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NEW YORK IN FICTION

"THE WALLS OF THE CHURCH DIMLY GLARING UNDER THE TREES BEYOND." — IRVING'S "LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW."

NEW YORK IN FICTION

By
ARTHUR BARTLETT MAURICE

ILLUSTRATED

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To MY SISTER

INTRODUCTORY

AS the years pass it is becoming generally understood that the great American novel, of which we have heard so much and for which we have been waiting so long, must be in every sense free from provincialism and localism. For instance, it cannot be distinctively a story of the Creoles of Louisiana, or of Georgia plantation life, or of the Crackers of North Carolina, or of the ranch, the mining-camp, the chaparral, or of the people of Maine, or of the people of Western New York. There must be a broad canvas: it must deal with the great common principles of our national life; its characters must be Americans, not Virginians or Texans or Kansans or Georgians. The many novels of recent

years which have been hailed as the great American novel — *King Noanett* and *Hugh Wynne* and, of late, *Richard Carvel* and *Janice Meredith* and *To Have and to Hold* — all have dealt with periods when American life was confined to a region that extended only a few hundred miles inland from the Atlantic coast. The vastness, the complexity of modern life, were absent. The Civil War is to all practical purposes a virgin literary field. The stories that we have had of it have been almost entirely tales of the battle-field, the camp, the bivouac, — all trumpet call and smoke and cannon glare; the life behind we have not seen, nor the wide and tremendous moral and geographical sweep of that struggle, nor its influence on homely destinies, on obscure lives. For instance, to take up a tale that is old and yet ever new, the marvel of *Vanity Fair* is in the manner in which Thackeray bound up the life of an insignificant little English girl, living quietly by Blooms-

bury Square, in the last fateful rush of the Imperial eagles. Indeed, an American novelist might do worse than boldly to take a few ideas from the Waterloo chapters and paint for us the rout of senators, congressmen, lobbyists, adventuresses — the pageant of frills and furbelows and champagne hampers moving out gaily from Washington to the battlefield of Bull Run, which was to be a spectacle, a sort of opera bouffe — with just enough of carnage and bloodshed to stimulate properly the emotions; then, later, the horror, the grim humour of that frenzied flight.

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Part One

OLD AND PROLETARIAN NEW YORK

New York in Fiction

Part One

I. THE NOVELISTS GEOGRAPHICALLY CONSIDERED

IT would be useless to attempt to treat the streets and haunts of any individual New York novelist as the London of Charles Dickens has been very often treated, as the London of Thackeray has been treated once or twice, notably in Mr. William H. Rideing's entertaining *Thackeray's London*, a book which, however, deals as much with the London in which Thackeray lived as the London of which Thackeray wrote; and as the Paris of Honoré de Balzac might be admirably treated by a Parisian who brought to the task an infinite patience, industry, and sympathy. In the first place, there is no writer sufficiently dominant. With a few notable exceptions, the novelists who have written of New

York life have made very little use of its local colour. Certain phases of its sociological life have been entirely ignored. The reader who spends very many hours with books of New York fiction often finds, after wading through a thick volume that at first sight seems as if it must be drenched with the spirit of the city, nothing beyond the information that some individual — usually of no vital importance to the narrative — lived, let us say, on West Thirty-seventh Street or somewhere on the East Side. A residence on West Thirty-seventh Street is quite meaningless, and the "East Side" is very vast and unsatisfying and noncommittal. The fault, however, does not lie entirely with the novelists.

It was in 1807 that the City Commissioners, with a curious disregard of what succeeding generations of New Yorkers might have to say in the matter, mapped out the entire island north of Waverley Place into squares. Then and there was

THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY

dealt a vital blow to the fiction that was to deal with the city's life. Since that time New York has undergone almost with every decade kaleidoscopic changes. Whole neighbourhoods have become obsolete. It is only of recent years that the traditions and the associations of the old town have had a meaning, that the streets have been more than mere thoroughfares. This change has been largely due to the revival of interest in the literature dealing with the subject, — to the letters of the late "Felix Oldboy," to Mr. Haswell's *Reminiscences of an Octogenarian*, to Mr. Thomas Janvier's *In Old New York*, and Mr. Dayton's *Last Days of Knickerbocker Life*. However, the poetic, the symbolic side is absent. New York has yet to be shown to us as living, feverish, incarnate.

Every American who has passed his ten days in the French capital knows or ought to know the Rue Racine, the Rue Balzac, the Boulevard Voltaire, the Rue

Alexandre Dumas, and so forth. The time must come when London and New York will be equally appreciative and realise the rich possibilities of national, literary, artistic, and musical figures in street nomenclature. The most superficial observer of American life must be impressed by the cheerless and monotonous sameness in the street names of smaller American cities and towns. The ubiquitous Main Street is probably the Americanisation of the very British High Street. Every town has its Poplar, Elm, Cherry, Maple Street or Avenue, all quite meaningless and absurd. There was a time when all rural hotels were Washingtons, Franklins, Jeffersons, — a sturdy patriotic form of nomenclature far preferable to the present flabby tendency toward Marlboroughs and Cavendishes and Wellingtons.

So it is very true and very pitiful that the great majority of the named New York streets have no significance what-

ever to the average New Yorker. He reads Cortlandt, Barclay, Reade, Rivington, or Great Jones on the lamp-post — that is all. On the other hand, the Parisian grocer knows that Rivoli and Austerlitz were great French battles, that Voltaire and Rabelais were great thinkers, that the street leading up to the Pantheon is named after the designer of that mausoleum of "*toutes les gloires de la France*." One thing in favour of naming streets after men of letters and artists is that these names are not likely to be affected by political changes. We find hugely ridiculous the strange succession of names that a Paris street has borne as France became Revolutionary, Royalist, Bonapartist, or Republican. We forget that New York once had a King Street, a Queen Street, a Crown Street, and a George Street. Time may come when this question will receive its proper consideration. We do not despair of seeing a Richard Harding Davis Alley some-

where between Fifth and Madison Avenue, or a court on the lower East Side named after Mr. Townsend or Mr. Stephen Crane. Chicago may thus immortalise her H. Chatfield-Chatfield Taylor, and Brooklyn, with characteristic discrimination and literary taste, will unquestionably vote the construction of a spacious and flowery Laura Jean Libbey Boulevard.

In the concluding chapter of *Le Père Goriot*, Balzac made Eugène de Rastignac declare war against Paris from the heights of the cemetery of Père Lachaise; Zola, standing with the Abbé Pierre on the sacred crest of Montmartre, sees the great city lying like a gigantic lizard in the sun; always a personified, capricious, changing Paris, now "a Paris of mystery, shrouded by clouds," "Paris which the divine sun had sown with light;" Tennyson is rapt in contemplation of the lights of London, lurid against the sky; it is impossible not to

feel the splendid significance of Thackeray's "great squares and streets of Vanity Fair;" Dickens, studying London from London Bridge, is submerged, swept out of himself, by its incarnate immensity and mystery. But Dickens's sweeps and orphans and beadles were English; the human dregs who people Balzac's books, or Eugène Sue's, or Guy de Maupassant's, or Émile Zola's are Frenchmen; whereas, between the New York novelist, who wishes to deal with proletarian types, and his subject there is usually the barrier of race. The novelists who have made the most of the city's streets as backgrounds are, as a rule, associated with certain quarters and phases of the metropolis. Thus, Richard Harding Davis, who during the last few years has in his books forsaken both New York and Philadelphia, his first love, for the shores of the Mediterranean and imaginary South American republics, wrote best of Fifth Avenue —

Fifth Avenue between Waverley Place and the Plaza — the frock-coated, top-hatted, five-o'clock-in-the-afternoon world which ignores the great stretch of the city that lies between Washington Square and Fulton Street; Henry Harland (Sidney Luska), in his earlier and more vigorous work (the work done at three o'clock in the morning with a wet towel bound around his head), delighted in quaint streets and houses of the upper East Side overlooking the river; Edgar Fawcett, in Squatter territory and in old Second Avenue; F. Hopkinson Smith, in that part of New York which lies near the clock tower of Jefferson Market, although he can also write very entertainingly of Washington Square and Gramercy Park and Staten Island; Edward W. Townsend, in Chinatown and Mulberry Bend; Abraham Cahan, in the Ghetto; Thomas Janvier, in West Ninth Street and Tompkins Square. It is the same with Bunner, with Marion Craw-

ford, with Howells, Henry James, Julian Ralph, Stephen Crane, Brander Matthews.

Among those men who seem so thoroughly enamoured of the city's history and traditions as to have been strongly moved by its rush and turmoil and perplexity, Bunner is unique. He once wrote somewhere:

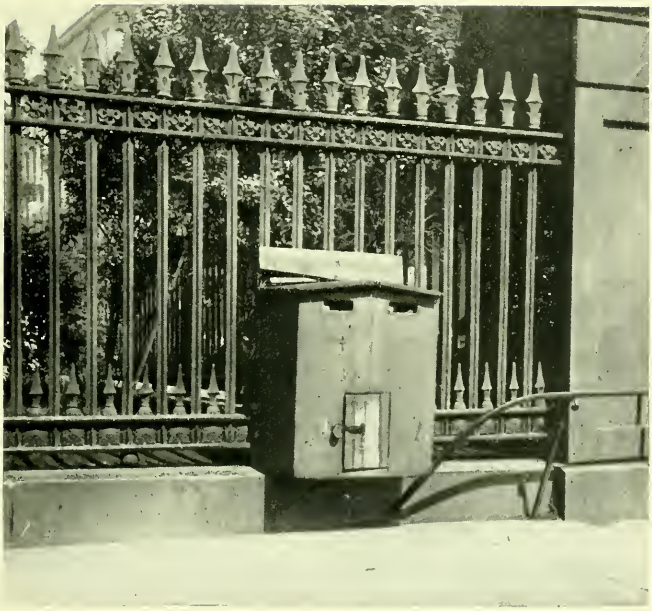
> "Why do I love New York, my dear?
> I do not know; were my father here,
> And *his*, and his, the three and I
> Might between us make you some reply."

His affection for the old town was very profound and sincere. He felt very keenly the significance of the phrase, "little old New York,"—a phrase which, though applied to a city that is not so very old and is certainly not little, is none the less sincere and sympathetic. In his books he makes us feel how much he would have liked to see the old beaux with their bell-crown hats ogling the crinolined ladies on lower Broadway of a spring or a summer afternoon. How

he pored over the old chronicles in the hope of seeing the ghosts of old vanities and follies and wickednesses rise up out of their graves and dance, smirk, and gibber again!

II. THE BATTERY — BOWLING GREEN — WALL STREET — BUNNER'S NEW YORK

Of the city of the poets and novelists of the first half of the century there is but little trace. The quaint homes of the people of Irving's *Knickerbocker History of New York* belong to the irrevocable past; the Broadway of which Paulding, Halleck, Willis, Drake, and Clarke, the "mad poet," sung, is very different from the Broadway of the closing years of the century. We can find the cottage at Fordham in which Poe lived, and follow Cooper's Harvey Birch through rapidly changing Westchester, but the New York of brick and stone belongs essentially to the work of the



"THE LITTLE RED BOX OF VESEY STREET." — BUNNER.

younger literary generation. Bunner seems to be equally at home in the old town, in Greenwich village, and about Washington Square. In one of his later poems he told us of the "Little Red Box of Vesey Street," and its part in the human comedy of New York life. The scenes of *The Midge* will be described later in this book; the houses and streets of the first part of *The Story of a New York House* belong to old New York. The house in which Jacob Dolph the elder lived during the first years of the century, and from the pillared balcony of which his family and friends looked out and down on the glinting waters of the bay, is one of the few noble structures that are left to us of the older city. Bunner's choice is easily understood. Even now the Mission of Our Lady of the Rosary, a home for Irish immigrant girls, No. 7 State Street, despite the incongruity of the neighbouring edifices, impresses one as having been in its day

the fitting mansion of a merchant prince of old Manhattan. The former grandeur of the locality is gone, the air shrill with the rush and clatter of the elevated trains, the clanging of cable bells, the rattle of heavily laden trucks; the surrounding streets are grimy and dirty, but the old house attracts and holds attention by its sedate dignity. The original builder, or the architect who designed it, probably changed his plans more than once in the course of building. It is supported by three tall rude columns of stone and stucco. The windows of the second story are thrown in shadow by the peculiar curve of the upper balcony. From the State Street sidewalk stone steps lead up to the entrance on both sides. Over the iron railing is the gilded cross of the Mission.[1]

[1] In 1804, which, according to Mr. Bunner's story, was the period of the occupancy of Jacob Dolph, the house was really tenanted by William Van Vredenburgh, who had served under Washington with the rank of Colonel. The Van Vredenburghs emigrated, not to Greenwich village, but

JACOB DOLPH'S HOUSE, NO. 7 STATE STREET. — BUNNER.

A few doors away, at No. 17 State Street, was the home of William Irving, Washington Irving's elder brother, and of J. K. Paulding, — a meeting place for the literary wits of the period. William Irving was the "Pindar Cockloft" of Salmagundi. Cockloft Hall itself, as De Wolfe in his *Literary Haunts* has pointed out, still stands on the banks of the Passaic. It was only a few hundred yards away by the water front of Battery Park that, half a century later, the Jacob Dolph who in 1807 was a little boy attending Mrs. Kilmaster's private school on Ann Street, fell to the ground with the apoplectic stroke that brought about his death. Mr. Howells writes of the Battery in *Their Wedding Journey* and in *A*

to the valley of the Mohawk, embarking for their journey in a sloop at the foot of Whitehall Street. Among the Onondaga Indians of the Mohawk, the erstwhile continental officer was known as "The Great Clear Sky." In a letter now before the present writer there are the words, "The great-granddaughter of the Colonel now sits opposite me, absorbed in the perusal of *A New York House*."

Hazard of New Fortunes; and Edmund Clarence Stedman is among the poets who have found in it poetical inspiration.

Retracing our steps across the Park, we leave State Street, turn into Whitehall Street, move northward past Bowling Green, where, on the site of one of the steamship offices that until a year ago lined the southern side of the triangle, Martin Krieger's tavern stood, and where the bruised and mutilated iron palings stand mute witnesses of patriotic scorn for the crest and features of King George. One of the scenes of Edgar Fawcett's *Romance of Old New York* — a prize story of a few years ago, but a story deserving more enduring fame than is accorded most prize stories — was laid in Bowling Green.

Jacob Dolph, to revert to Bunner's story, had a naïve belief in the city's future, and builded fine day-dreams of a New York that was to reach far beyond the City Hall, beyond Richmond Hill,

perhaps even as far as the Parade itself. He strenuously opposed the plan to have the north end of the new City Hall, which in 1807 was in the course of erection, constructed of cheap red stone, in the face of the popular belief that only a few suburbans would ever look down on it from above Chambers Street. In the first decade of the century the phrase "from the Battery to Bull's Head" was a fine and effective hyperbole. Part of a Bull's Head Tavern, though not the first, still stands on the northeast corner of Third Avenue and Twenty-fourth Street. When the Commissioners made the aforementioned map, Wall Street was already typical. The Stock Exchange had been in existence almost ten years, and the street which in the earlier colonial times had marked the northern boundary of the Dutch New Amsterdam, became almost immediately, to a certain extent, the pulse of the nation's finance. Since that time there has been no thoroughfare so

widely used and so roundly abused by the makers of New York fiction — scarcely one of them but at some time has taken his stand on the Broadway sidewalk in front of old Trinity and shouted his dismal denunciation. The heroes and heroines of American fiction very often achieve fabulous wealth through speculation; apparently worthless securities bought for a mere song and laid away in deposit vaults, or, better still, in old attic trunks or musty cupboards or woollen stockings, and forgotten, soar skyward on the Pindaric wings of romance; but Wall Street in the guise of the Fairy Godmother somehow never gets its due. This is the significant distinction, that in fiction fortune comes to men and women through "lucky speculation," ruin through Wall Street.

Leaving for a minute the men and women of Bunner's story, the vicinity conjures up the people of Charles Dudley Warner's *Golden House;* the Brights,

HOME OF THE LAUDERDALES. — F. MARION CRAWFORD'S "KATHERINE LAUDERDALE" AND "THE RALSTONS."

