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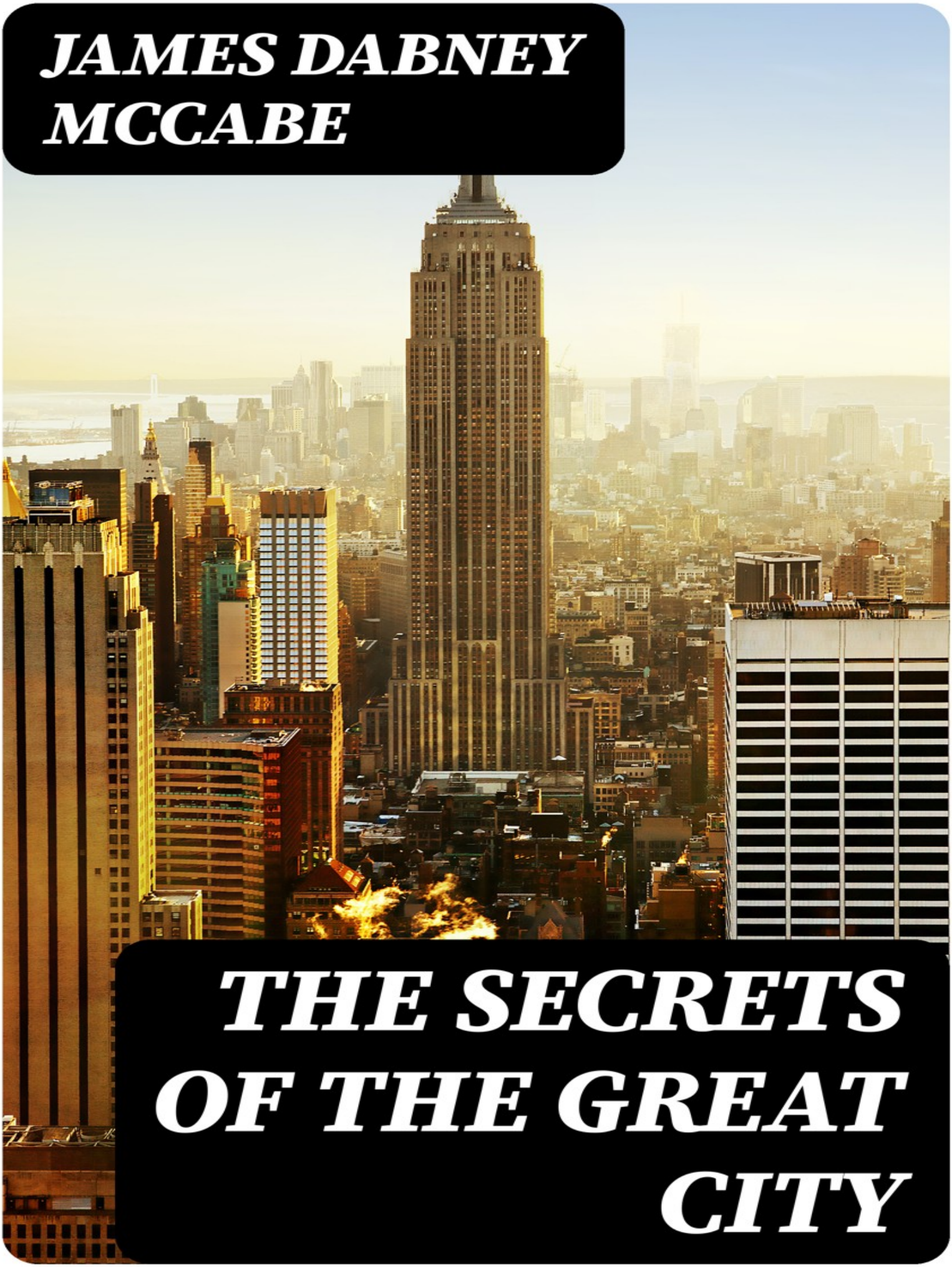

THE SECRETS OF THE GREAT CITY

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James Dabney McCabe

The Secrets of the Great City

A Work Descriptive of the Virtues and the Vices, the Mysteries, Miseries and Crimes of New York City

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CHAPTER I.

