NEW BUILDINGS OF PROMINENCE IN NEW YORK CITY.

[SEE FRONTISPIECE.]

If, as it has been said, the progress of a nation is written in its architecture, most assuredly a glance around our own city will show a degree of progress within the last five years unrivaled by almost any city in the world; a view then of some of its structures will not be uninteresting to our readers. It will also reveal several facts in regard to the increasing value of real estate, and a corresponding change in the methods of erection.

To the outsider, who should visit our city to-day after an absence of five years, the tremendous size and height of many recent buildings would be a surprise, and a ride on the elevated railroad from the Battery to 159th Street, on the west side, would convince him of the truth of our first statement in regard to the progress and, we may say also, the prosperity of the city.

In the vicinity of Central Park, and most beautifully situated, are two buildings that from their excessive size and height force themselves upon the view from almost any point north of 59th Street. The style of the two buildings is in marked contrast, and forms an interesting study of that comparatively new class of building with us, the apartment flats.

The Dakota flats, 8th Avenue between 72d and 73d Streets, from the hand of Mr. Hardenberg, is a large nine story building, in buff brick, with quoins, jambs, bays, and cornices in Ohio stone, the details being in the style of the Renaissance, and in plan consisting of a large central court with its surrounding buildings, the rooms being on a magnificent scale, and most sumptuously furnished.

Each elevation shows three distinct features, the central one on 8th Avenue covered by a hipped roof, and that on 72d Street by a gable, while the two flanking portions are also in each case covered by gables; and each in turn is connected by an arched balcony, most happily designed. Above the second story is an ornamental band with moulded belt course above, whose beauty, however, it must be said, is marred by being continually broken into by the arches of the windows. Above the sixth story is the cornice, in design of the Chateau de Blois order, while above is the steep roof broken by numerous dormers and bay turrets. The entrance is on 72d Street, and although it runs through the two lower stories, and is profusely ornamented, from a critical point of view its two arches interfere with each other, and detract in some degree from the dignity of a feature which so massive a building seems to demand.

It is an axiom as old as the Greeks, that the true test of a building is to strip it of its ornamentation, and mark the result of its mass. In this case most certainly the result would not be disappointing, for the several parts are simple in mass, possessed of a quiet dignity, and the disposition of the roofs well composed. We cannot help feeling, however, that the color of the material detracts from this dignity in no small degree.

This feeling is strengthened, too, as we walk down 8th Avenue, and approach the large group of buildings known as the Navarro flats, between 58th and 59th Streets and 7th Avenue, composed of red brick and trimmed with brown stone. The buildings are eight in number, are known as the Madrid, Cordova, Grenada, Valencia, Lisbon, Barcelona, Saragossa, and Tolosa, occupy a plot 201 by 425 feet, and are the work of Messrs. Hubert & Piersson. As will be surmised from their names, the buildings are in the Moorish style of architecture, and are by far the most important of their class in the city.

In plan they consist also of large central courts, which in this case are to be turned into gardens for the exclusive use of the occupants. By a duplex system of floors some of the flats are in two stories; all the rooms are open to the exterior light and air, are large and numerous, and furnished with every possible luxury. A most pleasing and effective feature is the arched balconies on the third, fifth, and seventh stories, which, although they connect the buildings, yet leave them open on the side to light and air, besides giving them a spacious covered balcony, which we venture to predict will be a most welcome retreat in summer. From an exterior view, the corners are flanked by circular oriels, running from the pavement to the roof, a height of nine stories.

The first and second story in each building is in rock face stone, with thin alternate tooled bands of the same material, a treatment that is most beautiful in effect; but it is extremely doubtful if the change in the color of the stone in each building does not detract from the general appearance. Above the second story to the cornice is brick work, relieved by diaper work, and the whole surmounted by a low roof, very much broken up, and the most unsatisfactory part of the whole work. The glory of the Dakota is most certainly the faulty feature in the Navarro.

The effect of the buildings will be best seen by standing at as great a distance as possible, and noting the very picturesque sky lines, which are emphasized by the chimneys and oriels with good effect.

The two central buildings on Fifty-eighth and Fifty-ninth Streets, when completed, will form by far the finest group on either street, being most simple in form and detail, consisting of two simple and graceful columnated entrances, four flanking bays in iron work of Moorish design, and the central portions broken at regular intervals by window openings, giving an effect most quiet and restful. These buildings form a most interesting group, and their location cannot be excelled in the city of New York.