Bemans, Lauderdales, Ralstons of Marion Crawford's novels of New York life; the hero of Thomas Janvier's *At the Casa Napoleon*, who day after day took his stand at the southwest corner of Broad and Wall streets to study idly the great statue of Washington on the stone steps of the Sub-Treasury, and build fine day-dreams of the three thousand dollar clerkship that never seem to come true. Joris Van Heemskirk, of whom Mrs. Barr tells us in *The Bow of Orange Ribbon*, was an important figure in the Wall Street of 1765. A two-storied house at the lower end of Pearl Street was the home of Jacob Cohen and his granddaughter Miriam. The Kalchook, or Kalch Hoek, where Captain Hyde and Neil Semple fought their duel, was a hill of considerable elevation, to the west of the present line of Broadway. Its southern boundary was about Warren Street, its northern boundary about Canal. The district lying at its base was a fever-

breeding marsh until drained by Anthony Rutgers. Afterward it was known as Lispenard Meadows, from Rutgers's daughter, Mrs. Lispenard. The little lake or pond at its foot was called first Kalk-Hook, and afterward became known as the Collect Pond. The corner of Broadway and Franklin Street marks what was then the summit of the Kalchook Hill. The slope is still perceptible. In her recently published *The Maid of Maiden Lane* Mrs. Barr treats practically of the same quarters of the city. The speculations that swept away all that was left of the once great Dolph family estate in the panic of 1873 were conducted in an office on William Street, near where the Cotton Exchange now stands. On Front Street was the wholesale grocery firm, "Files and Nelson," of which Thomas Bailey Aldrich has written in *My Cousin the Colonel*. The ship-chandlering firm of Abram Van Riper and Son, whence Eustace Dolph

fled a forger, and where the delightful Mr. Daw, a very Dickensy creation, once tried a rolled-top desk and a revolving chair to his alarm and discomfiture, was on Water Street. Of Mrs. Kilmaster's private school on Ann Street, attended by Jacob Dolph the second, or of the Van Riper mansion on Pine Street, opposite the great Burril House, of course no traces remain. Ray, the hero of William Dean Howells's *World of Chance*, coming to seek his fortune in New York, noted first, from the deck of the North River ferryboat, "the mean, ugly fronts and roofs of the buildings beyond, and hulking high overhead in farther distance in vast bulks and clumsy towers the masses of those ten-story edifices which are the necessity of commerce and the despair of art."

The men who figure in the first part of *The Story of a New York House* were in the habit of meeting to discuss trade and politics in the barber-shop of one

Huggins. This shop was on the northeast corner of Broadway and Wall Street, the site now occupied by the United Bank Building, a structure which has been in existence less than thirty years. In one of the old office buildings that formerly occupied the same site was Ugly Hall, the headquarters of the Ugly Club, a literary organization of which Halleck was a leading member. The entrance to Huggins's barber-shop was about on the spot now marked by the first Broadway door of the bank building. Before the yellow-fever plague of 1822, the fashionable residence quarter of the city was about Bowling Green, Water, Pearl, Beaver, Broad, Whitehall streets and the lower end of Broadway. Merchants, shopkeepers, lawyers, as a rule, resided over their offices and stores. Mr. Charles H. Haswell, in his *Reminiscences of an Octogenarian in the City of New York*, speaks of the "Dutch-designed and Dutch-built houses," with sharply

pitched roofs and gable ends to the street, that were at that day remaining in Broad Street. This street by night has been very effectively described by Mr. Julius Chambers in *On a Margin*. The plague drove people to the open fields that lay between the city proper and Greenwich village. One night during this period, when the sky was red with the light of the tar barrels that were being burned in Ann Street, Mrs. Jacob Dolph was buried in the churchyard of St. Paul's. In Chambers Street, opposite the north end of City Hall, was, in 1820, the office of the Chief of Police, where Allan Dale (Admiral Porter's *Allan Dale and Robert le Diable*) made his first appearance on the stage of that story. Farther up Broadway, in an office building near Worth Street, was the one-room law office of Peter — afterward the Honourable Peter — Stirling. At the Duane Street corner, adjoining the grounds of the New York Hospital, was

the cigar-store of John Anderson, which Edgar Allan Poe's story of *The Mystery of Marie Roget* assured a permanent place among the scenes of New York fiction.

III. PARK ROW IN FICTION

PARK ROW in fiction has a twofold significance and interest. In the first place, the Row and the adjacent streets are hallowed by the literary and histrionic memories of the past. Here, where the new Park Row Syndicate Building stands, was the old Park Theatre, the scene of the triumphs of Edmund Kean, Sinclair, Cooke, Young, Charles Kemble, Tyrone Power, Ellen Tree, Fanny Kemble, Emma Wheatley, Clara Fisher, Junius Brutus Booth, J. W. Wallack, John and Charles Mason, Charlotte Cushman. These pavements were trod by Irving, Poe, Halleck, Cozzens, Du Chaillu, "Harry Franco," Brougham, Hoffman, Morris; and Clark passed many a night

PRINTING HOUSE SQUARE AND PARK ROW.

on the benches in the Park opposite. Later, it has belonged to Edmund Clarence Stedman, George William Curtis, William Curtis, William Dean Howells, Richard Henry Stoddard and to the young and middle-aged poets and novelists of the present day. In the second place, as a background, as a part, a phase, of the Human Comedy of New York life, it is beginning to have a meaning. True, we have had nothing descriptive of the life comparable to Balzac's analytic and terrible arraignment of Paris journalism in *Illusions Perdues*, or even to the chapters dealing with the life of Fleet Street and the Fleet Prison in *Pendennis*. The stories of Park Row life have not gone very far below the surface, but two or three young newspaper men and at least one newspaper woman have written very cleverly and entertainingly of "beats" and "sticks" and "copy-readers" and "cub reporters" and "star" men. Then, too, there are the "lady novelists," to

whom the Row is as useful as it is vague, who find it a well of local colour, although it might not be polite to question them too closely as to the whereabouts of Ann or Beekman or Spruce or Franklin streets. The "journalist" — he is never a mere newspaper man — of this sort of fiction is forever stalking criminals, scenting out big news, talking in rather flabby epigram, or making violent love. He is usually dashing off editorials that make statesmen "sit up," and when he writes "stories," they are never less than a column in length and are inevitably found the next morning under big black headlines at the beginning of the first page. He lives in Bohemia, a neighbourhood of which most city editors, who are supposed to know a good deal about everything pertaining to the city's streets and corners, will profess entire ignorance. In short, the journalist of this type is very beautiful and well groomed, but it must be confessed he is

considerably different from the practical newspaper man of real life. And it is with the latter that the present writer has to do.

THE CITY EDITOR'S DESK. — J. L. WILLIAMS'S "THE CITY EDITOR'S CONSCIENCE."

If, as you go up the Row, you will turn in at the dark doorway of No. 29, and mount three pairs of stairs, you will find the long, grimy one-room newspaper office which was the scene of Jesse Lynch

Williams's story of "The City Editor's Conscience." In *The Bookman* for June, 1899, Maguire, who got the gold watch and chain, and of whom Henderson said in his speech that he was "about the squarest city editor in Park Row, even if he did flare up occasionally and get red in the face," was identified as "Jerry" Donnelly. It may be of interest to add that the real name of the telegraph editor mentioned in the opening sentence of the story is Clark; that Brown, who was sent to the telephone to take from the Police Headquarters man, Wintringer (who in real life is Watson Sands), the story of a "bull that has broken loose on its way to a slaughter-house uptown, and been terrorising people on Fifty-ninth Street, near the river," is Albert M. Chapman; that the cub reporter who was sent out on the ferry accident assignment is John E. Weier. The appearance of the office is changed but very little since the time of the story.

Farther up the Row, the *Sun* building, at the corner of Nassau and Frankfort streets, is the scene of "The Stolen Story." Here worked Hamilton Knox, the cub reporter who found it easier to write his facts and then make them; and Rufus Carrington, who beat all the older men from the other papers on the "Great Secretary of State Interview;" and Townsend's Philip Peyton and Terence Lynn and T. Fitzgerald Lyon and that pathetic figure Tommy Nod; while just over the way is the office of the *Earth*, where Billy Woods was employed for a few eventful hours after being discharged by the *Day*. In the Park opposite, Colonel Peter Stirling's regiment was quartered during the riots described in Paul Leicester Ford's book. It was there that took place the bomb explosion which killed Podds. Over on the Park Row sidewalk Peter Stirling was found sleeping with his head pillowed on a roll of newspapers by Leonore and Watts D'Alloi.

After laying aside Jesse Lynch Williams's stories of newspaper life, one very naturally turns to Miss Elizabeth Jordan's admirable *Tales of the City Room*. With one exception all the stories which make up Miss Jordan's books had the office of the *New York World* for background. The author was with that newspaper for ten years, doing editorial work in various departments. Many of the stories are entirely true. For instance, one of the strongest of all, "Miss Van Dyke's Best Story," which told of a shy, demure young newspaper woman who, inspired by the sheer horror and novelty of the thing, wrote a most wonderful and unfortunate description of the hideousness of an election night in the Tenderloin district, really happened just as was told, with the exception of the love incident at the end. The heroine is a young lady now on the staff of the *Journal*. "'Chesterfield, Junior,'" says Miss Jordan, "is a live small boy who looked very

MONKEY HILL.

like the description I gave of him, and whose manners were a delight to the entire staff. He is still at work, and is now wrestling with an ambition to be a managing editor some day."

A rather striking recent book that is closely linked with this part of New York is Mr. Irving Bachelor's *Eben Holden*, of which several very graphic chapters treat of the old Tribune office in the days of Horace Greeley. In finding for his hero a home in New York, Mr. Bachelor has preserved in fiction one of the quaintest of all its quaint corners. The Monkey Hill of the period of the story was at a point which is now overshadowed by one of the arches of the Brooklyn Bridge. It has to-day a practical existence, but its identity has long been lost. At the time of the outbreak of the War of Secession, there were some neat and cleanly looking houses on it of wood and brick and brownstone, inhabited by small tradesmen; a few shops,

a big stable, and the chalet sitting on a broad, flat roof that covered a portion of the stable yard. The yard itself was the summit of Monkey Hill. It lay between two brick buildings and up the hill from the walk, one looking into the gloomy cavern of the stable; and under the low roof, on one side, there were dump-carts and old coaches in varying stages of infirmity. "There was an old iron shop, that stood flush with the sidewalk, flanking the stable yard. A lantern and a mammoth key were suspended above the door, and hanging upon the side of the shop was a wooden stair ascending to the chalet. The latter had a sheathing of weather-worn clapboards. It stood on the rear end of the brick building, communicating with the front rooms above the shop. A little stair of five steps ascended from the landing to its red door that overlooked an ample yard of roofing, adorned with potted plants. The main room of the chalet had the look of a

ship's cabin. There were stationary seats along the wall covered with leathern cushions. There were port and starboard lanterns, and a big one of polished brass that overhung the table. A ship's clock that had a noisy and cheerful tick was set in the wall. A narrow passage led to the room in front, and the latter had slanting sides. A big window of little panes, in its further end, let in the light of William Street.

IV. THE POLITICIAN AS LITERARY MATERIAL

VERY recently a breezy Western statesman gave out unsolicited the interesting information that he had decided to write a novel. When asked if he had in mind any definite theme, he replied that he guessed that the book would treat of political life. Thereupon the newspaper paragrapher waxed exceedingly merry at his expense, and the daily reader snickered and mentally added the statesman

in question to the already long list of jokes which arise out of the political incongruities of the West, — the Boy Orators and the Sockless ones. We wish stoutly to maintain our possession of a sense of the humorous and our appreciation of the little ironies of life. We acknowledge that we are not building any high hopes in regard to this promised literary effort, and will cheerfully leave to the press of Xenia, Ohio, Joliet, Illinois, and Mapleton, North Dakota, the task of heralding it as the Great American novel; but beyond this we must profess ourselves totally unable to appreciate the humour which is provoked by the mere suggestions of politics as a theme for literary treatment; also the whole incident is so very significant. The manner in which the machinery of politics has been ignored in the attempts of fiction to portray American life as it is, is certainly one of the most curious anomalies of our national literature.

To measure with any degree of accuracy the reasons for this neglect of a subject which, above all others, would seem to be vitally linked with the very fibres of American life, one can get nothing very convincing from merely looking at the conditions which prevail to-day; one must go back and look into the literary tastes which prevailed during the first half of the century and the years which immediately preceded and immediately followed the War of Secession. If we except a few of the great names—Poe, Hawthorne, Irving, Cooper, and their peers—one may say without being in the least unpatriotic that the general tendency of our literature was to be decried rather than applauded. The school of which N. P. Willis in his day was so striking a type was one which threatened seriously to retard the scheme of evolution which one may say now with considerable confidence will ultimately give us a great national literature. The

fiction which was so popular a quarter of a century ago was utterly bad in that it preached false ideals and a certain false gentility. It was written in response to a demand; on the other hand, it did a great deal toward fostering this demand and fettering alike the writer and the reader.

Probably there is no book which better represents this type than Mrs. Augusta J. Evans Wilson's *St. Elmo*. Its hero was certainly the prize stock hero of his time, the real and indisputable ancestor of the Richard Harding Davis hero when that writer is at his worst. Taken apart, St. Elmo Murray was rather a flabby sort of poor creature, but when standing in full make-up under the glare of the lime-light, he was a positive triumph of sardonic *insouciance*. What dreadful oaths he swore and how amazingly genteelly he swore them! What a tremendous amount of rag-bag information the fellow had at his fingers' ends! The most

commonplace remark apropos of the most trivial incident of every-day life, and, presto, he was off, scampering through Egyptian mythology, playing ducks and drakes with the legends of the Scandinavian Eddas, bawling his Promethean "Ai!" over very un-Promethean woes. It is doubtful whether there was very much harm in the acceptance by the millions of readers of the high-school type of this twaddle as real scholarship. Very likely there were some who were in a measure benefited and refined by reading all this ill-digested information. Only, the whole thing served to obscure for a time from American writers and the American reading public the real field of literary labour.

To point out how distinctively characteristic of American literature alone is the neglect of the politician as literary material, it is not necessary pedantically to go back to the comedies of Aristophanes; one need only look to French

and English fiction in the present century. Take the names which come most readily to the mind — Dickens and Thackeray and Bulwer Lytton and Balzac and Victor Hugo. Eliminate from the *Comédie Humaine* the politician and the business and chicanery of politics, and how inadequate and incomplete the whole structure would seem! Take from *Little Dorrit* the Tite-Barnacles, or from *Oliver Twist* Police Justice Fang, or from *The Pickwick Papers* the election scenes, and Dickens would not be what he is. What lover of Thackeray would be content to give up the contest between Sir Barnes Newcome and his uncle, and the figure of the sturdy old colonel brandishing his stick and crying for "fair play" before the hostelry of the King's Arms?

A book was recently published which bears forcibly on the subject of the present article. It is called *Thirty Years in New York Politics*, and was written by

Matthew P. Breen, a former member of the legislature. It is from a literary standpoint in many respects disappointing. The reader will find in it neither style nor form. It cannot boast even good type or good paper or good binding; and yet it is a book which if once taken up by the New Yorker who has any interest in his city and its complex history should be read from cover to cover. That the author realised to the slightest degree the remarkable dramatic material contained in these pages is very much to be doubted. And yet this story of the men and events connected with the political administration of New York City since the close of the War of Secession contains dramatic elements for a series of novels which, one may say without the slightest exaggeration, might be made to surpass anything which Balzac gave us in his *Scenes from Political Life*. Where is the romancer who would dare to build out of sheer imagination any-

thing to compare with the tremendous complications of the Tweed ring, the trials of the arch boss and his escape, his concealment in the woods near Weehawken, his flight to Spain, and his final capture. Take as the basis for fiction a few of the characters which figure in these pages, — John Morrissey, Harry Genet, Oakey Hall, Peter B. Sweeny, "Slippery Dick" Connolly, the Judges Barnard and Cardozo. What romance of human invention could be more complete than that of which the greater part was played out in the house in West Twenty-third Street, where Josephine Mansfield received Fisk and Stokes? And yet of the books which have in recent years enjoyed wide popularity, we can recall but one, Mr. Ford's *The Honourable Peter Stirling*, which has made use of this side of American life. By virtue of this alone, *The Honourable Peter Stirling*, which, judged purely as a literary production, is mediocre, which is

very long-winded, which is in parts rather vapid and meaningless, rises to the dignity of being almost a great novel.