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

The City of New York is the largest and most important in America. Its corporate limits embrace the whole of Manhattan Island, on which it is situated, and which is bounded by the Hudson, the East and Harlem rivers, and by Spuyten Duyvil creek, which last connects the Harlem with the Hudson. Being almost entirely surrounded by deep water, and lying within sight of the ocean, and only sixteen miles from it, the city is naturally the greatest commercial centre of the country. The extreme length of the island is fifteen miles, and its average breadth a mile and a half. The city lies at the head of New York Bay, which stretches away for miles until the Narrows, the main entrance to the harbor, are reached, presenting a panorama unsurpassed for natural and artificial beauty. The people of New York are

very proud of their bay, and justly regard it as one of the most magnificent in the world.

The city was originally settled by the Dutch, toward the close of the year 1614, and called by them New Amsterdam. In 1664, it passed into the hands of the English, and was named New York, which name was also given to the whole province. The first settlement was made at the extreme lower part of the island, on the spot now known as the Battery. A fort was erected, and the little hamlet surrounded by a strong stockade as a protection against the savages. The first settlers were eminently just in their dealings with the red men, and purchased the island from them, giving them what was considered by all parties a fair price for it. They felt sure that their new home was destined to become a place of importance in the course of time. Its commercial advantages were evident at a glance; the climate was delightful, being neither so rigorous as that of the Eastern colonies, nor so enervating as that of the Southern. The hopes of the founders of New York are more than realized in the metropolis of to-day.

The city grew very slowly at the beginning. In 1686, it was regularly incorporated by a charter. In 1693, the first printing press was set up in the city by William Bradford. In 1690, New York contained five hundred and ninety-four houses and six thousand inhabitants. In 1790, one hundred years later, the city had a population of thirty-three thousand. It was not until the beginning of the present century that it commenced that wonderful growth which has given it its present importance. At first it spread more rapidly on the east side than on the west. As late as the

close of the Revolution, what is now Chambers street was the extreme upper limit, and its line was marked by a strong stockade, built across from river to river, with gates leading to the various country roads which traversed the upper part of the island.

The City of New York now extends from the Battery to the Harlem river and Spuyten Duyvil creek, and is built up with great regularity as far as One-hundred and Thirtieth street. Harlem, Yorkville, Manhattanville, Bloomingdale, Carmansville, and Washington Heights or Fort Washington, were all originally separate villages, but are now parts of the great city. The island comes to a point at the Battery, and from this extremity stretches away northward like a fan. It attains its greatest width at Fourteenth and Eighty-seventh streets. Broadway is the longest street, running from, the Battery to Spuyten Duyvil creek, a distance of fifteen miles. It is lighted with gas along the entire line. Street railways and omnibus lines connect the various parts of the city, affording cheap and rapid transportation within its limits. Ferry boats ply constantly between the island and the neighboring shores, and railroads and steamboats connect it with all parts of the world.

THE POPULATION.

The population of New York is over one million of inhabitants. This does not include the immense throng of visitors for business and pleasure. It is estimated that forty thousand of these arrive and depart daily. During times of more than ordinary interest—such as a national convention

of some political party, the meeting of some great religious body, the world's fair, or some such special attraction—these arrivals are greatly increased. During the recent session of the Democratic National Convention, in July, 1868, the number of strangers present in the city was estimated at two hundred thousand. The amount of money brought into the city by these strangers is astonishing. Millions are spent by them annually during their visits to the metropolis.

The population is made up from every nation under Heaven. The natives are in the minority. The foreign element predominates. Irishmen, Germans, Jews, Turks, Greeks, Russians, Italians, Spaniards, Mexicans, Portuguese, Scotch, French, Chinese—in short, representatives of every nationality—abound. These frequently herd together, each class by itself, in distinct parts of the city, which they seem to regard as their own.

Land is very scarce and valuable in New York, and this fact compels the poorer classes to live in greater distress than in most cities of the world. The whole number of buildings in the city in 1860 was fifty-five thousand, which includes churches, stores, etc. In the same year the population was eight hundred and five thousand, or one hundred and sixty-one thousand families. Of these fifteen thousand only occupied entire houses; nine thousand one hundred and twenty dwellings contained two families, and six thousand one hundred contained three families. As we shall have to recur to this subject again, we pass on now, merely remarking that these "tenement sections" of the city, as they are called, are more crowded now than ever,

the increase in buildings having fallen far behind the increase of the population in the last eight years.

