKEN.

drinks, its own chatter, its own customs and subsidiary recreations. Lodging-places, of course, do not so conspicuously vary. Yet you may lodge in New York after the manner of many countries; and certainly there is room for choice among the places of repose which are characteristically American. Down on the East Side or the West Side you may buy for five cents the right to sleep for a night, among tramps and «bummers,» on a dirty piece of canvas stretched between four posts. And as your fortunes mend you may do better and better, by the most gradual steps, until on upper Fifth Avenue you sup beneath tropical palm-trees to the sound of Hungarian music, and sleep upon carved couches under canopies of Parisian silk. How much you will have to pay if you insist upon getting, even for a night, the very best that places like this can offer, I am sure I do not know. But I can tell you how big the largest of our new hotels will be when the work which is to double its present size is finished: it will then be quite as big as a medieval cathedral of the very first rank.

Cosmoramaic, too, would be the scenes you would witness, Babel-like the tongues you would hear, could you mingle with all the clubs in New York. They vary from countless coteries and «lodges,» usually called by jocose or else by very ambitious names, which play an incalculable part—political or polemical, suggestive, educational, or argumentative, charitable, Terpsichorean, bacchanalian, or otherwise recreative—in the lives of our humblest folk, up to associations of our wealthiest, who, seeking club life with a view to reposeful social intercourse or else to organized athletic industry, house themselves in places as fine as the ones which bid for the custom of the plump-pocketed traveler. Even the most sumptuously ensconced among the latter class of New York clubs are by no means all composed of Americans. Some of them, as their titles confess, are formed by groups of foreigners; and they include groups of prosperous Hebrews, who must be the despair, or perhaps the inspiration, of their brother laboring in some sweat-shop down town.

And our theaters? The finest of these are much like fine theaters everywhere in the world, except that they are more comfortable, better ventilated, and better protected against accidents by fire than most of those in European cities. But visit our less aristocratic quarters, and the theaters will seem as strange as the people themselves. There are rows of them, big and little, along the

Bowery. With some exhibitions that it could not profit your morals, and some that it would disgust even your curiosity, to witness, they offer you others well worth contemplation. Here the variety-show (that supplanter of the old-time minstrel-show in the lighter dramatic affections of New York) may be seen at its worst; but also sometimes at its best, because, while its «acts» are good of their kind, you will not feel, as you must up town, that the audience ought to care more for acts of some other kind.

On the Bowery, again, you may fancy yourself your grandfather in his youth, witnessing a bloody and thunderous, yet poetic and virtuous, melodrama of the brave old type. More distinctive still is the modern drama of New York life, which tries above all to be up to date, reproducing To-day in its figures, its trivial happenings, its jests, its crimes, its tragedies, and its local fads and interests with a realism which may distress you less than that of a more artistic kind—a realism so unselfconscious that you would be foolish to judge it by the canons of art at all. The acting is bad? Perhaps; but you can hardly judge it if you have not known such people, walked amid such scenes, in life. And perhaps it is not so bad when, as often happens, a genuine thief or policeman, pugilist or green-goods man, or general all-round scamp, is doing over on the stage precisely those things which he has most frequently done in life. A great deal of art in writing and acting used to be shown us in the «local» plays at Mr. Harrigan's famous theater up town, now, alack! to be numbered among the places of the past; and it taught us something as regards the way in which the «other half» of New York lives and behaves. But its witness had to be accepted with grains of salt, like that of a cleverly humorous tale or poem. The witness of the typical Bowery drama of New York life may be taken in the same spirit as the voice of the newspaper, which likewise makes no pretense to be an artistic form of speech.

Almost as characteristic are the Bowery's German dramas, adapted to the soil of New York, but played in the language of German; and its Hebrew dramas, given sometimes in German and sometimes in Hebrew, or, at least, in Yiddish—in that jargon composed of bad German, bad Polish, and bad Hebrew, which, developed in central Europe, is now the dominant tongue in many of our East Side streets.

Once I witnessed a benefit performance for a Hebrew lodge of some sort, when not a

Gentile except ourselves sat in the very big and crowded Bowery play-house. We saw an Oriental operetta in which most of the characters spoke or sang comprehensible German, while the pronouncedly comic ones used Yiddish. I learned two interesting facts at this performance. I learned that we have never seen an Oriental drama really well

be thought more interesting than its public schools. Yet how many people in New York who do not send their own children to them have ever entered one of their doors?