It is related of ex-Mayor Gilroy that he read *Peter Stirling* during an ocean voyage from England to this country, and that after his arrival, when seated among his friends one evening, he took up the book and pointed with his finger to the different parts which treated of politics, emphasising the gesture with the forcible and eloquent words, "Isn't it all damn so?" Than this Mr. Ford could ask no higher praise. Another very typical case is that of a former New Jersey county clerk, who confesses that during the last three or four years he has been reading *The Honourable Peter Stirling* through on an average of once every three months. He has been a lifelong politician. The primary is his workshop. The devices, the trickeries, the stratagems of politics, are to him the tarts of the pastry-cook, only in this case they

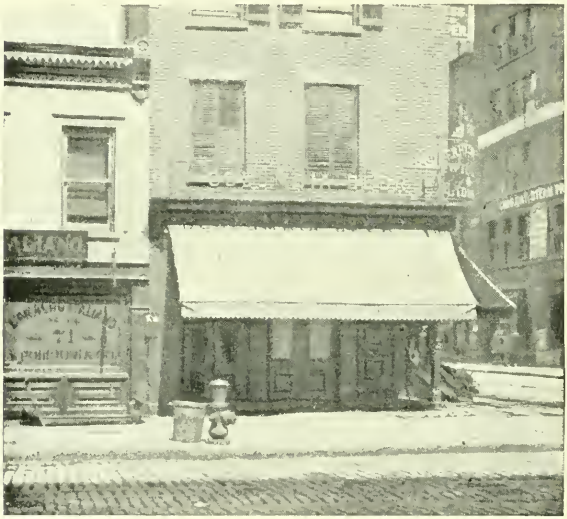
have in no wise lost their crispness and flavour. He is not a bookish man, and lighter fiction does not appeal to him. A man on the highroad to fifty cannot forever be snivelling over the woes of Rudolph and the lamentations of Regina; he is one of a class seriously to be reckoned with; and to one who has a sturdy belief in the future of American literature his simple but eloquent preference for a book which commands attention only as striking into a very vital phase of life which has hitherto been deemed beneath literary treatment is infinitely more significant than the applause of high-school sentimentalists or the cackling of the "Culture Clubs."

At the angle made by the running together of Worth and Park Streets is, as any one with the slightest pretension to an acquaintance with New York knows, the little triangular park that marks the site of what was once the Five Points. It was there, about 1874, that Peter Stir-

"A LITTLE PARK, TOO SMALL TO BE CALLED A SQUARE, EVEN IF ITS SHAPE HAD NOT BEEN A TRIANGLE." — FORD'S "THE HONOURABLE PETER STIRLING."

ling made friends with the tenement-house children and took the first step toward the achievement of his career. The park lies directly to the east of the Broadway building in which he had his office. "It had no right to be there, for the land was wanted for business purposes, but the hollow on which it was built had been a swamp in the old days, and the soft land, and perhaps the unhealthiness, had prevented the erection of great warehouses and stores, which almost surrounded it. So it had been left to the storage of human souls, instead of merchandise, for valuable goods need careful housing, while any place serves to pack humanity." While there remains much to remind us of the conditions of twenty-five years ago, the comparatively recent construction of the greater park, only a stone's throw distant, has done a great deal toward the reclamation of the quarter. A few hundred yards to the west of this little

park we find on Centre Street the saloon of Dennis Moriarty, Peter's staunch friend and political henchman.



SALOON OF DENNIS MORIARTY.

When Edward W. Townsend was a reporter on the New York *Sun*, he was one day sent out on a "story" which took him to the offices of a fossilised company with a nine-worded name.

Two or three antiquated clerks sat about on high stools, poring over musty ledgers,

THE NIANTIC, EXCHANGE PLACE. — TOWNSEND'S "A DAUGHTER OF THE TENEMENTS."

and the business atmosphere was that of the sixth rather than the last decade of

the century. These offices were in No. 51 Exchange Place, between Broad and William streets, and that structure plays a conspicuous part in *A Daughter of the Tenements* under the name of the Niantic. It was there that Dan Lyon, the "Lord of Mulberry Court," was janitor, that Mark Waters schemed, and that the Chinaman Chung stole the papers that he afterward concealed in the sole of his shoe. No. 51 is on the north side of the street, next to the Mills Building. It is five stories in height; it has an elevator — a startling concession to modernity in the buildings that line Exchange Place. At every story iron balconies jut out over the sidewalk and grooved gray columns run up along the front of the main office. There is a barber shop in the basement. In the book the Niantic was characterised as "one of the old-fashioned five-story granite office buildings, where commercial aristocracy transacts its business affairs in the same manner as when the

tenants of the building lived on Park Place or Barclay Street or thereabouts, and took drives to the homes of that venturesome colony of other aristocrats who had located out of the country as far uptown as Washington Square."

V. THE EAST SIDE — CASE'S AND THE BIG BARRACKS TENEMENTS — "CAT ALLEY" — THE GHETTO — MULBERRY BEND AND CHINATOWN

On the south side of Hester Street, about fifty yards west of the Bowery, is Case's Tenement, where the disreputable Mr. Raegan lay in hiding after his fatal fight with Pike McGonegal at the end of Wakeman's Dock on the East River front, and which is spoken of in many of Richard Harding Davis's earlier stories. It is a very dirty and dilapidated structure, — broken panes of glass, twisted railings, glaring discolourations. There is a Chinese laundry on the main floor. Nine

or ten years ago Mr. Davis, who was then a reporter on the *Evening Sun*, was one

CASE'S TENEMENT, HESTER STREET. — RICHARD HARDING DAVIS.

day sent up to this place to "cover" the story of a greengoods game that was supposed to be running there under the supervision of a man named Perceval. Mr. Perceval was found, but refused to believe in the sincerity of his visitor as a "come-on," and the interview ended by Mr. Davis beating a very hasty and undignified retreat. Later, the author of Van Bibber met the messenger boy, who acted as trailer for the greengoods man, and offered him ten dollars for information as to the exact nature of his employer's business, the boy proving incorruptible. The incident was elaborated in the story of "The Trailer of Room No. 8."

The Big Barracks Tenement, the scene of the majority of the stories in Julian Ralph's *People We Pass*, is a great yellow brick structure on the west side of Forsythe Street, near the northern end. The Big Barracks was the home of Dr. Whitfield and his daughter, Mrs. Eric-

son, "Petey" and Nora Burke, and the scene of "The Lineman's Wedding," arranged and reported by Mr. "Barny" Kelley of the *Daily Camera*. Allusion is also due to the stories of "Love in the Big Barracks," probably the truest and strongest tale of all in *People We Pass*, and "The Mother Song," with its touching pathos and quaint humour. Speaking of these stories, Mr. Ralph, in a recent letter to the present writer, says: "In truth, like so many other things of the kind, my stories grew out of many pieces. First I adopted the name of the house because of the brutal and insulting name, 'The Big Flat,' I saw on a double-decker tenement in lower Mott or Baxter Street. Next I described the house with which I was familiar — or a type of tenement found elsewhere. Finally I chose Forsythe Street, because I knew more tenement folks there than elsewhere, knew them better, and thought that the mixture of races and worldly conditions

"BIG BARRACKS" TENEMENT, FORSYTHE STREET. — JULIAN RALPH'S "PEOPLE WE PASS."

offered as much scope for stories as I could get from any other quarter. Innumerable as were the kinds and points at which I touched these tenement people in my reporting experience, it was only here that I was received in their clubs or societies, at their dances and on their picnics, on a basis of complete friendliness and frankness. In other words, *I looked on* in other tenement districts, but in this one *I took part*. And here I found at least one lay employer of skilled labour living in old-world fraternity with his employés and their families, as well as an unusual number of well-to-do and more than ordinarily respectable tavern and shop keepers. It's all a thing of the past. A very few years ago I went back and tried to resurrect the old conditions, but they were buried and their spirit had moved uptown."

The streets in this vicinity are also the streets of Abraham Cahan's stories of Ghetto life, which will be treated more

closely hereafter. In Ludlow Street was the home of Lena (Edward W. Townsend's "By Whom the Offence Cometh"), before she went to live with Bat the pickpocket. One of the dim alleys that lead back from Rivington Street was used by Charles Dudley Warner in *The Golden House;* it was also in Rivington Street that Van Bibber thrashed the toughs with a scientific vehemence which showed that he might have risen to high distinction in the welter or light-weight division. Meeting on the northwest corner of Rivington Street and the Bowery, John Suydam and the novelist De Ruyter start out together in "The Search for Local Colour" (Brander Matthews); near by Chimmie Fadden made an effective political speech from the tail end of a cart, and the atmosphere and life of this quarter of the city were admirably portrayed in a short fugitive sketch called "Extermination," by J. L. Steffens, published in a New York newspaper about

two years ago.[1] The scene of "Extermination" was Cat Alley, opposite the Police Headquarters in Mulberry Street. "Looney Lenny" was "Silly Willie," or "Willie" Gallegher, a messenger for the headquarters newspaper men. "Cat Alley," which no longer exists, was admirably described by Jacob A. Riis in an article on "The Passing of Cat Alley," printed in the *Century* about a year ago. Brander Matthews has written of the old wooden houses of this neighbourhood "as pathetic survivals of the time when New York still remembered that it had been New Amsterdam." Here he found the streak of local colour that went to make "Before the Break of Day." While the telephone number was given, the saloon of the story was purely imaginary. The episode on which the tale was based actually took place in a house in Denver.

Going back to the Ghetto, Abraham

[1] The *Commercial Advertiser*, July 24, 1897.

Cahan's "Yekl," whom Zangwill recognised as the only Jew in American fiction, worked in a sweatshop in Pitt Street. Mr. Cahan said recently in conversation that New York contained four different Ghettos. The great Ghetto is bounded by the East River, by Cherry Street, by the Bowery, and on the north formerly by Houston Street, but now it has crept up as far as East Tenth Street. This is the largest Ghetto in the world, greater even than the Warsaw Ghetto. Hester Street, the heart of this Ghetto, is known throughout Europe. Of the other three Ghettos, one lies between Ninety-eighth and One Hundred and Sixteenth Streets, east of Central Park; another, the Brownsville Ghetto, is in the Twenty-sixth Ward, Brooklyn; the last is the Williamsburg Ghetto. In writing "The Imported Bridegroom," a story which dealt with the New York of twenty years ago, Mr. Cahan had in view the old Ghetto about Bayard and Catherine

PAY-DAY IN THE SWEATSHOP. — CAHAN'S "YEKL."

streets, which in the years following the close of the Civil War was settled by a

THE GREAT SYNAGOGUE OF THE GHETTO, NORFOLK STREET. — CAHAN'S "THE IMPORTED BRIDEGROOM."

prosperous class of Russian Jews. At the time of the writing of the story considerable of this quarter remained. It is now almost entirely extinct. The school in Christie Street attended by Flora Stroon was only recently torn down. On the east side of the Bowery, a little below Canal Street, was the restaurant in which Shaya was found by Azrael Stroon. On Norfolk Street, near Broome, is the great synagogue "Beth-Hamidrash Hagodal" (the great house of study"). It was there in the vestry room that Shaya Golub studied the Talmud. On the third floor of a rickety old tenement in Essex Street was the sweatshop of the Lipmans, described in "A Sweatshop Romance." Boris and Tatyana Lurie of "Circumstances" lived in Madison Street, and it was to rooms on the second floor of a Cherry Street tenement-house that Nathan and Goldy repaired after "A Ghetto Wedding."

In Henry Street was the first New

York home of the Everetts (Edgar Fawcett's *A New York Family*) after their

STUDY ROOMS, THE GREAT SYNAGOGUE, NORFOLK STREET. — CAHAN'S "THE IMPORTED BRIDEGROOM."

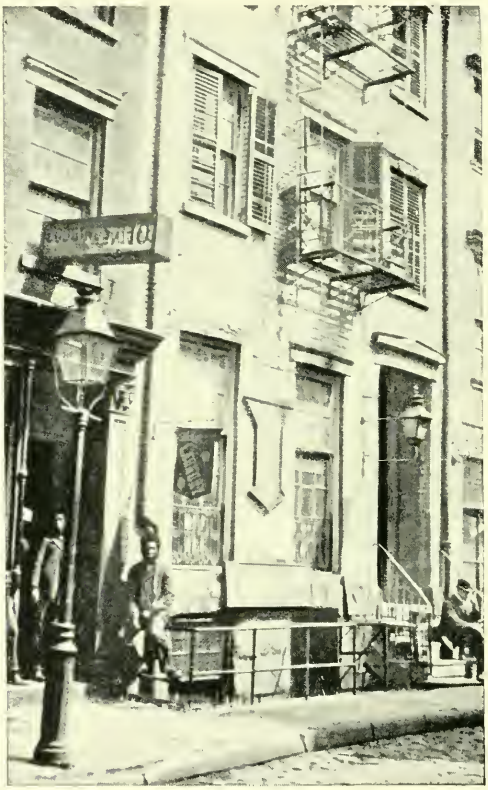
migration from Hoboken. The Everett children attended school in Scannel Street. That was in the early half of the

century, when Broome, Prince, and Bond streets were fashionable thoroughfares, and the best shops were on Grand Street and the Bowery. With the passing of the Bend disappeared Mulberry Court, the strange, grim, and picturesque bit of proletarian New York that Edward W. Townsend has described in *A Daughter of the Tenements*. The entrance to the narrow alley that led to the court was on the west side of Mulberry Street, about fifty paces below Bayard Street, and directly opposite the Italian banks and the Italian library. The site of Mulberry Court is marked by a tree that, surrounded by a circle of turf, stands in the northeast corner of the new park. On the east side of Baxter Street, south of Bayard, a tunnel leads back to the rear tenement where Carminella and Miss Eleanor Hazlehurst of North Washington Square visited the child stricken with fever. The tunnel was next door to a saloon. All this, of course, was swept away when

THE CHURCH WHERE THE WHITE SLAVES DIED, MOTT AND PARK STREETS. — TOWNSEND'S "THE HOUSE OF YELLOW BRICK."

the block was converted into a park. Mr. Townsend, as became the historian of this quarter, has spoken of the colour and brightness of Mulberry Street, which is fairly alive with the scarlet and orange and green and bronze of the shops and push-carts. In direct contrast is the hideous blackness of Baxter Street, with its ghastly and inhuman stretches of second-hand clothes. Moving up the steep incline that begins at Mulberry and Park streets, we find at the corner of Mott Street the little Roman Catholic Church of the Transfiguration, where the white slaves of Chinatown died in Townsend's story of "The House of Yellow Brick." The House of Yellow Brick stands on the north side of Pell Street, about thirty yards from the Bowery. Only a few doors away a saloon at the corner of Doyer and Pell streets marks the site of the Old Tree House in which Mrs. Susanna Rowson's "Charlotte Temple" died about 1776. The original of

"Charlotte Temple" was Charlotte Stanley, the mistress of Lieutenant-Colonel



"THE HOUSE OF YELLOW BRICK," PELL STREET. — E. W. TOWNSEND.

John Montresor, the Montraville of the novel. She is buried in Trinity churchyard. At No. 16 Mott Street, a quaint and striking brick building only a few doors from Chatham Square, was the opium den kept by the Chinaman Chung, who, as told in Mr. Townsend's *A Daughter of the Tenements*, stole the papers from Mark Waters's office in the Niantic building on Exchange Place. The Chinese fish, flesh, and fowl shop described in the book has disappeared, but the restaurant on the second floor and the Joss Temple, with windows opening on the iron balcony, remain. A flight of well-worn stone steps run up from the sidewalk in front. Since the structure was made use of in Townsend's novel, another story has been added. This building is known as the City Hall of Chinatown. A little farther up Mott Street is the Chinese restaurant to which Lena ("By Whom the Offence Cometh") went, after Bat had been convicted and sentenced for picking pockets

on Fifth Avenue. Near Mott Street lived Berthold Lindau, the fanatical socialist of Mr. Howells in *A Hazard of New*

"A NARROW, WORN PAIR OF STONE STEPS RUNNING UP ALONGSIDE AN OLD THREE-STORY BRICK BUILDING." — TOWNSEND'S "A DAUGHTER OF THE TENEMENTS."

Fortunes. It was a mere chance that caused Mr. Howells to choose this part of the city for Lindau's home. The interior of the dwelling in the story was

drawn from the interior of the home of a Socialist who lived in East Fourth Street and whom the author visited many years ago. A few blocks away, on the Bowery above Bayard Street, is the Atlantic Garden, thinly disguised under the name of the Arctic Garden, where "Tom" Lyon and Carminella and her mother would come after the young heroine's dance was over for a real supper of beer and sandwiches, and Philip Peyton would "send drinks to the performers and hear the fact alluded to in the next song." The "Tivoli" Theatre, where Carminella made her first appearance and scored her early successes, has of recent years been given over to Yiddish melodrama. Returning to Baxter Street, a dark passage running back from the dirty green door of No. 14 leads to what remains of Murderer's Alley, one of the most tragic and gruesome corners of the old Five Points region. Murderer's Alley was used and elaborately staged by the late Augustin Daly in his

play called *Pique*. The heroine, who was enacted by Fanny Davenport, was murdered there. The Brace Memorial News-

NEWSBOYS' LODGING HOUSE, WHERE TOWNSEND FOUND "CHIMMIE FADDEN."

boys' Lodging House, where the idea of "Chimmie Fadden" first came to Mr. Townsend, is on New Chambers Street,

a block east of Park Row. Over on Cherry Hill were born Hefty Burke and the disreputable Mr. Raegan, two of Richard Harding Davis's earlier creations. East Broadway was the scene of the work of Conrad Dryfoos and of Margaret Vance described in Mr. Howells's *Hazard of New Fortunes*. In a sailor's pawnshop at the lower end of Catherine Street was laid one of the scenes of *The Shadows of a Great City*, a very popular melodrama of some ten years ago.