This mixed population makes New York a thorough cosmopolitan city; yet at the same time it is eminently American. Although the native New York element is small in numbers, its influence is very great. Besides this, numbers flock to the city from all parts of the Union, and this constant influx of fresh American vitality does much to keep the city true to the general character of the country.

It has been well said, that "New York is the best place in the world to take the conceit out of a man." This is true. No matter how great or flattering is the local reputation of an individual, he finds upon reaching New York that he is entirely unknown. He must at once set to work to build up a reputation here, where he will be taken for just what he is worth, and no more. The city is a great school for studying human nature, and its people are proficients in the art of discerning character.

In point of morality, the people of New York, in spite of all that has been said of them, compare favorably with those of any other city. If the darkest side of life is to be seen here, one may also witness the best. The greatest scoundrels and the purest Christians are to be found here. It is but natural that this, being the great centre of wealth, should also be the great centre of all that is good and beautiful in life. It is true that the Devil's work is done here on a gigantic scale, but the will of the Lord is done on an equally great, if not a greater, scale. In its charities New York stands at the head of American communities—the great heart of the city throbs warmly for suffering humanity. The municipal authorities

expend annually seven hundred thousand dollars in public charities. The various religious denominations spend annually three millions more, and besides this the city is constantly sending out princely sums to relieve want and suffering in all parts of our broad land.

The people of New York are the most liberal of any in America in matters of opinion. Here, as a general rule, no man seeks to influence the belief of another, except so far as all men are privileged to do so. Every religious faith, every shade of political opinion, is tolerated and protected. Men concern themselves with their own affairs only. Indeed, this feeling is carried to such an extreme that it has engendered a decided indifference between man and man. People live for years as next door neighbors, without ever knowing each other by sight. A gentleman once happened to notice the name of his next door neighbor on the door-plate. To his surprise he found it the same as his own. Accosting the owner of the door-plate one day, for the first time, he remarked that it was singular that two people bearing the same name should live side by side for years without knowing each other. This remark led to mutual inquiries and statements, and to their surprise the two men found they were brothers—sons of the same parents. They had not met for many years, and for fully twelve years had lived side by side as neighbors, without knowing each other. This incident may be overdrawn, but it will illustrate a peculiar feature of New York life.

Strangers coming to New York are struck with the fact that there are but two classes in the city—the poor and the rich. The middle class, which is so numerous in other cities,

hardly exists at all here. The reason of this is plain to the initiated. Living in New York is so expensive that persons of moderate means reside in the suburbs, some of them as far as forty miles in the country. They come into the city, to their business, in crowds, between the hours of seven and nine in the morning, and literally pour out of it between four and seven in the evening. In fair weather the inconvenience of such a life is trifling, but in the winter it is absolutely fearful. A deep snow will sometimes obstruct the railroad tracks, and persons living outside of the city are either unable to leave New York, or are forced to spend the night on the cars. Again, the rivers will be so full of floating ice as to render it very dangerous, if not impossible, for the ferry boats to cross. At such times the railroad depots and ferry houses are crowded with persons anxiously awaiting transportation to their homes. The detention in New York, however, is not the greatest inconvenience caused by such mishaps. Many persons are frequently unable to reach the city, and thus lose several days from their business, at times when they can ill afford it.

We have already referred to the scarcity of houses. The population of the city increases so rapidly that house-room cannot be provided for all. House rent is very high in New York. A house for a family of six persons, in a moderately respectable neighborhood, will rent for from sixteen hundred to twenty-five hundred dollars, the rate increasing as the neighborhood improves. On the fashionable streets, houses rent for from six thousand to fifteen thousand dollars per annum. These, it must be remembered, are palatial. Many persons owning these houses, live in Europe, or in other

parts of the country, and pay all their expenses with the rent thus secured.

In consequence of this scarcity of dwellings, and the enormous rents asked for them, few families have residences of their own. People of moderate means generally rent a house, and sub-let a part of it to another family, take boarders, or rent furnished or unfurnished rooms to lodgers.