Here, again, you might discover a noteworthy fact: whatever else may be well or ill taught in these schools, they are fruitful and potent nurseries of Americanism. The



FROM A WATER-COLOR BY JOHN A. FRASER.

A WINTER EVENING ON SIXTH AVENUE.

done up town, because we have never seen it done by Orientals, looking and moving and speaking and wearing their clothes as Orientals should. And I learned that when the Hebrew look, the Hebrew bearing, even the Hebrew methods of gesticulation and enunciation, are put before us in Oriental garb and setting, they no longer make a disagreeable effect upon Caucasian nerves. Once we cease to judge the Semite by Aryan standards, once he ceases to clothe himself in Aryan dress and deeds, the real beauty, the real distinction of his type makes itself apparent. You may discover this by traveling in the far East, but you may also discover it in certain places on the East Side of New York.

I ought not to feel obliged to say that, if one takes any interest in the future of our extraordinary town, none of its places should

good they do in this direction far outranks all that can be done by all other agencies and influences put together. This is the reason—not fear of any kind of religious instruction as such—why all New-Yorkers should earnestly try to keep the children of aliens out of «national» and parochial schools. Inevitably, by gathering all kinds of children together, the public school teaches that all men are brothers under our flag; and deliberately it teaches reverence for that flag. Unconsciously it breaks down the barriers which separate race from race, and so quickly that little children speak fluent English, and broken German or Italian, whose parents cannot speak English at all; and consciously it teaches a new patriotism to these children whom our census calls foreigners. As a result the foreign child is apt to be more American—more keenly aware and more proud

of the fact—than most of those who can trace back their Americanism for generations. Go to one of our public schools on the day before a national holiday, and you will see this flower of youthful patriotism spreading its petals very bravely; but go on any other day, and you will see the good seed that produces it being diligently sown.

VIII.

OUR most curiously peopled quarters and most singular individual streets; our parks; our great and glittering shops, and the pestiferous «sweat-shops» which so lamentably furnish some of them with wares; our ball-rooms, so cosmopolitanly conventional up town, where only Americans fill them, but down town so amusingly local, yet so national after the manner of a dozen different nations; our annual art exhibitions and our perennial waterside galleries of maritime living pictures; our museums and libraries; our police courts; our newer places up beyond Central Park; and those home interiors which, from the tenement-house to the abode of luxury, are, after all, the most important and significant places in any town—these are but a few of the many places in which I should like

to linger. And certainly I ought to show you how the evil sights and odors, and even the evil acts, of our most overcrowded quarters have been lessened by our new discovery that it is possible to clean their streets. But how can I do what I wish or what I ought when editors queerly maintain that the readers of magazines demand even more «variety» than the city of New York can show?

One thought, however, makes me half content to leave some of these places for the moment mute. This is the thought that there are two New Yorks—a winter and a summer town. They are very unlike, and in many ways the city of the summer is the more individual and interesting. It deserves at least one whole chapter to itself; and in that chapter all characteristic places which are roofed by the open sky may best be discussed. These include our parks and waterways, but also many of our streets. We have highways and byways less remarkable for the buildings that line them, or the life that is led within their walls, than for the multiform activities which their pavements show. And of course the life of the pavement is most lively at seasons when the open sky is the only roof that parboiled tenement-house humanity can endure.

M. G. Van Rensselaer.

THE BODY TO THE SOUL.

PURE spirit, pure and strangely beautiful,
What body fledst thou? Where in all this
dull,

Unlovely world was there such loveliness
That thou couldst wear it for thy fleshly
dress?

*Before this hour thou must have looked on me;
As men look on old friends I look on thee.*

It cannot be. Far-wandering music blown
From heaven thy voice is. In what garden
grown
Wert thou, too lovely blossom? in what
vale?

Who wert thou ere the flushing cheek fell
pale?

*The quick winds change, and change the fields
and sky.*

Look well; thou mayest know me by and by.

II.

What hate despatched thee out of hell
To mock me? Shapeless, smoky mass,
Thou hideous mist, I curse thee: pass!

*Time was when I was welcome to thy breast;
I knew it as the wild bird knows her nest.*

Thou liest! Never on that fell
The sight that took not instant blight.
Pass, pass! 'Go, blot upon God's light!

*Ay, through the portal whence this hour I stole;
Open thy breast to me, take back thy soul.*

John Vance Cheney.