Robert Barr, in an article published about two years ago, suggested Stephen Crane as the man most likely to write the great American novel. Somehow the idea was not easily dismissed. As a story of New York life — his *Maggie, a Girl of the Streets* — even in the form in which it was publicly printed, was in a way a dominant book. Few writers have felt so intensely the throbbing life of the city. Stephen Crane saw in the flickering street lights, the wet pavements, the

looming factories and warehouses, countless untold tragedies. Balzac somewhere said that the brief newspaper paragraph, "Yesterday at four o'clock in the afternoon a young person jumped from the Pont Neuf into the Seine," contained all the elements of the greatest novel. In Mr. Crane we found something of this passionate intensity. When *Maggie* appeared, many cried out against it on the ground that it contained no light, no hope. But Mr. Crane saw no hope, no light. *Maggie*, above all his other books, is striking in its sincerity. He could not see in the lives of the people of Devil's Row and Rum Alley sunshine and sentiment and humour, — these people to whom joy comes only in debauch. His proletaire is very convincing and powerful, rising transcendent over his eccentricities of style and diction. But the localities of the story are merely symbolic. Rum Alley and Devil's Row, we learn with regret, had no real foundation in fact.

Part Two

ABOUT WASHINGTON SQUARE

Part Two

I. THE HISTORICAL NOVEL OF THE FUTURE

YEARS ago, in the days when — old New Yorkers tell us — the skies seemed to smile more brightly than they do now, when Lower Broadway was still a fashionable promenade, when the native Greenwich villager clung proudly and somewhat arrogantly to his birthright, and frivolous-minded young bucks gathered nightly in the Apollo rooms on Broadway near Canal Street, — over in Paris fat *épiciers* and their fat wives were blubbering nightly over a melodrama then popular at the playhouses of Belleville and the outer boulevards under the name of *The Streets of Paris.* It was a play combining all the conventional elements of sensation, — battle, murder and sudden death, arson

and charcoal fumes, and of course the ultimate triumph of virtue. Just before the fall of the curtain it was customary for the principal mummer to step forward to the edge of the footlights and in a few words point out that it was the theatre's mission to portray make-believe woes and passion — for the real tragedy of the streets of Paris, the audience must look outside, in the narrow alleys of Montmartre or about the *abbatoirs* of La Villette. After yielding substantial revenues to French managers, the play in the course of years crossed the Channel. It made its bow to the audiences of the Adelphi Theatre and straightway became *The Streets of London.* Again a few years passed and it was being played in a New York theatre, far uptown on the East Side, — the old Mount Morris, we think, joy of the benighted Harlemite of fifteen or twenty years ago, — as *The Streets of New York.* It was always and ever the same old play, only Martyrs'

Hill (Montmartre) became in turn Saffron Hill and Cherry Hill. It is many years now since *The Streets of New York* thrilled Manhattan audiences, but — Well, the moral is quite obvious.

Our age and manner of life are, in a certain way, dull and disappointing. They lack the element of intrigue. We look about us from day to day, from month to month; we see all the factors of history, — battles by land and sea, treaties made and treaties violated, riots, massacres, annexations, usurpations, and the rest; we take a certain hard-headed pride in the practical activity of our time, but we feel that all is apparent, painfully apparent, traceable to well-known and established laws and causes. The romance, the colour, the mystery are not for us, but for the readers of the historical novel that is to be written two or three hundred years hence. It is not very difficult to imagine what these novels will be like. One can very readily

think of the reader laying the delightful volume aside to curse the monotony and limitations of his own prosaic time, and to muse wistfully on those closing years of the nineteenth century when a man of spirit could carve out for himself fine adventures, and by his courage, dash, dexterity, and genius for intrigue do something toward moulding the history of the age in which he lived. There is not the slightest doubt that people who lived in Cœur de Lion's time or Quentin Durward's time or D'Artagnan's time considered their environments on the whole rather monotonous and lacking in romance. The novels of the twenty-second century that deal with the age in which we are living will teem with cunningly laid snares, dark intrigues, sanguinary encounters. Swash-buckling heroes will stalk Broadway or the Bowery or Fifth Avenue by night, in search of strange adventures, and, of course, find them. Then history will stand forth raw, bare,

naked yet picturesque, — shorn of all its polite phrases and diplomatic attitudes. To give an instance, we in our blindness ridiculously believed the amicable settlement of the Fashoda incident, let us say, due to the good sense and skill of Lord Salisbury and M. Dupuy (Ha! Ha!), just as the benighted Britons of 1660 or thereabouts believed the return of Charles the Second very commonplace and matter-of-fact. *They* knew nothing of the night on the Newcastle marshes, and the French fishermen driven to the shore by storms, and the enterprise launched in the Rue des Lombards by Planchet et Cie. Nor do we see the real figure, the real hero, who, as the historical novel of the future will tell, at the time when the crisis was most acute, crossed to Paris on a Cook's ticket, shut the French Premier up in a folding bed, shipped bed, mattress, Minister, and all to a Manchester furnishing-house and — But this of course will be the version of the English romance; the

French story will be quite different. It will be a French *guet à pens*, and the victim will in this case be "Le Lord Maire Comte de Sale Berri." Why should the romancer, wishing to tell of brave deeds, of sword strokes and pistol play, and to find for them a setting in our own age, be forced to invent imaginary kingdoms, principalities, and republics? Believing as we do in our Ivanhoes and Durwards and D'Artagnans, we can ill afford to discredit the historical romance of the future. We feel the existence of these heroes; let them stand forth that we may do them honour.

II. WASHINGTON SQUARE

HENRY JAMES, in his novel *Washington Square*, speaks of the locality having "a kind of established repose which is not of frequent occurrence in other quarters of the long, shrill city; it has a richer, riper look than any of the upper ramifica-

tions of the great longitudinal thoroughfare — the look of having had something of a social history." Probably in the last words we have the key to the hold which the Square has had on almost every novelist who has written of New York life. An imaginary circle, with its centre in the white Memorial Arch and a radius of five or six hundred yards, would hold fully one-half of what is best in the local colour of New York fiction. In the two short blocks from Macdougal Street to Washington Square East, along the north side of the quadrangle, are many of the structures that have served in the fiction of Brander Matthews, Henry James, F. Hopkinson Smith, Edward W. Townsend, and Julian Ralph. On the south side lived Captain Peters and Philip Morrow. Only a few blocks away are the Casa Napoleon of Janvier, the structure in which Colonel Carter lived; the Garibaldi of James L. Ford; the office of *Every Other Week* exploited in *A Hazard*

of New Fortunes; the house where Van Bibber found his burglar; the home of the Lauderdales — the list is a very long

THE SLOPER RESIDENCE.— HENRY JAMES'S "WASHINGTON SQUARE."

one. And it is curious to note that novelists, who elsewhere are at best superficial, here become sincere and con-

vincing. Dr. Sloper's house, described in Henry James's *Washington Square*, is on the north side of the Square, between Fifth Avenue and Macdougal Street. In 1835, when Dr. Sloper first took possession, moving uptown from the neighbourhood of the City Hall, which had seen its best days socially, the Square, then the ideal of quiet and genteel retirement, was enclosed by a wooden paling. The structure in which the Slopers lived, and its neighbours were then supposed to embody the last results of architectural science. It was then and is to-day a modern house, wide-fronted with a balcony before the drawing-room windows, and a flight of white marble steps ascending to a portal also faced with white marble. In the twenties Mrs. Sloper was "one of the pretty girls of the small but promising capital which clustered about the Battery and overlooked the Bay, and of which the uppermost boundary was indicated by the grassy waysides of Canal

Street." A few doors away was the home of Mrs. Martin, known as "the Duchess of Washington Square," which Brander Matthews assured us, in *The Last Meeting*, "has now regained the fashion it had lost for a score of years." George William Curtis babbled charmingly of the old Square in *Prue and I*.

Mr. Howells, in *A Hazard of New Fortunes*, writes of the "old-fashioned American respectability which keeps the north side of the Square in vast mansions of red brick, and the international shabbiness which has invaded the southern border and broken it up into lodging-houses, shops, beer gardens, and studios." Basil and Isabel March came here when worn out by futile flat-hunting, and "strolled over the asphalt walks under the thinning shadows of the autumn-stricken sycamores." In one of the brick houses with white trimmings on Waverley Place, to the east of the Arch, lived Miss Grandish (in Julian Ralph's *People We*

Pass). Petey Burke, from the sidewalk opposite, watched the comings and goings of Jenson, the husband of Agnes Whitfield, the angel of the Big Barracks tenement on Forsythe Street. The striking social contrast presented by the north and south sides of the Square was admirably caught by Mr. Townsend in "Just across the Square." F. Hopkinson Smith brings in the Square in *Caleb West*, Sanford living in a five-room apartment at the top of a house with dormer windows on the north side. His guests looking out could see the "night life of the Park, miniature figures strolling about under the trees, flashing in brilliant light or swallowed up in dense shadow as they passed in the glare of the many lamps scattered among the budding foliage." Another of these houses was tenanted by Mrs. Delaney, of Edgar Fawcett's *Rutherford;* and the Square was the scene of Mrs. Burton Harrison's *Sweet Bells out of Tune.* Near the southeast corner of

L. of C.

the Square is the Benedick, a red-brick bachelor apartment building, used under the name of the Monastery by Robert W. Chambers in *Outsiders*, his recent story of New York life.

Under its own name the Benedick plays a conspicuous part in the same writer's really fine and tragic story, "The Repairer of Reputations," and in "The Yellow Sign" of *The King in Yellow*.

An intimate friend of the late author-editor told the present writer that *The Midge* "was written by Bunner to get married on." The book was dashed off in the house on Seventh Street in which he was then living. It was one of the rare occasions on which Bunner was ever seen to work. This characteristic was always a mystery to his friends and business associates. He was seldom seen at his writing-table, and yet at the end of the year showed an extraordinary amount of work to his credit. The secret lay in the ease and speed with which he wrote.

THE MONASTERY, WASHINGTON SQUARE. ROBERT CHAMBERS'S "OUTSIDERS" AND "THE KING IN YELLOW."

There has probably never been a novel written that is so drenched with the spirit of Washington Square as *The Midge*. Bunner lived there in his younger Bohemian days, and throughout his life he seemed always to think of it with a great love and sympathy. To other writers the Square was something to be studied in its architectural aspects or as a problem in social contrasts. Bunner liked it best at night, with the great dim branches swaying and breaking in the breeze, the gas lamps flickering and blinking, when the tumults and the shoutings of the day were gone and "only a tramp or something worse in woman's shape was hurrying across the bleak space, along the winding asphalt, walking over the Potter's Field of the past on the way to the Potter's Field to be." Captain Peters, or Dr. Peters as he preferred to be called, lived on the top floor of No. 50, a three-story brick structure on the "dark south side," between Thomp-

son and Sullivan streets. The house, adjoining the Judson Memorial, stands back from the street, and is even darker

CAPTAIN PETERS'S HOME, WASHINGTON SQUARE.—BUNNER'S "THE MIDGE."

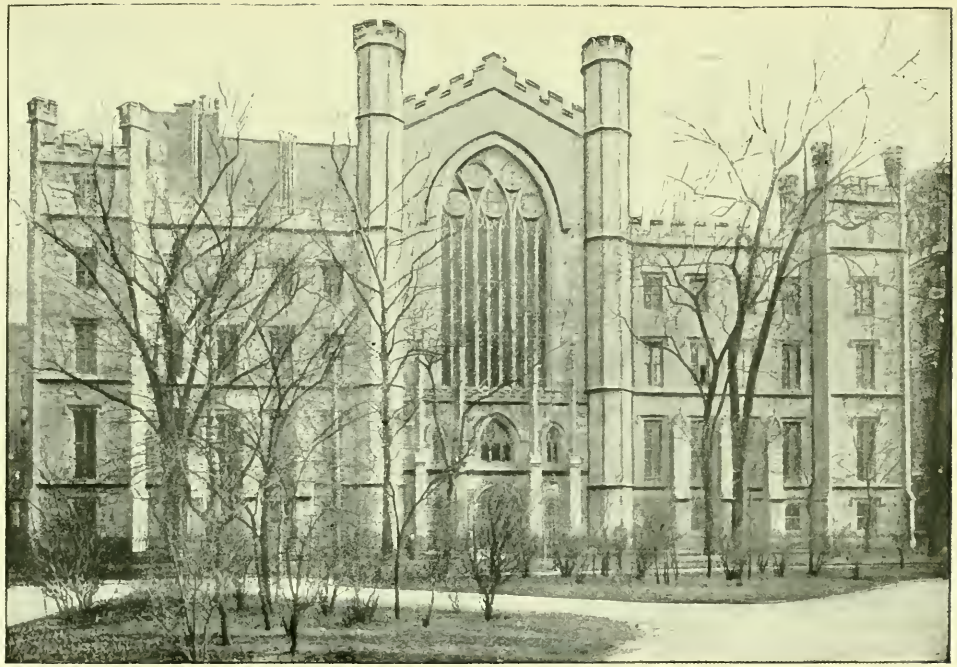
and gloomier than those about it. A low iron railing, once green, separates the sidewalk from the poor little plot of sod and stunted grass. The door, a single step above the ground, is flanked by thin

grooved columns. From the second-story windows jut out little balconies. It was through the dormer windows jutting from the roof that Peters looked out upon the Square. In the story allusion is made to two vacant lots in the rear, stretching through to West Third Street. "These yards in summer were green and bright, and in the centre of one there was a tree." Years ago buildings were erected on this site, but even to-day, or at least until very recently, taking one's stand on the east sidewalk of Thompson Street and looking over the wooden fence in the rear of the Memorial Building, the top branches of this tree may be seen. On one of the benches of the Square Father Dube confessed to Dr. Peters the unhappiness of his mistaken avocation, and advised the latter to brighten his life by marrying the Midge. At the University Place corner of the Square Dr. Peters and Paul Hathaway, to whom the Midge was ultimately married, had their first

meeting. A few years ago, when the University of New York buildings were torn down, there disappeared the last traces of Chrysalis College, used by Theodore Winthrop in *Cecil Dreeme*. The same time marked the passing of the little church in which Katherine Lauderdale and John Ralston were married.

III. THE GARIBALDI — BRASSERIE PIGAULT — THE CASA NAPOLEON

As one goes down Macdougal Street from the southwest corner of Washington Square, where the French quarter of former days merged into the Greenwich Village of former days, the second house on the left-hand side, No. 146, is a three-story trellised-stoop structure that is rapidly going the way of most of the houses of this vicinity. Behind a long, narrow table covered with dirty white oilcloth, that stands close to the basement win-



CHRYSALIS COLLEGE. — THEODORE WINTHROP'S "CECIL DREEME."

dows, directly under the balcony, an ancient and toothless Italian vends soft drinks. The house is tenanted by three or four Italian families. People acquainted with this part of New York will remember that a very few years ago this building was occupied by a rather pretentious Franco-Italian hotel. A number of years before it was frequented by Bunner, James L. Ford, Brander Matthews, and other newspaper men and artists, and as such it was used by Mr. Ford in his humorous sketch "Bohemia Invaded" under the name of the Garibaldi. The Garibaldi was a basement restaurant, and the yard in the rear beyond the window, guarded by thick iron bars, was littered with old casks. Here Tommy Steele and Charlie Play and Kitty Bainbridge of the Merry Idlers and all the gay Bohemians held high carnival until young Etchley, the artistic person, made his appearance and precipitated the onslaught of the Philistines. The grated window in the

rear, through which Charlie Play passed in his caustic comments on the restaurant's commercial *habitués*, is still to be

THE GARIBALDI'S BARRED WINDOW.—JAMES L. FORD'S "BOHEMIA INVADED."

seen. What was then the dining-room has since been partitioned into a number of little living rooms.

A LA VILLE DE ROUEN
J. PIGAULT
LAGER BEER
FINE WINES, BRANDIES
AND LIQUEURS.