Furniture is expensive, and many persons prefer to rent furnished houses. These are always in demand, and in good localities command enormous prices. Heavy security has to be given by the lessee in such cases, as, without this, the tenant might make away with the furniture. Many persons owning houses for rent, furnish them at their own expense, and let them, the heavy rent soon paying a handsome profit on the furniture.

Persons living in a rented house are constantly apprehensive. Except in cases of long leases, no one knows how much his rent may be increased the next year. This causes a constant shifting of quarters, and is expensive and vexatious in the highest degree. It is partly due to the unsettled condition of the currency, but mainly to the scarcity of houses.

Many—indeed; the majority of the better class of inhabitants—prefer to board. Hotels and boarding houses pay well in New York. They are always full, and their prosperity has given rise to the remark that, "New York is a vast boarding house." We shall discuss this portion of our subject more fully in another chapter.

To persons of means, New York offers more advantages as a place of residence than any city in the land. Its delightful climate, its cosmopolitan and metropolitan character, and the endless variety of its attractions, render it the most delightful home in America. That this is true is shown by the fact that few persons who have lived in New York for twelve months ever care to leave it. Even those who could do better else where are powerless to resist its fascinations.

[Illustration: Broadway, as seen from The St. Nicholas Hotel.]

CHAPTER II.

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THE STREETS OF NEW YORK.

The City of New York has been regularly laid out and surveyed for a distance of twelve miles from the Battery. It has over two hundred miles of paved streets. Most of the streets in the old Dutch city are crooked and narrow, but above that they are broader, and better laid on; and after passing Fulton street, they become quite regular. Above Fourteenth street, the city is laid off in regular squares. First street is located about a mile and four fifths above the Battery. From this the cross streets extend to Two hundred and twenty-eighth street.

The lengths of the blocks, between First and One-hundred and twenty- first streets, vary from one hundred and eighty-one to two hundred and eleven feet eleven inches.

Those between the avenues (which run at right angles to the streets), vary from four hundred and five to nine hundred and twenty feet.

The avenues are all one hundred feet wide, excepting Lexington and Madison, which are seventy-five, and Fourth Avenue, above Thirty-fourth street, which is one hundred and forty feet wide.

The numerical streets are all sixty feet wide, excepting Fourteenth, Twenty-third, Thirty-fourth, Forty-second, and eleven others, north of these, which are one hundred feet wide.

There are twelve fine avenues at parallel distances apart of about eight hundred feet. They begin about First or Fourth street, and run to the end of the island. Second and Eighth are the longest, and Fifth and Madison the most fashionable.

BROADWAY.

The most wonderful street in the world is Broadway. It extends, as we have said, the whole length of the island. But its most attractive features are between the Bowling Green and Thirty-fourth street—the chief part of these being below Fourteenth street. The street is about sixty feet wide, and is thronged with vehicles of every description. Often times these vehicles crowd the streets to such an extent that they become "jammed," and the police are forced to interfere and compel the drivers to take the routes assigned them. The scene at such a time is thrilling. A stranger feels sure that the vehicles cannot be extricated without loss of life or limb to man or beast, and the shouts and oaths of the drivers fairly bewilder him. In a few moments, however, he sees a squad of policemen approach, and plunge boldly into the throng of vehicles. The shouts and oaths of the drivers cease, the vehicles move on, one at a time, according to the orders of the police, and soon the street is clear again, to be blocked, perhaps, in a similar manner, in less than an hour.

Twenty thousand vehicles daily traverse this great thoroughfare.

It is always a difficult matter to cross Broadway in the busy season. Ladies, old persons, and children, find it impossible to do so without the aid of the police, whose duty it is to make a way for them through the crowds of vehicles. A bridge was erected at the corner of Broadway and Fulton street, which is the most crowded part of the city, for the purpose of allowing pedestrians to cross over the heads of the throng in the street. It proved a failure, however. Few persons used it, except to see from it the magnificent panorama of Broadway, and the city authorities have ordered it to be taken down. It disfigures the street very much, and its removal will be hailed with delight by the native population.