In the center of the activity of Twenty-third Street is the little building known as the Eden Musee, in the style of the French Renaissance, that has attracted considerable attention during its erection. It is from the pencil of Mr. Fernbach, who, however, did not live to see it completed, and it is one of the very few buildings of its style in New York, although common to almost every avenue in Paris. It is but two stories with attic in the steep roof, and consists of five sections, divided by pilasters on the first story, small caryatides on the second story, and is rather overloaded with detail and ornamentation. Over the central bay is a polished Tennessee marble slab with the name in gilt, and capped by a curved pediment, while the two side sections have three small windows over the entrances and a pediment dormer above. A rather slight bronze grill ornaments the central section on the first story, and it is supposable that the doors are at present temporary only, as they do not in any way harmonize with the building; rather detract from the general appearance by their cheapness.

Another jaunt toward the Battery brings us to the busiest portion of the city, where we find a magnificent structure on Nassau Street now nearly completed, and the property of the Mutual Life Insurance Co. Mr. Clinton has here given New York a notable and worthy building, but has worked under the embarrassing condition of narrow and cramped streets, so that much of its beauty is lost to the eye. The building takes in the whole square upon which the old post office stood, and the facade on Nassau Street is divided into three distinct bays, the central one breaking back a couple of feet, and occupied in part by the entrance porch. The first story and a half is built up with granite piers slightly rusticated, and gives an appearance of strength and solidity to the whole structure. Above, a light sandstone is used, and the second order is formed by square pilasters of small height in proportion to their width, which support a cornice breaking around the whole building. Above this cornice starts the happiest feature of the building, consisting of simple flat pilasters with carved capitals and arched heads, inclosing four stories in height.

Still above the main cornice is another story, with ornamented balustrade above, but entirely lost to view, owing to the tremendous height and the narrowness of the street. Perhaps the finest feature is the porch, running two stories in height, and consisting on the first story of square pilasters covered with Renaissance carving, and flanked by a column in alternate courses of polished and fluted granite. Above are still other square shafts, with two polished granite columns. It is perhaps the most magnificent porch in the city. Mr. Clinton has been criticised as building an architectural folly, because of the relation of the new building to its surroundings. But this is evidently unfair, since, were any such rule followed out, our architecture would become a mere adaptation of a building to its surrounding buildings, be they high or low, good, bad, or indifferent, instead of standing on its own merit as an architectural work; and we may thank the architect in the present instance for ignoring just such absurd criticism, and placing on his site a building that stands head and shoulders above its neighbors in reality as well as architectural worth. The drawing which we have made of the building is taken from a lithograph published by Root & Tinker, of this city.

Battery Park has long been regarded as a most desirable location for a building of large proportions, and Mr. Post has recently placed upon one of its most important sites the building known as the Produce Exchange, a large building covering a whole square, and in brick and terra cotta. Unlike many of our large structures it is very simple in design, and a repetition of a single well designed feature. The first story is broken by massive brick piers, inclosing an iron framed window of ornamented mullions and transoms, and supporting a heavy frieze and cornice, upon which starts the second order of pilasters, of brick, with noble round arches of brick and terra cotta, the spandrels being filled with ornamented terra cotta panels, from which spring the heads of different animals in strong relief. Above these, inclosed between the frieze necking and the main cornice, is a row of nearly square windows, while above is an added story of arched windows, but giving one the impression of an afterthought or an addition. In the center of the facades are the triple entrances, with polished marble columns projecting from the face of the building, and backed by massive arches. The huge tower is unseen from Broadway, but it forms a conspicuous landmark to the south, and can be seen far away at sea.

As an example of the recent domestic architecture of our city, perhaps no buildings have attracted such general attention as the Vanderbilt mansions on Fifth Avenue. By far the finest of them is the studied work of Mr. Hunt, on the corner of 52d Street, and reminding one strongly of the old French chateaux in the departments of Indre-et-Loire. Could it have been surrounded by trees, away from the whirl of Fifth Avenue, and its area filled with water, after the fashion of a moat, we should verily have had a small Chambord, a Chenonceaux, or an Azay-le-Rideau. The arched entrance is broad, highly ornamented, and surrounded by a balcony whose sides are enriched by most delicate carving. Above is a beautifully proportioned triple window, over which runs the cornice with its hipped roof and dormer. In the angle of the entrance is quartered a small circular stairway, with profuse exterior ornamentation, and capped by a veritable "extinguisher top" roof.