With the above strange and pleasant conceit, Mr. Bunner introduced the readers of *The Midge* to the Brasserie Pigault, that quaint and mysterious haunt of Dr. Peters, and Father Dube, and Parker Prout, the old artist, who had failed in his career because of too much talent, and M. Martin and old Potain, who lost his mind after his wife's death, and Ovid Marie, the curly-haired music-teacher from Amity Street. It was as printed above that the patrons of the old wine-shop saw and liked best its sign. Thoughts of that sign and of the warmth

and comfort and cleanliness within, and of Madame Pigault, neat and comely, knitting — now knitting t' other side of Styx — and of the sawdust-covered floor, and of the little noises of a gentle sort inspired Mr. Bunner to that fine anti-prohibition sermon in which he showed with truth and keen humour the "estimable gentlemen who go about this broad land denouncing the Demon Drink," that there were wine-shops not wholly iniquitous and that bred not crime, but gentleness and good cheer. But not only is there no trace of the Brasserie Pigault; it is doubtful if it ever had any tangible existence. Brasserie Pigault, Mr. Ford, who knew Bunner in the early days, says, was any one of the quaint little French wine-shops of which there were so many in the quarter to the south of Washington Square in the later seventies and early eighties.

No. 159 Greene Street, the site of the old French bakery mentioned in *The*

Midge, is to-day occupied by a tall office building. On Houston Street, near what was then South Fifth Avenue, was the shop of Goubaud, the dealer in feathers, where died Lodviska Leezvinski, the mother of the Midge. Charlemagne's, where Peter and the Midge went often to dine, was probably the Restaurant du Grand Vatel on Bleecker Street. The Grand Vatel has also passed into history, its site being now occupied by an Italian restaurant and lodging-house. Pfaff's cellar, the resort of the literary wits during the sixties and early seventies, was on the corner of Bleecker Street and Broadway. Mr. Howells has written entertainingly of Pfaff's in his literary reminiscences.

"De Duchess," Chimmie Fadden, his friend "de barkeep," and the latter's "loidy fren," during one of their outings in the city strolled down South Fifth Avenue and lunched together at the restaurant of the White Pup. The identity

of the White Pup is obvious enough. It has served several times as a background for fiction, and was only very recently used by Miss Ellen Glasgow for one of the New York scenes of *The Descendant*. Recrossing Washington Square and moving up Fifth Avenue, we find at 19 and 21 West Ninth Street the little Franco-Spanish South-American Hotel, which was the original of the Casa Napoleon, the modest and inviting hostelry where lived so many of Mr. Thomas Janvier's men and women, — Mrs. Myrtle Vane, who did the New York society news for Western papers; Mr. Dunbar and Miss Bream, Mr. Witherby and Mrs. Mortimer, the web-spinning capitalist in a small way — the home of the genial Duvant and the refuge of the family Efferati. "Janvier knows his New York," once said John Breslin, — high praise, for few have known the city as did the old fire chief. His comments on the New York of some of the other writers were more forceful and less polite.

THE CASA NAPOLEON.—JANVIER AND HOWELLS.

The Casa Napoleon has another literary interest. This was the little restaurant to which Mr. Howells sent Ray (in *The World of Chance*) during the young writer's first weeks in New York, and it was here also that the Marches of *A Hazard of New Fortunes* came to dine during the long weeks spent in futile flat-hunting. Mr. Janvier, who at such times as he is in New York is a frequent visitor at the Casa Napoleon, dwelt at length on the establishment's "attractive look," and the balcony that ran along the line of the second-story windows, in which flowers were growing in great green wooden tubs. The Louis Napoleon of Mr. Janvier's stories is Louis Napoleon Griffou. The Dunbars, Breams, Witherbys, and the rest have taken their departure, but in their place there has sprung up another coterie of newspaper men, flippantly and facetiously known as "the Griffou push."

In the odd little white frame building

that in bygone years was No. 58½ West Tenth Street, Frederick Olyphant,

IN THE CASA NAPOLEON.— JANVIER AND HOWELLS.

who figures in Brander Matthews's *The Last Meeting*, had his studio. The house was reached from West Tenth Street by

passing through a dim alley, "worn by the feet of three generations of artists." This structure, which holds a very important place in the New York of fiction, will be described at length in the following section. The artist life about Tenth Street was also the theme of the Van Dyke Brown stories. On Eleventh Street, between Fifth and Sixth avenues, is the building in which Fulkerson, Conrad Dryfoos, and Basil March conducted *Every Other Week*. Mr. Howells had in mind one of the renovated old houses which line the street. It was on Union Square, in front of Brentano's, that Margaret Vance and Conrad Dryfoos met for the last time before the latter was killed in the great strike. In writing about this strike Mr. Howells drew upon his impressions of the railway strike of 1882 when an innocent spectator met his death in much the same manner as did Dryfoos in the novel.

IV. RICHARD HARDING DAVIS — VAN BIBBER'S HAUNTS — GREENWICH VILLAGE — SCENES OF EDGAR FAWCETT'S NOVELS

RICHARD HARDING DAVIS strikes his highest, best, and most human note when telling of men and women lonely and homesick in other lands. The nostalgia has been strong upon him. It has been treasured in his memory, and at times the balm of spring air, some subtle odour of perfume or flower, a picture, a line in a book or a letter, brings over him with remarkable vividness the same sensations of strange, overwhelming loneliness that he has felt some time in the years gone by when he was knocking about somewhere a few thousand miles away from the lights of Broadway and the tall tower of the Madison Square Garden. This note dominates all his work in which he finds his background in other lands. He has used it very effectively a number of times, and yet it does not seem to grow

stale. It is a nostalgia that comes upon strong men, never maudlin, never weakly sentimental, but a great yearning homesickness, that expresses itself feelingly, simply, colloquially. Near the end of *The Exiles*, Holcombe, the New York assistant district-attorney, leaving Tangiers, asks Meakin, the police commissioner who had been indicted for blackmailing gambling-houses, if he cannot do something for him at home. In the latter's reply we have what is probably the most powerful and sincere bit of writing that Mr. Davis has ever done. It is here quoted entire:

"'I'll tell you what you can do for me, Holcombe. Some night I wish you would go down to Fourteenth Street, some night this spring, when the boys are sitting out on the steps in front of the Hall, and just take a drink for me at Ed Lally's; just for luck. That's what I'd like to do. I don't know nothing better than Fourteenth Street of a summer evening, with all the people crowding into Pastor's on one side of the Hall and the

Third Avenue L cars running by on the other. That 's a gay sight, ain't it now? With all the girls coming in and out of Theiss's, and the sidewalks crowded. One of them warm nights when they have to have the windows open, and you can hear the music in at Pastor's and the audience clapping their hands. That 's great, is n't it?' Well, he laughed, and he shook his head. 'I'll be back there some day, won't I?' he said wistfully, 'and hear it for myself.' "

Turning from Meakin to the versatile Van Bibber, we find at the corner of Ninth Street and University Place the French restaurant (Hotel Martin) from which he started out as "Best Man." The tables at which Van Bibber and the runaway couple were dining are in the one-story addition that runs along Ninth Street. On the steps running down from the hotel entrance to the sidewalk of University Place Van Bibber met the groom's elder brother, and promptly sent him off to Chicago. Later he wished it had been Jersey City. A block to the

west, at the northwest corner of Ninth Street and Fifth Avenue, is the house in which Van Bibber came upon his peni-

WHERE VAN BIBBER FOUND THE RUNAWAY COUPLE. — R. H. DAVIS'S "VAN BIBBER AS BEST MAN."

tent burglar. At the northeast corner of Twelfth Street and Fifth Avenue is the Mission House before which Lena died (E. W. Townsend's "By whom the Offence Cometh").

Bunner coined a striking phrase when he spoke of the "bourgeois conservatism

WHERE VAN BIBBER FOUND THE BURGLAR. — R. H. DAVIS.

of Greenwich Village." But that was written many years ago, before the invasion of the old American ward by the

foreign element had really begun, and when a few minutes' walk from the tall

HOUSE BEFORE WHICH LENA DIED. — E. W. TOWNSEND'S "BY WHOM THE OFFENCE COMETH."

clock tower of Jefferson Market whisked one back to the atmosphere and condi-

tions of the early half of the century. The sight of that tall clock tower filled the soul of Chad (*Colonel Carter of Cartersville*) with unutterable bitterness. Brander Matthews, in one of his *Manhattan Vignettes*, speaks of John Suydam noting the "high roof and lofty terrace above all the yawning baskets of vegetables and the pendent turkeys." In "Aunt Eliza's Triumph" Mr. Townsend takes us to Greenwich Village, Aunt Eliza living in a house on Bank Street.

Edgar Fawcett, in the story of *A New York Family*, pointed out the significant fact that all the great capitals of history, after many hesitant swerves and recoils, have taken a steadfast western course. This feature, however, is probably less true of our own than of any other metropolis of modern times. Chelsea and Greenwich Village were thriving populated communities when the eastern portion of the city of the same latitude was farm and swamp land. Mr. Faw-

cett's work is an excellent illustration of the element that is lacking in the local colour of the New York of fiction. He is strenuous, indomitably persistent, undoubtedly sincere. His descriptions are apparently laboriously and conscientiously wrought. But they are too often unconvincing. Much is to be said of his treatment of quaint corners of suburban New York, of Brooklyn, of Greenpoint, of Hoboken. These places, however, belong to a later paper. One of the houses of the picturesque Colonnade Row in Lafayette Place was the home of Mrs. Russell Leroy, described in *A Hopeless Case*. The old church at the southern end of Lafayette Place mentioned in the novel was St. Bartholomew's. The dwelling-houses on the east side of the street disappeared years ago. Moving westward again, passing Grace Church, which Mr. Fawcett describes as "looming up a tall and stately sentinel at the upper end of Broadway," and the St. Denis Hotel,

where Basil and Isabel March (*A Hazard of New Fortunes*) stayed during their

NO. 68 CLINTON PLACE.—JANVIER'S "A TEMPORARY DEADLOCK."

invasions of New York, we find in West Tenth Street, between Fifth and Sixth avenues, the home of Spencer Dela-

plaine, the husband of Olivia Delaplaine in Mr. Fawcett's novel of that name. Two blocks away, at the Brevoort, lived Clinton Wainwright, Mr. Fawcett's "Gentleman of Leisure." One of Mr. Fawcett's most vigorous descriptions occurs where, in this book, he contrasts lower Fifth Avenue and Madison Square. Directly across the street from the Brevoort, on the east side of the avenue, is No. 68 Clinton Place, interesting as being not only the scene, but the *raison d'être*, of Thomas Janvier's *A Temporary Deadlock*. In one of the Fifth Avenue houses near here lived the Huntingdons of Edgar Fawcett's *A Hopeless Case*.

V. CRAWFORD'S NEW YORK — OLD SECOND AVENUE — GRAMERCY PARK — COLONEL CARTER'S HOME

F. Marion Crawford belongs to a race of novelists — a race whose influence is likely to dominate the lighter literature

of the early half of the twentieth century — who are untrammelled by circumstance of mere creed or speech; who turn to their work with a recognition of the great fundamental principle that human nature is everywhere pretty much the same, — that love, hatred, avarice, jealousy, make romance equally in Madagascar and Maine. The story-tellers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries wrote of soils other than their own for the purpose of giving their extravagances the appearance of reality and verisimilitude. They sat down to their writing-tables in much the same spirit as Tartarin started for Algiers. The Spain of Le Sage and Beaumarchais was as strange, as delightful, and as unreal as the country of the Liliputians or the Brobdignagians. Thackeray in all his more important stories took his men and women at some time in the narrative to Paris or Weimar or Rome, but it was to the British society of these places that

he introduced us, — a society which carried with it its usages, its prejudices, — its Lares and Penates. Among contemporary writers Mr. Davis, invading the shores of the Mediterranean and imaginary South American republics for local colour, must take with him a few men and women out of Mr. Gibson's sketch book to establish himself soundly; and Mr. Anthony Hope needed an Englishman to carry him through Ruritania. Even Mr. Kipling, so persistently hailed as the trumpeter of world-wide literature, has confined himself almost entirely to English-speaking people. His tales of native life are exotic. Mr. Crawford is more typically the pioneer. So distinctly is he a cosmopolitan, that his New York stories in no way compare with the splendid Saracinesca series; in the former he fails to make us feel the vastness, the complexity of the metropolitan life that is behind his men and women. In finding a home for the Lau-

derdales, Mr. Crawford obviously made use of the vine-covered residence of Mr. Richard Watson Gilder, to which he has been a frequent visitor, on the north side of Clinton Place, a few doors east of Fifth Avenue. He speaks of Clinton Place never having been a fashionable thoroughfare, although it once lay in a fashionable neighbourhood. Farther east on Clinton Place, in "an odd, old structure tenanted by Bohemians," lived Paul Hathaway (*The Midge*). Again taking up Mr. Crawford's New York, the second house of Colonnade Row, opposite the Astor Library, was the home of Walter Crowdie and his wife Hester. A little garden, surrounded by an iron railing, separates the house from the street. These white houses, with their tall pillars and deep balconies, are among the most interesting and picturesque relics of the older New York. One of them was used by Mrs. Burton Harrison in *The Anglomaniacs*. John Ralston and Katharine

THE CROWDIES' HOME, LAFAYETTE PLACE.— F. MARION CRAWFORD'S "THE RALSTONS."

Lauderdale, on their spring-day walk strolled up Stuyvesant Street and passed St. Mark's Church and on to Tompkins Square with its broad walks and hordes of screaming children — Julian Ralph has written of these in *People We Pass* — and beyond across the lettered avenues to the timber-yard at the water's edge. On Avenue B was the canary-bird shop of Andreas Stoffel, of Mr. Janvier's *An Idyll of the East Side.*

Claire Twining, in Edgar Fawcett's *An Ambitious Woman*, noted the "wide, airy expanse of the Square lighted with innumerable lamps," on her wild flight from Slocumb after the outbreak of fire in Niblo's Theatre. In this story Mr. Fawcett refers to the time when Tompkins Square was a "dark horror to all decent citizens living near it." By day set aside as a parade ground for the city militia, which paraded there scarcely twice a year, its lampless lapse of earth was by night at least four acres of brood-

ing gloom, and he who ventured to cross it stood the risk of thieving assault, if of nothing more harmful.

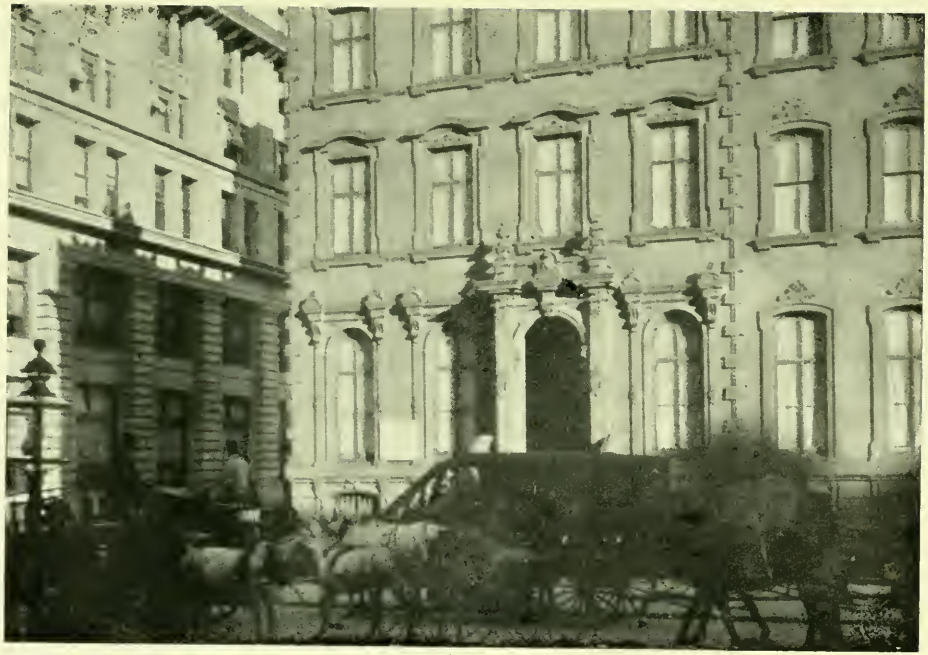
The Grosvenors lived in a big, dingy mansion on Second Avenue, near Stuyvesant and Rutherford squares, which neighbourhood Mr. Fawcett has spoken of as "one of the few fragments that have been left uninvaded by the merciless spirit of change." Near by, in a little red brick house, dwelt Mrs. Montgomery, of Henry James's *Washington Square;* and Bunner has told us how at night the strong wind used to blow the music of St. George's bells half across the city to the Midge's ears. "It was as though Stuyvesant Square snugly locked up for the night sent a midnight message of reproach to the broader and more democratic ground, whose hard walks knew no rest from echoing footsteps in light or dark." In one of the houses facing the north side of the Square lived the socialist Dircks and his daughter Esther, the

heroine of Brander Matthews's *A Confident To-morrow*. Farther down, near the

ERNEST NEUMAN'S HOME.— HENRY HARLAND'S "AS IT WAS WRITTEN."

avenue's southern extremity, we find on the northwest corner of Second Street the large red brick house where Ernest

Neuman went to live under an assumed name after his release from the Tombs Prison, where he had been on trial for the murder of his betrothed, as described in Henry Harland's *As It Was Written*. The Karons of the same writer's *Mrs. Peixada* lived between Sixth and Seventh streets, and across the way was the pawnshop of Bernard Peixada, "a brick house, although the bricks were concealed by a coat of dark grey stucco that blotches here and there had made almost black." The pawnbroking establishment was on the ground floor, and the broad windows in front were protected, like those of a jail, by heavy iron bars. In these windows were musical instruments, household ornaments, kitchen utensils, firearms, tarnished uniforms, women's faded gewgaws and finery, and behind these, darkness, mystery, and gloom. The three upper stories were hermetically sealed and wore a sinister and ill-omened aspect. There is, however, no structure



LARRY LAUGHTON'S HOME.— BRANDER MATTHEWS'S "THE LAST MEETING."

in the neighbourhood even remotely suggestive of this shop.