Broadway properly begins at the Bowling Green. From this point it extends in a straight line to Fourteenth street and Union Square. Below Wall street, it is mainly devoted to the "Express" business, the headquarters and branch offices of nearly all the lines in the country centering here. Opposite Wall street, on the west side of Broadway, is Trinity Church and its grave-yard. From Wall street to Ann street, Insurance Companies, Real Estate Agents, Bankers and Brokers predominate. At the corner of Ann street, is the magnificent "Herald Office," adjoining which is the "Park Bank," one of the grandest structures in the country. Opposite these are the Astor House and St. Paul's Church. Passing the Astor House, the visitor finds the Park, containing the City Hall, on his right. Across the Park are Park Row and Printing House Square, containing all the

principal newspaper offices of the city. Old Tammany Hall once stood on this Square, but the site is now occupied by the "The Sun," and "Brick Pomeroy's Democrat"—*Arcades Ambo*.

Beyond the City Hall, at the north-east corner of Chambers street and Broadway, is "Stewart's marble dry goods palace," as it is called. This is the *wholesale* warehouse of A. T. Stewart & Co., and occupies the entire block. The *retail* department of this great firm, is higher up town. Passing along, one sees, in glancing up and down the cross streets, long rows of marble and brown stone warehouses, stretching away for many blocks on either hand, and affording proof positive of the immensity and success of the business transacted in this locality.

Opposite Pearl street is the New York Hospital, standing back amidst its noble old trees; the yard is cut off from the street by an iron railing. Crossing Canal street, the widest and most conspicuous we have yet passed over, we see the handsome establishment of Lord & Taylor. rivals to Stewart, in the retail dry goods trade; on the corner of Grand street. The brown stone building opposite, is Brooks' clothing house, the largest and finest in the country. Between Broome and Spring streets, are the marble and brown stone buildings of the famous St. Nicholas Hotel. On the block above, and opposite, is Tiffany's, too well known to need a description. On the corner of Prince street, is Ball & Black's, a visit to which palace is worth a trip to the city. Diagonally opposite is the Metropolitan Hotel, in the rear of which is the theatre known as Niblo's Garden. Above this we pass the Olympic Theatre, the great Dollar store, the Southern Hotel,

the New York Hotel, the New York Theatre, and Goupil's famous art gallery. On the corner of Tenth street, is a magnificent iron building, painted white. This is Stewards up town, or retail store. It is always filled with ladies "shopping," and the streets around it are blocked with carriages. Throngs of elegantly dressed ladies pass in and out, the whole scene being animated and interesting. Above this is Grace Church, one of the most beautiful religious structures in the city. On the corner of Thirteenth street, is Wallack's Theatre. At Fourteenth street, we find a handsome square, formerly a fashionable place of residence, but now giving way to business houses and hotels. This is Union Square. Passing around it, Broadway runs in a north-westerly direction, and at the intersection of the great thoroughfare with Fifth Avenue, at Twenty-third street, we see the magnificent front of the Fifth Avenue Hotel. On the block beyond are the Albemarle and Hoffman Houses, with the St. James a little above. Opposite are the Worth Monument and Madison Square. Above this are several minor hotels, and Wood's Theatre. The street is but little improved above Thirty-fourth street.

Below Twenty-third street, and especially below Union Square, Broadway is built up magnificently. Marble, brown stone, and iron warehouses, extend in long rows on each side of the street. There are some old shanties still standing on the great thoroughfare, but they are rapidly disappearing, and in a few years will be entirely gone. The view from any point below Fourteenth street, ranges from Union Square to the Bowling Green, and is grand and exhilarating beyond description. The windows of the stores

are filled with the gayest and most showy goods. Jewels, silks, satins, laces, ribbons, household goods, silver ware, toys, paintings; in short, rare, costly, and beautiful objects, greet the gazer on every hand.

There are no railroad tracks on Broadway below Fourteenth street; the public travel is done by means of omnibusses, or stages, as they are called. Several hundred of these traverse the street from the lower ferries as far up as Twenty-third street, turning off at various points into the side streets and avenues. At night the many colored lamps of these vehicles add a striking and picturesque feature to the scene. They are filled with all sorts of people.