Best of all is the extreme simplicity of the main double windows, repeated in the three stories of the main building, and ending in a dormer of exquisite design. On the side are three bays, one a hanging oriel window, supported upon an enriched and moulded corbel, while the bay itself is broken by a triple window with carved pilasters and delicate carved panels above and below. Above the bays are two more large dormers of somewhat similar design as on the front. A noticeable feature in Mr. Hunt's design is the large amount of honest, unbroken wall surface, which gives the building breadth and character, notwithstanding the unusual amount of enrichment, and this fact is the more marked because of the almost universal mania of architects to break up every surface by unmeaning panels or windows.

The buildings of which we have thus made slight mention are but a half dozen of the hundreds that are springing up all over New York, that are beautifying our streets, and bidding fair to make the city the architectural center of the country.

The Future Consumption of Cotton.

It appears from the statistics of W. John Basilie, who has patiently investigated the subject, that the total production of cotton last year amounted to 9,410,000 bales. The quantity consumed may be thus approximately reckoned: America, 2,238,000 bales; England, 3,666,000 bales; European Continent, 3,120,000 bales. The consumption of cotton by Indian spinners may be left out of consideration. All the cotton produced went into consumption with the exception of a trifling balance of about 386,000 bales, and, as the records of previous years show similar results, the first portion of the theory advanced may be assumed to be correct.

Now let these figures be analyzed so that data may be obtained as to the probable future consumption of cotton. The consumption of cotton in England for cotton goods exported is 2,534,760 bales, and the consumption of cotton goods in Great Britain is 1,131,240 bales, this latter quantity being equal to 12 pounds of cotton per annum for each person. The consumption of cotton goods sent from England to the East Indies averages annually 1,737,000,000 yards, equal to 1¾ pounds of cotton per head; and to China and Japan 443,000,000 yards, or 4 ounces of cotton per head. The consumption of cotton in Europe for cotton goods imported is 620,000 bales, and the cotton consumed on that continent for cotton goods there manufactured is 2,500,000 bales, equal to 6 pounds of cotton per head. The consumption of cotton in the United States for cotton goods exported is 1,403,000 bales, and the cotton consumed for cotton goods manufactured for home use is 835,000 bales, equal to 6 pounds per head. Taking past experience into consideration in conjunction with last year's consumption, it is underestimating future consumption to assume that within the next three years the requirements of the East Indies, China, and Japan will rise to 2¼ pounds of cotton per head, which will give an increase of 2,478,200 bales. It has already been said that the consumption of cotton in Great Britain is 12 pounds per head per annum, and on the Continent 6 pounds per head per annum.

Ignore any increase in the consumption of Great Britain, but allow the European consumption to increase from 6 pounds to 8 pounds per head, which is a moderate computation, seeing how the consumption has grown during the last decade, and in two or three years there will be from Europe alone an increased demand for cotton amounting to 1,250,000 bales. Then allow an increase in the American consumption to bring up its total to 2,613,000 bales, and the result is that within a year or two, or it may at the outside be three years, there will be required by cloth manufacturers 13,127,200 bales of cotton for the year's work, and it requires no stretch of the imagination to see that in five years' time 15,000,000 bales will be required for manufacturing purposes. It is not intended in this article, says *The Textile Record*, to discuss the source of supply, but simply to show an enormous increase in the future in the demand for cotton. All calculations respecting the output are liable to miscarry, but in those above named it may confidently be assumed that they underestimate probable requirements, and do not err on the side of exaggeration.

Sawdust in Plastering.

Two Western inventors have recently obtained patents for the use of sawdust instead of sand in plastering compositions, and this, it is conceived, may be a matter of considerable importance to the owners of sawmills in the principal lumbering towns. One of the patents is for the use of nearly equal parts of plaster of Paris or cement and sawdust, with the ordinary amount of plastering hair and water; the other calls for the use of about 4½ pounds each of slaked lime and sawdust to 1 pound of plaster of Paris, a quarter of a pound of glue, and a sixteenth of a pound of glycerine, with plasterer's hair. Whether or not either of these described plasters would be cheaper than those made in the ordinary way, they would certainly be lighter, and it is believed that they would better adhere to the walls, and not be so liable to chip, scale, and crack. Sifted sawdust has before been used to some extent by experienced workmen for mixing with mortar for plastering external walls, exposed to the alternate action of water and frost, as a preventive of scaling. Certainly the experiment of introducing sawdust in place of sand in mortar is worth trying, for in many places sharp sand suitable for the purpose is difficult to obtain.

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THE CAMPANILE.

THE PRODUCE EXCHANGE.

W. K. VANDERBILT HOUSE.

THE MUTUAL LIFE BUILDING.

THE DAKOTA APARTMENT HOUSE.

BONNELL DEL

CENTRAL PARK APARTMENTS.

EDEN MUSÉE.

SCHAMM

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