At the corner of Eighteenth Street and Fifth Avenue was the house of Uncle Larry Laughton (Brander Matthews's *The Last Meeting*), where the Full Score Club met the evening that Frederick Olyphant was "shanghaied" by the man with the Black Heart. The original of Laurence Laughton was Laurence Hutton, and the house in question was the home of Professor Matthews's father. The scene of the dinner in *The Last Meeting* was the library, to which was transferred, for the purposes of the story, Laurence Hutton's famous collection of death masks.

Crossing from here to Gramercy Park, we find at No. 2 the home of Mr. Gifford Pinchot, used by F. Hopkinson Smith as the residence of Mrs. Leroy in *Caleb West*. It was here that Caleb's wife found a refuge after her flight with Lally. The house at the west corner of Lexington Avenue

and the Park was probably the home of Royal Weldon, who appears in Edgar Saltus's *The Truth about Tristrem Varick.*

MRS. LEROY'S HOUSE, GRAMERCY PARK.—F. HOPKINSON SMITH'S "CALEB WEST."

It was in the drawing-room of this house that Tristrem Varick drove the needle-

ROYAL WELDON'S HOME, GRAMERCY PARK.—
EDGAR SALTUS'S "TRISTREM VARICK."

like Roman knife home to his host's heart.

The quarters occupied by Colonel Car-

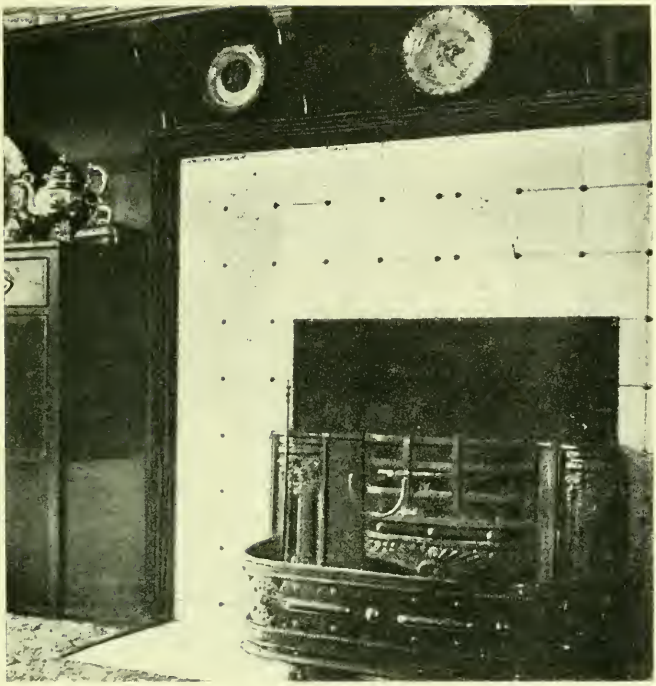
ter of Cartersville during that period of his life when he was in New York trying to interest the agents of English syndicates in the railroad scheme, the consummation of which would have given many of the very first Virginian families easy access to the Atlantic Coast, were described by F. Hopkinson Smith as being in "an old-fashioned, partly furnished, two-story house, nearly a century old, which crouched down behind the larger and more modern dwelling fronting on the street," designated in the book as *Bedford Place*. The spot was within a stone's throw of the tall clock tower of the Jefferson Market. The street entrance to this curious abode was marked by a swinging wooden gate, opening into a narrow tunnel, which dodged under the front house. "It was an uncanny sort of passageway, mouldy and wet from a long neglected leak overhead, and lighted at night by a rusty lantern with dingy glass sides." Bedford Place was West Tenth

Street, and over the swinging wooden gate is the number — "58½." Until a very few years ago this quaint bit of local colour existed in its entirety. Most of it, however, was destroyed when Mr. Maitland Armstrong, the owner of the front house, No. 58 West Tenth Street, remodelled his own residence. The entrance and the eastern half of the white frame structure in the rear, where the Colonel had his home, remain intact. The swinging wooden gate whence "Chad" swooped down upon the complacent shopkeepers of the quarter was for years a familiar landmark of the neighbourhood. It opened into the tunnel directly under the stoop of No. 58 as it exists today. To the west of the gate the steps curved up to the door of the front house. Peering through the iron gate in front, one may see part of the dark, uncanny tunnel where the Colonel indulged in pistol practice preparatory to his expected meeting with the broker

Klutchem. The garden where Fitz and the Major took refuge while "Chad"

COLONEL CARTER'S GATE, PRESENT DAY.—F. HOPKINSON SMITH'S "COLONEL CARTER OF CARTERSVILLE."

held the lighted candle as a mark for Carter's skill was then between the two



"THE FIRE IS MY FRIEND," SAID COLONEL CARTER.

COLONEL CARTER'S FIREPLACE.— F. HOPKINSON SMITH'S "COLONEL CARTER OF CARTERSVILLE."

houses. Few traces of it remain, for the extension built in the rear of No. 58 covers the greater part of the ground. Those who witnessed the stage presentation of *Colonel Carter of Cartersville* at Palmer's Theatre will doubtless remember that the scene of one act is laid in the Colonel's dining-room. When the play was in preparation, Mr. Smith piloted the scenic artist through the old building, with the result that the long room made familiar to theatre-goers as the scene of the Virginian Don Quixote's exploits was an exact reproduction of the original chamber. In the rear may be found the little door opening into the hall and the fourteen little white wooden steps by which Carter and his friends mounted to the upper story of the structure, where from one of the west windows "Chad," looking out into the night, saw the tall, illuminated tower of "de jail" looming up ominous and mysterious. A few hun-

dred yards away, on Sixth Avenue, was the cellar saloon patronised by Carter and his Virginian friends. Mr. Smith recognises three dominant types in American life. From *Colonel Carter of Cartersville*, in which he attempted to portray the old Southern chivalry so rapidly passing away, he passed in *Tom Grogan* to the study of the ubiquitous Irish-American type. *Caleb West* completed the trilogy with a picture of the sturdy life sprung from the New England soil.

Part Three

THE NEW CITY AND SUBURBAN NEW YORK

Part Three

I. NEGLECTED PHASES

SEVERAL of the chapters of *Olivia Delaplaine* Edgar Fawcett devoted to a picture of Mrs. Ottarson's boarding-house, a red brick, high-stooped structure on Twenty-third Street, between Seventh and Eighth avenues. It may be noted here that this house had no tangible original. Mr. Fawcett placed it for the purposes of the story in West Twenty-third Street, but always felt it to be one of the houses in Fourteenth Street, between Seventh and Eighth avenues, "that domain where the boarding-house is ubiquitous." These chapters have an interest far beyond their narrative importance. They call one's attention to a field, a phase of New York life, wonderfully rich and typical, — a field in

which the novelist will not only have a small world of contrasts, characters, complications within four walls, but in which he will be absolutely untrammelled by the traditions or influences of European writers. There is no need of going for new types and material to the West or the Southwest. The boarding-house is, on the whole, rather more American than Red Gulch or Yuba Bill. The American writer may find an inspiration in the squabble of the Bayneses, the Bunches, and the MacWhirters in *The Adventures of Philip* or the intrigues of the *Maison Vauquer* of Balzac's *Le Père Goriot*. But the inspiration must be purely technical.

Not but that we have had little touches of this life: it has been a rich field for the joke makers. Mr. John Kendrick Bangs has introduced us to its breakfast-table and pelted us with its harmless if superfluous epigrams. But none has treated it seriously in literature or done justice to its vulgarity and its tragic

gloom. In the boarding-house scenes of *Olivia Delaplaine*, passing over the very obvious fact that no woman ever talked as did Mrs. Ottarson, we feel that the Rev. Drowle, the Spillingtons, Bankses, and Sugbys are flagrant caricatures, very degenerate descendants of the Americans of *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Mrs. Amelia Sugby, purveyor of the literature in which chambermaids and factory heroines delight, is a type that has been so persistently flaunted that it has ceased even to bore. Few writers touch even remotely on this subject without contemptuous allusion to the floorwalker type. But where is the man who will lay bare for us this floorwalker's soul: this floorwalker's egotism, before the light of which the arrogance of the feudal baron must pale; the floorwalker distinction which poisons, vitiates, and makes ridiculous the social systems of the communities in the neighbourhood of great cities?

Boarding-house life, vulgar as it is, is too great and too vitally American to be treated merely in caricature. We have seen somewhat inadequately its laughable pretence, its amusing vanity, its sham elegance. But the man who treats its shabby gentility seriously, who can grasp its power, its intrigue, its passion, its pathos, will come very near to giving us the great American novel.

By all odds the most puerile and unreasonable complaint that one hears from literary workers is that the more obvious and inviting themes have all been worked threadbare, and that one in search of originality must go to the improbable and bizarre. This is far from being absolutely true of any literature; in this country the complaint is, on the face of it, absurd. One can suggest, almost offhand, other phases of American life that not only have not been worn threadbare, but have in reality never been fully discovered.

For instance, we should have very little hesitation in predicting success to the young man of industry and real literary talent who will thoroughly study the life of the conventional American small town, — not especially the New England town or the Western or the Southern town, but the American town. Let him study all the factors of this really complex life and their relations toward each other. Let him keep well in hand his sense of humour, study the social life, its distinctions, its complications, its scandals; let him know the local newspaper offices, the tax-receiver's office; above all, let him know every detail of the town's political life, the aspirations of prospective councilmen, the men whose votes are for sale and the men who buy them; and when he really knows all this he will have the material for not one but a dozen strong and vitally interesting novels. This suggestion may be offered to a young man, but hardly to a young woman. In the first

place, she will not see it, and then she would ignore it if she did. A young woman who writes and who aspires to treat realistically of this very life to which we allude recently blandly confessed that she had no idea of what a "primary" was, though she surmised that it had something to do with the Board of Education. She was quite satisfied and content. Politics were vulgar, and, besides, what had they to do with fiction? What she was after was the "love interest." Well, the "love interest" should, perhaps, not be ignored, but the fact remains that it is a fetichism which has spoiled many good novels and many good plays, and that absurd belief in the cant phrase is one of the greatest barriers in the way of true and good literature.

Probably no profession but that of the clergyman has been treated in American fiction with any degree of adequacy. The physician's has not; the newspaperman's has not, despite the flattering partiality of

feminine purveyors of fiction for "brainy young journalists." The term "literary man" was once one of dignity and respectability; and yet so much has it been abused that it is doubtful if any sane, normal, intelligent man will hear it applied to himself with perfect equanimity. Any ill-balanced witness in a police court case and without ostensible occupation may be relied on to inform the court that he is a "literary man." And this is the type that the public takes quite seriously, just as it greedily swallows the "journalist" of feminine fiction who writes manuscript and is "kind" to mere reporters.

But of all the professions, the richest in unworked literary material is probably that of the law. One could not easily overestimate the debt which the whole great scheme of the *Comédie Humaine* owes to the brief period of his early life which Honoré de Balzac spent in the

office of a notary. It was there that he got at the very heart of modern life. There he learned the meaning of money, not in its vulgar sense, but as a great moving and working factor and force in human society. That period was brief, but then and there was laid the foundation upon which the whole fabric of the *Comédie* was raised stone by stone. It is between the lines of the lawyer's brief that much of the real romance of the future will be found. A well-known sociological writer with whom we recently discussed the subject suggested that in the history of the New York Bar there was enough material to furnish a different plot to every man and woman who aspired to write a novel. We rather feel that he overestimated the New York Bar. However, he told what he said was a typical story, vouching for the accuracy of every detail; and this story we must concede was simply wonderful in its dramatic elements. It concerned a former

New York District Attorney, a New York daily newspaper, and one of the most notorious murder trials in the history of the country. It let in a full flood of light upon events familiar to every New Yorker. It treated of people whose names are known wherever an American newspaper is read. In short, it was a story containing every element of romance to such a degree that if served up as fiction it would probably be branded as downright sensationalism by a reading public which seems to think that the novel to be true to life must deal essentially with five-o'clock-tea ideas and twilight dialogue.

A man cannot spend very many days wandering about his New York without stumbling upon corners and neighbourhoods seemingly designed for no other purpose than to give contrast and local colour to the maker of fiction. He need not go far out of his way in the search. They will flash by him as he peers out of

windows of elevated trains,—bits of green high up on roof tops, glimpses of rear-tenement life. The closes leading from both sides of the Canon Gate, the Cowgate and the High Street, which no American visiting Edinburgh would allow himself to miss, are no more picturesque and are infinitely less interesting as spectacles of human life than our own rear tenements. Many of the most picturesque of these were swept away with the reclamation of Mulberry Bend. There are still many throughout the Ghetto, among the streets lying under the Bridge, and here and there higher up on the east and west sides. Some striking back tenements exist, or existed until recently, between East Thirty-second and East Thirty-third streets, near the river. A few years hence this phase of New York life is likely to have passed away, and if this book provokes one reader to a closer acquaintance with the rear tenements of New York, it will not

have been written in vain. A piquant and perhaps morbid curiosity for the darkness and gloom of a great city is the heritage of Dickens. James L. Ford in *The Literary Shop* described, it will be remembered, the barbed-wire fence that magazine magnates had stretched across the city at Cooper Union, and below which no purveyor of New York fiction with an eye to disposing of his work could discreetly go. As must be the case with any book of real satire, it was based upon a good deal of truth. It is probably due to the fact that the treatment of low life in our fiction is of comparatively recent origin that so much of the darker strata of New York has been ignored.

Whatever of his books may be preferred by the reader, it will usually be found that among the bits of London of which Dickens wrote there is none that has exercised a greater and more holding a charm than the debtor's prison of the

Marshalsea. To the normal well-dressed Londoner residing, let us say, somewhere in Hammersmith or the neighbourhood of St. John's Wood, the vast region "over the river" means something a little mysterious and weird. Blot out that part of Paris which lies "over the river," and the loss to literature would be infinitely more far-reaching. There lie the streets trod by Messieurs Athos, Porthos, Aramis, and D'Artagnan, the scenes of one-half of what is greatest in the *Comédie Humaine* of Jean Valjean's skulking pilgrimages, of the light loves, the *fourberies*, the poignant sufferings of Murger's men and women. The Thames and the Seine! Both are pregnant with literary significance. We have two rivers; but our novelists seem to find no inspiration in studying them by light or dark; our poets don't pipe their little lays over their darkness, their mystery, their tragedy, their treachery, their silence. For the "over the river" in New

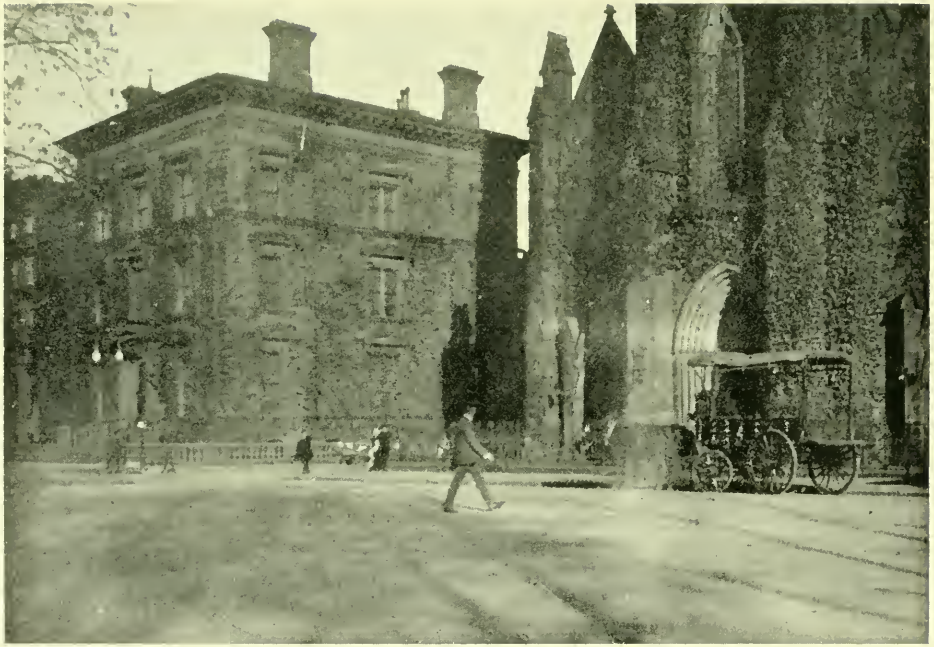
THE BERKELEY. — R. H. DAVIS.