The Broadway side walks are always crowded, and this throng of passers- by is, to our mind, the most attractive feature of the busy scene. Every class and shade of nationality and character is represented here. America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and even Oceanica, has each its representatives here. High and low, rich and poor, pass along these side-walks, at a speed peculiar to New York, and positively bewildering to a stranger. No one seems to think of any person but himself, and each one jostles his neighbor or brushes by him with an indifference amusing to behold. Fine gentlemen in broad cloth, ladies in silks and jewels, and beggars in squalidness and rags, are mingled here in true Republican confusion. The bustle and uproar are very great, generally making it impossible to converse in an ordinary tone. From early morning till near midnight this scene goes on.

A gentleman from the remote interior, once put up at the St. Nicholas Hotel. He came to the City on urgent business,

and told a friend who was with him, that he intended to start out early the next morning. This friend saw him, about noon the next day, waiting at the door of the St. Nicholas Hotel, surveying the passing crowd with an air of impatience.

"Have you finished your business?" he asked.

"No," said the gentleman, "I have not yet started out. I've been waiting here for three hours for this crowd to pass by, and I see no signs of it doing so."

The friend, pitying him, put him in a stage, and started him off, telling him that crowd usually took twenty-four hours to pass that point.

At night the scene changes. The crowd of vehicles on the street is not so dense, and the "foot passengers" are somewhat thinned put. The lower part of the city, which is devoted exclusively to business, is deserted. For blocks the only persons to be seen are the policemen on their beats. Above Canal street, however, all is life and bustle. The street is brilliantly lighted. The windows of the stores and restaurants, and the lamps of the theatres and concert saloons, add greatly to the general illumination, while the long lines of the red, green, and blue lights of the stages, rising and falling with the motion of the vehicles, add a novelty and beauty to the picture. Strains of music or bursts of applause, float out on the night air from the places of amusement, not all of which are reputable. The street is full of all kinds of people, all of whom seem to be in high spirits, for Broadway is a sure cure for the "blues." One feature mars the scene. At every step, almost, one passes women and girls, and even mere children, seeking for company, and

soliciting passers by with their looks and manner, and sometimes by open words. The police do not allow these women to stop and converse with men on the street, and when they find a companion, they dart with him down a side street. This goes on until midnight. Then the street gradually becomes deserted, and for a few hours silence reigns in Broadway.

THE BOWERY.

Leaving the City Hall, and passing through Chatham street, one suddenly emerges from the dark, narrow lane, into a broad square, with streets leading from it to all parts of the city. It is not overclean, and has an air of sharpness and repulsiveness that at once attract attention. This is Chatham Square, the great promenade of that class generally known as "the fancy."

At the upper end of the Square is a broad, well paved, flashy looking street, stretching away to the northward, crowded with street cars, vehicles of all kinds, and pedestrians. This is the Bowery. It begins at Chatham Square, and extends as far as the Cooper Institute on Eighth street, where Third and Fourth Avenues, the first on the right hand, the other on the left, continue the thoroughfare to the Harlem river.

The Bowery first appears in the history of New York under the following circumstances. About 1642 or 1643, it was set apart by the Dutch as the residence of superannuated slaves, who, having served the Government faithfully from the earliest period of the settlement of the island, were at

last allowed to devote their labors to the support of their dependent families, and were granted parcels of land embracing from eight to twenty acres each. The Dutch were influenced by other motives than charity in this matter. The district thus granted was well out of the limits of New Amsterdam, and they were anxious to make this negro settlement a sort of breakwater against the attacks of the Indians, who were beginning to be troublesome. At this time the Bowery was covered with a dense forest. A year or two later, farms were laid out along its extent. These were called "Boweries," from which the present street derives its name. Bowery No. I. was bought by Governor Stuyvesant. His house stood about where the present St. Mark's (Episcopal) Church is located. In 1660, or near about that year, a road or lane was laid off, through what are now Chatham street, Chatham Square, and the Bowery, to the farm of Governor Stuyvesant, beyond which there was no road. To this was given the distinctive name of the "Bowery Lane." In 1783, the Bowery again came into prominent notice. On the 25th of November of that year, the American army, under General Washington, marched into the Bowery early in the morning, and remained until noon, when the British troops evacuated the city and its defences. This done, the Americans marched down the Bowery, through Chatham and Pearl streets, to the Battery, where they lowered the British flag, which had been left flying by the enemy, and hoisted the "Stars and Stripes" of the new Republic.