York fiction we must rely on the future. Yet not far from the river on the Brooklyn side, near to the Sands Street gate of the Navy Yard, is a series of little alleys quite as dirty, as picturesque, as rich in suggestion as the alleys of Dickens's London. Again might be pointed out Fort Lee and the Sound side of Staten Island, with the looming chimneys of Constable Hook. Years ago, in one of those juvenile publications then the source of endless delight, appeared serially a story of which the *mise-en-scène* was on board a canal-boat which lay at anchor in the Bay of Gowanus. Gowanus! There is one reader at least to whom the sight or sound of that word still thrills and charms — by whom that early impression of darkness and gloom shall never be forgotten.

II. MADISON SQUARE — THE BERKELEY — MANHATTAN CLUB — POVERTY FLAT

Of recent years Madison Square seems to have an influence over the novelists

of New York something akin to that so long wielded by the trees and asphalt of Washington Square. There is in the turmoil, the light, the rush of the former something very typical of New York life. The tall tower of the Garden looming high over the adjacent structures has afforded our writers an inspiration which they occasionally use with singular felicity. That tower is one of the staple subjects of conversation of Mr. Davis's heroes and heroines when they happen to be in South America or Tangiers — or on board steamers in the South Atlantic — any place sufficiently distant from New York. The hero of one of Brander Matthews's *Vignettes of Manhattan*, the failure in life, pointed out of Delmonico's windows and confessed to his friend of the old college days that he would die out of sight of that tower. Many of the old landmarks that have passed away in recent years were linked with the Square's associations in earlier fiction.



EZRA PIERCE HOME. — BRANDER MATTHEWS'S "HIS FATHER'S SON."

Long before the idea of the huge garden was ever conceived the old Brunswick served as the scene of many of the episodes of Mr. Fawcett's novels. On Fifth Avenue, a little below the Square, in the heart of what is now the publishing district, lived the Satterthwaites of his *Olivia Delaplaine*.

On Twenty-third Street, a block to the east of the Square, is the School of Art used by Mr. Howells in *The Coast of Bohemia;* and at the northeast corner of the Square and Twenty-fourth Street is the home of Ezra Pierce of Brander Matthews's *His Father's Son*.

Across the city, at Twenty-sixth Street and the East River, Hamilton Knox (J. L. Williams, "The Cub Reporter and the King of Spain") used to dangle his feet over the water and watch the incoming ferryboats while waiting for Morgue news. There has been among college men, especially among Princeton men, considerable speculation as to the

identity of Hamilton Knox. Hamilton Knox was drawn from Frank Morse, the Princeton half-back of the 1893 Eleven.

Two blocks to the north, on the southeast corner of the avenue and Twenty-eighth Street, is the "Berkeley Flats," described by Richard Harding Davis in *Her First Appearance*. It was here that the irrepressible Van Bibber brought the little girl whose acquaintance he had made two hours before in the theatre green-room. The apartment of Carruthers must have been in one of the upper stories of the building, for Mr. Davis speaks of Van Bibber looking out through the window and down upon the lights of Madison Square and the boats in the East River. This story was written by Mr. Davis in Twenty-eighth Street, only a stone's throw from the "Berkeley," and the illustrations which accompanied the story were drawn from one of the "Berkeley" apartments. Re-

"THE LITTLE CHURCH AROUND THE CORNER."—DAVIS AND MATTHEWS.

turning to Madison Square, the Garden Theatre is introduced in one of Brander Matthews's *Vignettes of Manhattan*. It was there that John Stone, the naval officer, and Clay Magruder, the cowboy, saw *Patience* the night before the burning of the hotel where they were staying. The "Apollo" Hotel mentioned in so many of Professor Matthews's sketches and stories of New York life was drawn from the Belvidere Hotel, at Eighteenth Street and Fourth Avenue. At No. 5 East Twenty-ninth Street is the Church of the Transfiguration, better known as "The Little Church around the Corner." It was there that Van Bibber, acting as "Best Man," sent the young eloping couple whom he had found dining on the Terrace at the Hotel Martin. Brander Matthews calls it "The Little Church down the Street," and makes it the scene and the *raison d'être* of his most characteristic tale — the story of the actor's funeral, with its blood-red climax, the

bearers passing stolidly down the aisle unconsciously heedless of "the dry-eyed

MANHATTAN CLUB. — P. L. FORD'S "THE HONOURABLE PETER STIRLING."

mother of the dead man's unborn child." The curious arched entrance at the street

gate was erected about four years ago, and was of course not mentioned by Professor Matthews in his graphic description of the church. Crossing the avenue, we find, at the corner of Thirty-fourth Street, the home of the Manhattan Club, soon to be torn down. It was there that was held the meeting which resulted in the nomination of the Honourable Peter Stirling for the governorship of New York. A few blocks farther north brings us to the Grand Central Station which Mr. Howells has described in *Their Wedding Journey* and *A Hazard of New Fortunes*, and which plays a very conspicuous and dramatic part in Mr. Paul Leicester Ford's *The Honourable Peter Stirling*.

On the north side of Thirty-third Street, a few doors west of Sixth Avenue, is the Cayuga Flat, which, under the name of "Poverty Flat," has figured in many of James L. Ford's short, satiric studies of New York life. In the Cayuga

took place "A Dinner in Poverty Flat," and it was the scene of many of the ex-

"POVERTY FLAT."—J. L. FORD.

ploits of the amiable Police Captain Fatwallet. The hero of Richard Harding

Davis's "A Walk up the Avenue" having broken with his *fiancée*, approaching the hill at Thirtieth Street, is filled with satisfaction at the thought of his new-found freedom. At Thirty-second Street this satisfaction is changed to discontent. By the time he is passing the Reservoir at Forty-second Street he has made up his mind that he will always remain a bachelor. The sight of the tall white towers of the Cathedral at Fiftieth Street looming up before him makes him think with a great, wistful sadness of his meeting her some time in the far distant future. At the entrance to the Park come remorse, meeting, and reconciliation.

III. HENRY HARLAND'S SCENES — BEEKMAN PLACE AND THE TERRACE — ABOUT CENTRAL PARK — THE UPPER WEST SIDE

HENRY HARLAND began his literary career when he was working in the Surrogate's Office and living in his father's

house in Beekman Place. This quaint bit of New York, perched high up on the city's eastern brink, opposite the southern extremity of Blackwell's Island, and com-

"THE RIVER, THE PENITENTIARY AND THE SMOKE FROM THE OIL FACTORIES OF HUNTER'S POINT."

manding a fine view of the penitentiary, the river, and the oil factories of Hunter's Point, was the scene of all his earlier and more vigorous work, written over the *nom de guerre* of Sidney Luska. At that

time Mr. Harland was obliged to resort to a most rigid plan of literary work, carried out by him with the self-abnegation and energy of a Balzac. It was his custom to go to bed immediately after dinner, to rise at two o'clock in the morning, and, fortified with strong coffee, with a wet towel bound around his head, to write undisturbed until it was time for breakfast, after which he started downtown for his daily work in the Surrogate's Office. The first of his books thus produced was *As It Was Written*, the story of a Jewish musician, splendidly tragic in its conception and scheme. The first scene of *As it Was Written* is laid at the Fifty-first Street end of the Terrace. It was there that Ernest Neuman first found Veronika, one night when the moon had risen, a huge red disc out of the mist and smoke across the river. From the Terrace at this point a long flight of white stone steps leads down almost to the water's edge. In *Mrs.*

Peixada Mr. Harland gave us a long and graphic description of Beekman Place. He speaks of this unpretentious choco-

THE TERRACE.—H. HARLAND'S "AS IT WAS WRITTEN."

late-coloured thoroughfare, running north and south for two blocks from Forty-ninth to Fifty-first Street, as being in striking contrast to the rest of hot and

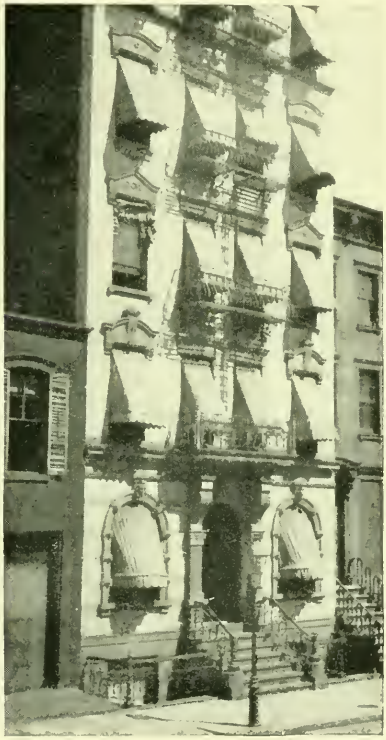
dusty New York. In the book Mrs. Peixada's home is identified as No. 46; the apartment occupied by Arthur

MRS. PEIXADA'S HOME. — H. HARLAND'S "MRS. PEIXADA."

Ripley and Julian Hetzel being in the top floor of No. 43. In reality no such numbers exist. But No. 46 was spoken of as a corner house, and the links of circumstantial evidence scattered through the book are convincing enough to leave little doubt as to its identity. From the balcony of the house occupied by Mrs. Peixada the characters of this story looked down upon the busy river, where the tugs and Sound steamers kept up a continual puffing and whistling. Mr. Harland sees a beautiful mother-of-pearl tint in the water, and hears the band around the corner grinding out selections from *Trovatore*. Veronika and her uncle Tiluski lived in the topmost story of the white apartment house on Fifty-first Street, near Second Avenue. It was there that Neuman murdered his betrothed.

A few blocks to the west and north, on Fifty-seventh Street, is the City Court which served Mr. Jesse Lynch Williams

in his story of "Mrs. Harrison Wells's Shoes." Farther up, at Sixty-ninth Street and Fifth Avenue, opposite the Park, we



TILUSKI'S HOME. — H. HARLAND'S "AS IT WAS WRITTEN."

find the house of John Lennox (*David Harum*). It was on the bridle-path that runs alongside the Reservoir that took

SCENE OF J. L. WILLIAMS'S "MRS. HARRISON WELLS'S SHOES."

place the runaway described by Mr. Ford in *The Honourable Peter Stirling*. The swan-boats in the little lake at the lower end of the Park were the inspiration of

"VAN BIBBER AND THE SWAN-BOATS." — R. H. DAVIS.

Mr. Davis's fragile and sympathetic story of Van Bibber and the little girls

JOHN LENNOX'S HOUSE. — WESTCOTT'S "DAVID HARUM."

from the tenement districts of the down-town east side. Directly across the city,

at Fifty-eighth Street and Eleventh Avenue, stood, many years ago, the cow-sheds described in *The Honourable Peter*

"THE LONG STRETCH BY THE RESERVOIR." — P. L. FORD'S "THE HONOURABLE PETER STIRLING."

Stirling. The "swill-milk cases" alluded to in this book actually took place in 1858; but for the purposes of the story Mr. Ford used them while writing of the events of the year 1873. The scenes of squatter life treated by Mr. Fawcett in his *Confessions of Claud* were laid about Sixtieth and Sixty-first streets, near the North River.

IV. HARLEM HEIGHTS—THE NEUTRAL GROUND—SCENES OF CHIMMIE FADDEN—LAGUERRE'S—SLEEPY HOLLOW

In one of the sketches of *Made in France*, which was a collection of short tales from Guy de Maupassant told with a United States twist, the late Henry Cuyler Bunner described one of those quaint old frame houses with great gardens which, until ten or a dozen years ago, were to be found here and there throughout the upper West Side. It was in the garden that the hero of

the tale came upon the strange old couple pirouetting through their ghostly dance.

SQUATTER TERRITORY. — EDGAR FAWCETT'S "THE CONFESSIONS OF CLAUD."

As to the actual situation of the house and garden there was very little said positively. It was somewhere west of

Central Park, rather far up; and with this as guide the reader who knew this part of the city in those days, before the sweeping invasion of the real-estate agent, the architect, and the mason swept away the traces of the island's earlier history, may make such selection as suits his taste. Whatever the selection may be, the reader will not have to journey far to find the scenes of Professor Brander Matthews's *Tom Paulding*, which were laid about what is now the Riverside Drive. The opening chapter of the book treated of West Ninety-third Street, and years after it was written the author took up his residence in this street, and there lives at the present day.

Among the parts of New York which have been ignored in fiction Harlem is strikingly prominent. Perhaps this is in a measure due to the swiftness of its growth and the constant changes in its architectural aspect and social conditions

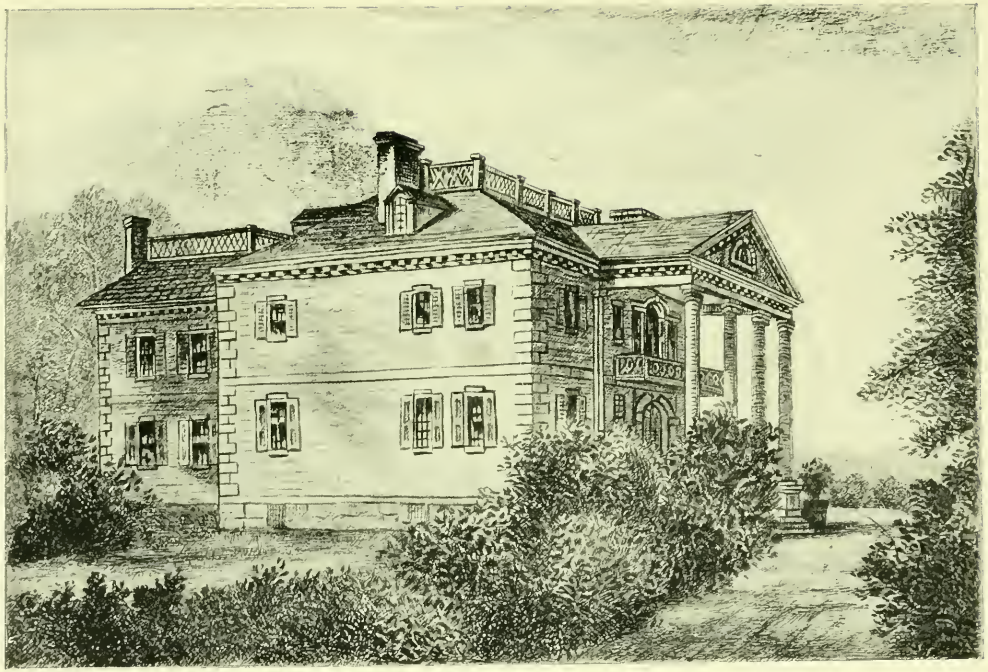
from year to year. The ubiquitous Mr. Fawcett has occasionally alluded to it, Mrs. Anna Katharine Green has used it as the background of one or two of her sensations, but it wholly lacks the charm of maturity which appeals to the literary temperament, and has, justly or unjustly, been regarded as dull and commonplace. Moving up the Heights, we come to the Jumel mansion, frequented by so many of the great personages of our national history, and one of the reputed places of concealment of Fenimore Cooper's Harvey Birch. Beneath the Heights to the northwest stretches the broad expanse of the Hudson as the Spy and Captain Wharton saw it during their flights from the Virginian troopers. To the north the broken fragments of the Highlands, throwing up their lofty heads above masses of fog that hung over the water, and by which the "course of the river could be traced into the bosom of hills whose conical summits were grouping

THE JUMEL HOUSE. — A REPUTED REFUGE OF HARVEY BIRCH.

together, one behind another, in that disorder which might be supposed to have succeeded their gigantic but fruitless efforts to stop the progress of the flood; and emerging from these confused piles, the river, as if rejoicing at its release from the struggle, expanded into a wide bay, which was ornamenting into a few fertile and low points that jutted humbly into its broad basin." Near by are the scenes of *Janice Meredith* when Mr. Paul Leicester Ford, in the fifteenth chapter, carries his narrative from southern New Jersey to the northern end of Manhattan Island; whisking the characters of the book to Harlem Heights, and showing us Washington at a time when the colonial cause was beginning to look dark and hopeless. A group of horsemen on a slight eminence of ground were watching the movements of the British men of war, and the discomfiture of the raw American recruits. Later the action shifts to the Roger Morris house, where

Washington had his headquarters and Mr. Meredith and his daughter are brought to answer to a charge of conveying to the British vastly important information as to the lack of powder in the American army.

The country at the northern end of Manhattan Island and beyond the Harlem was in a measure the inspiration of Fenimore Cooper's *The Spy*. Every crag and valley was the scene of one of the skirmishes between partisans of the rival causes in the Revolutionary period; every road knew the wanderings of Harvey Birch. The opening pages of the book find General Washington, under the name of Harper, pursuing his way through one of the numerous little valleys of Westchester, which became after the occupation of New York by the British army common ground until the end of the war. The towns in the southern part of the country near the Harlem River were, for the most part, under English dominion,



THE ROGER MORRIS HOUSE. — WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS. — P. L. FORD'S "JANICE MEREDITH."

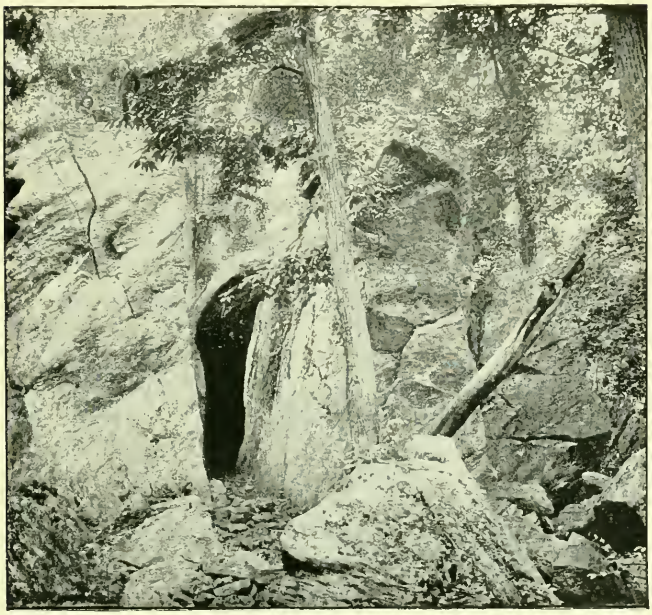
while those of northern Westchester were in sympathy with the Revolutionary cause. "The Locusts," the home of

"THE ROAD WINDING AROUND LITTLE HILLS." — "THE SPY."
Courtesy of owners of Park Hill.

the Whartons, which was a meeting-place for the officers of King George's army, stood and still stands on the side of a hill

overlooking the distant waters of Long Island Sound, the scene of *Water Witch*. "The Locusts" at the present day is occupied by descendants of the family that Cooper, when living at Closet Hall — the home of the Littlepage family in *Satanstoe* — was in the habit of visiting on his little journeys inland. The appearance of this house, which played so important a part in *The Spy*, has changed but little since the time when Cooper knew it. All the country to the north of the Harlem, stretching from the Hudson to the Sound, is rich with associations of Cooper's first great historical novel. Near by at "The Four Corners" is the site where stood the building from which Harvey Birch escaped disguised in Betty Flanagan's clothes. The village of Four Corners was a cluster of small and dilapidated houses at a spot where two roads intersected at right angles. The hilly country between Spuyten Duyvil and Yonkers was the scene of the flight and wander-

ings of the pedler and Captain Wharton, after the escape from the farmhouse in



HARVEY BIRCH'S CAVE. — WASHINGTON ROCKS.
Courtesy of owners of Park Hill.

which the English officer was imprisoned awaiting execution, and from which he was rescued by Harvey's strategy. The

cave in which they took refuge when pursued by the troop of American horse was in the Washington rocks at Park Hill. Turning from the fiction which finds its background in the last years of the eighteenth century to fiction which very distinctively belongs to the closing years of the nineteenth century, we find a few miles from "The Locusts" the house which was the scene of the exploits, belligerent and amorous, of Edward W. Townsend's *Chimmie Fadden*. The little Bowery boy, it will be remembered, after his reclamation by Miss Fannie was taken as footman to the country residence of "His Whiskers." It was there that he entered polite society, and wooed and won "De Duchess." The original of the country home of "His Whiskers" was the residence of Mr. Gillig, ex-Commodore of the Larchmont Yacht Club, at Larchmont, overlooking the Sound. To this great house the author of *Chimmie Fadden* has been a frequent visitor. Fifty

RESIDENCE OF "HIS WHISKERS." — E. W. TOWNSEND'S "CHIMMIE FADDEN."

or a hundred feet away from the northern end of the house is the stable to which "His Whiskers" was in the habit of taking Chames whenever he deemed that the young man was in need of more vigorous redemption than Miss Fannie's instruction could supply.

On the banks of the Bronx, sung by the aforesaid Chimmie, was Laguerre's, so well beloved by Mr. F. Hopkinson Smith, who characterized it as the "most delightful of French inns in the quaintest of French settlements." From the windows of the passing railway trains one may see the "tall trees trailing their branches in the still stream — hardly a dozen yards wide — the white ducks paddling together, and the queer punts drawn up on the shelving shore or tied to soggy, patched-up landing stairs." Alighting from the train at Williamsbridge, crossing the water, passing the tapestry factory, a short walk brings one to the former home of Henri Lemaire, the original of

François Laguerre. Farther down the road there is a café very much like Laguerre's, only more modern and pretentious, and consequently less picturesque. Like Laguerre in the story, Lemaire was a maker of *passe-partouts*. He is still living, and has a shop somewhere on Sixth Avenue. It is only ten or fifteen years since Laguerre's was unique in its mouldiness and charm. But now everything is much changed. The old house and the punts are going to decay, the stream is bit by bit losing its quaintness.

No portion of New York or its environments has been more sympathetically and tenderly treated than in Washington Irving's *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. Following the post road to the north from Tarrytown, one may, from the countless associations of stone and wood, readily re-evoke the quaint figure of Ichabod Crane astride his horse Gunpowder in the wild flight from the Galloping Hes-

"THE MOST DELIGHTFUL OF FRENCH INNS." — F. HOPKINSON SMITH'S "A DAY AT LAGUERRE'S."

sian. The little valley among high hills and the small brook gliding through it remain much the same as in the days when Irving was living at Sunnyside. The old church where Ichabod instructed Katrina Van Tassel in psalmody is still to be seen surrounded by locust-trees and lofty elms from among which "its decent whitewashed walls shine modestly forth, like Christian purity beaming through the shades of retirement. A gentle slope descends from it to a silver sheet of water, bordered by high trees, between which peeps may be caught at the blue hills of the Hudson." This church was built in the seventeenth century. From the surrounding churchyard the Headless Horseman was said to issue nightly. Ichabod's fright began when passing the tree by which Major André was captured. His experience with the Headless Horseman began at the bridge, about two hundred yards farther on. It was not until the old church had been

reached that the Headless Horseman, rising in his stirrups, hurled the pumpkin which laid the fleeing schoolmaster

THE OLD MILL. — GEOFFREY CRAYON'S "CHRONICLES."

low. The old Mott homestead, believed to have been the home of Katrina Van Tassel, was recently destroyed. The schoolhouse in which Ichabod Crane

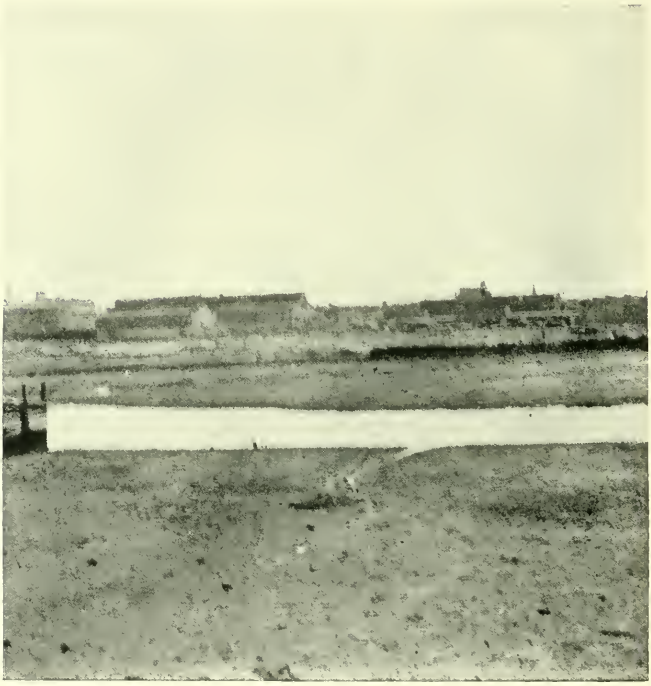
"FLOCKS OF WHITE DUCKS PADDLING TOGETHER." — F. HOPKINSON SMITH'S "A DAY AT LAGUERRE'S."

taught and which was harassed by Brom Bones and his wild cronies, has also passed away. Near by we find the ruins of the haunted mill of Geoffrey Crayon's *Chronicles*.

V. GREENPOINT — SCENES OF "TOM GROGAN"

In *An Ambitious Woman* Edgar Fawcett gave us a description of an outlying portion of New York strikingly adequate in its scope and conviction. Of Greenpoint he says that its sovereign dreariness still remains. He dwells at length on its melancholy, its ugliness, its torpor, its neglect. To him it always had a certain "goblin hideousness keenly picturesque." When writing *An Ambitious Woman* he went time and time again to Greenpoint to study its conditions and atmosphere, — to get all its tragi-comic suggestiveness well in memory. The background of the story — the black, loamy meadow, and the sodden bridge,

and the little inky creek, and the iris-necked flock of pigeons, and the dull,



"THE INKY CREEK AND FLAT MARSH LAND." — EDGAR FAWCETT'S "AN AMBITIOUS WOMAN."

dirty smoke from the factories — was all very real to him.

"THAT BROAD EXPANSION OF THE RIVER DENOMINATED BY THE DUTCH NAVIGATORS THE TAPPAN ZEE."

The Twinings lived in a three-story wooden house of a yellowish drab colour, with trellised piazza, Corinthian pillars, and high basement windows, in one of the retired side streets of Greenpoint. A few such houses are still to be found, but the book offers no evidence that the author had in mind any particular structure. Claire Twining, before the encounter with Josie which marked such a crisis in her life, was standing on a little hill which overlooked the lights of the city. This hill, from which Mr. Fawcett described his heroine as "watching the wrinkled river, drab and tremulous, the boats, and beyond the church-spires of New York," was probably Pottery Hill, which was razed about ten years ago. Crossing two rivers and the city between, we find at Hoboken the little green park described in the same author's *A Daughter of Silence*. This book was a favourite novel of the late Colonel Ingersoll. In this park, which may be

seen from the river, Guy Arbuthnot and Brenda first speak.

TOM GROGAN'S HOUSE.

The opening pages of F. Hopkinson Smith's *Tom Grogan* deal with the work about the Lighthouse Department and

THE ANDRÉ TREE AND MONUMENT. — IRVING'S "LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW."

the Government dock at St. George, Staten Island. Babcock, building the sea wall, comes upon Tom Grogan in the depot yard with its coal docks and machine shops. Over the hill in Staple-

TOM GROGAN'S BARN.

ton, thinly disguised in the story as Rockville, was Tom Grogan's house and stables. The house, a plain, square frame dwelling, with front and rear verandas, protected by the arching branches of a

big sycamore-tree and surrounded by a small garden filled with flaming dahlias and chrysanthemums, is to-day occupied by the daughter and son-in-law of the original of the character, who herself lives in a house of recent erection only a stone's throw distant. Directly in the rear of this house may be found the stables, the stable yard, and the pump and horse trough, all of which play a conspicuous part in the tale. It was while in the larger of the two stables that Tom was struck down by the hammer in the hand of Dan McGaw, and through the window at the side came the light by which she saw his face before the blow fell. The long room in which Judge Bowker gave the decision which settled finally the question of the award of the contract, and allowed Tom Grogan the right to use her husband's signature in carrying on her business, was not, as might be supposed, in the Town Hall proper, but in a room directly over the

"THE SEA WALL THAT BABCOCK WAS BUILDING FOR THE LIGHTHOUSE DEPARTMENT." — F. HOPKINSON SMITH'S "TOM GROGAN."

Stapleton Post-Office. Across the square is a one-story frame structure, which was the original of O'Leary's saloon, where McGaw and Crimmins hatched their plots against Tom. The experiences which went to make this book were gathered during Mr. Smith's connection with the Government Lighthouse Department as contractor. It was then that he came in contact with Mrs. Bridget Morgan, stevedore, the original Tom Grogan.

Down the Atlantic Highlands are the scenes of Fenimore Cooper's *Water Witch*, and out from Sandy Hook is the Scotland Lightship, thoughts of which inspired Mr. Richard Harding Davis when writing one of his best and most charming scenes of love-making, — that of Robert Clay and Hope on the north-bound steamer off the coast of South America.

A very few miles inland are the scenes of the greater part of Mr. Paul Leicester Ford's *Janice Meredith*, — many of them comparatively the same as in the days

when General Washington was in full flight across the State on his way to Philadelphia and Valley Forge. The old church where Janice and her family worshipped was destroyed by the British soldiers during the Revolution, and the tavern frequented by Fownes and Joe Bagby long ago passed away from the eyes of men. And yet there is much to re-evoke the atmosphere of the novel. Nassau Hall still stands as solidly and majestically as at the time when it served as barracks for the soldiers of both causes. Here at New Brunswick is the same Raritan, and the same broad fields, and beyond, in the distance, is the mountain range of the tale.

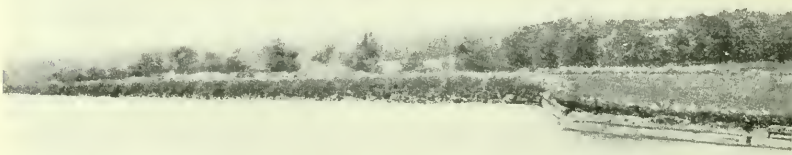
After turning over the last page of *Janice Meredith*, the present writer took up *The History of Union and Middlesex Counties*, and reading through the chapters devoted to the city of New Brunswick and the surrounding country during the War of the Revolution, found it

difficult to determine just where, in the romance, fact ended and fiction began. So careful and accurate was Mr. Ford in the building of his story that the very names of the book have the same ring

"NASSAU HALL, THEN SERVING AS BARRACKS FOR THE FORCE CENTRED THERE." — "JANICE MEREDITH," CH. XXXII.

as the names to be found in the war and court records of Middlesex County. We read in the novel of the troubles Lambert Meredith had with his Whig neighbours, and then find in a printed fragment of a letter of a British officer that "one of

our friends had got several thousand in the back country brought over to our interests; but about a month ago a mob



"GLIMPSES OF THE RARITAN, OVER FIELDS OF STUBBLE AND CORNSTACKS, BROKEN BY PATCHES OF TIMBER AND ORCHARD." — "JANICE MEREDITH," CH. III.

of about one hundred dissolute fellows surrounded his house, with an intention to tar and feather him, upon which he came out armed, and while he was rea-

GREENWOOD, THE HOME OF THE MEREDITHS. — P. L. FORD'S "JANICE MEREDITH."

soning the case with them at the door he was knocked down with the butt end of a musket, then laid like a calf across a horse, and tied to a tree while yet insensible, and tarred and feathered." This sort of thing was going on all over the country; the Tories, on the other hand, retaliating whenever they had the opportunity.

Greenwood, the home of the Merediths, by the river road, some four miles from the town of Brunswick, was purely an imaginary structure, and the accompanying picture of the house is as much the creation of the artist as of the author. In fact, there are a few little details, such as the relations of the house and the barn and the hedge, which fail to agree with the text. The interior of the Greenwood of the story was modelled after the old Ford home; the exterior after a house in Morris Plains.

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