[Illustration: Broadway, looking up from Exchange Place.]

After the city began to extend up the island, the Bowery, which had been eminently respectable in its earlier history,

lost caste. Decent people left it, and the poorer and more disreputable classes took possession. Finally, it became notorious. It was noted for its roughs, its rowdy firemen, its courtezans—in short, it was the paradise of the worst elements of New York. The march of trade and improvement along the east side of the city has effected a partial reformation, but still the Bowery is generally regarded as one of the doubtful localities of the city.

The street runs parallel with Broadway, and is about a mile in length. It is much wider than the latter thoroughfare. It is tolerably well built up; and is improving in this respect every year. In connection with Chatham Square, it is the great route from the lower part of the island to the Harlem river on the east side. It is devoted principally to the cheap trade. The Jews abound here. The display of goods in the shops is attractive, but flashy. Few persons who have the means to buy elsewhere, care to purchase an article in the Bowery, as those familiar with it know there are but few reliable dealers along the street. Strangers from the country, servant girls, and those who are forced to put up with an inferior article from the want of a few dollars, and often a few cents, to buy a better one, trade here. As a general rule, the goods sold are of an inferior, and often worthless, quality, and the prices asked are high, though seemingly cheap. Large fortunes are made by the Bowery merchants, who, with but few exceptions, are adepts in the art of swindling their customers.

Pawnbrokers' shops, "Cheap Johns," second class hotels, dance houses, fifth rate lodging houses, low class theatres, and concert saloons, abound in the lower part of the street.

The Sunday law, which, seems to be so rigidly enforced in other parts of the city, is a dead letter in the Bowery. Here on Sunday, one may see shops of all kinds—the vilest especially—open for trade. Cheap clothing-stores, etc., concert saloons, and the most infamous dens of vice, are in full blast. The street, and the cars traversing it, are thronged with the lower classes, in search of what they call enjoyment. At night all the places of amusement are open, and are crowded to excess. Boughs, thieves, fallen women, and even little children, throng them. Indeed, it is sad to see how many children are to be found in these vile places. The price of admission is low, and, strange as it may sound, almost any beggar can raise it. People have no idea how much of the charity they lavish on street beggars goes in this direction. The amusement afforded at these places ranges from indelicate hints and allusions to the grossest indecency.

Another feature of the Bowery is the immense beer-gardens with which it abounds. We refer to those of the better class, which are patronized chiefly by the German element of the city. These are immense buildings, fitted up in imitation of a garden. Some are very handsomely frescoed, and otherwise adorned. They will accommodate from four hundred to twelve hundred guests. Germans carry their families there to spend a day, or an evening. Clubs, parties of friends, and public societies, often pay such visits to these places. Some carry their own provisions; others purchase them from the proprietor. There is no admittance fee: the entrance is free. Beer and other liquids are served out at a small cost. Guests are coming and going all the

time. Sometimes as many as five thousand people will visit one of these places in the course of an evening. The music is a great attraction to the Germans. It is exquisite in some places, especially in the Atlantic Garden, which is situated in the Bowery, near Canal street.

[Illustration: City Hall]

The profits are enormous; the proprietors frequently realize handsome fortunes in the course of a few years. Were these places all the Germans claim for them; they would be unobjectionable; but there is no disguising the fact that they encourage excess in drinking, and offer every inducement for a systematic violation of the Sabbath.

Besides these, there are saloons and gardens where none but the abandoned are to be seen. These will be noticed further on.

Respectable people avoid the Bowery, as far as possible, at night; but on Sunday night, few but those absolutely compelled to visit it, are to be seen within its limits. Every species of vice and crime is abroad at this time, watching for its victims. Those who do not wish to fall into trouble should keep out of the way.

THE AVENUES.

The Avenues of New York commence with First Avenue, which is the second east of the Bowery. They are numbered regularly to the westward until Twelfth Avenue is reached. This street forms the western shore of the island in the extreme upper part of New York. East of First Avenue, above Houston street, there are five short avenues, called A, B, C,

D, E,—the first being the most westerly. There are also other shorter avenues in the city, viz.: Lexington, commencing at Fourteenth street, lying between Third and Fourth Avenues, and extending to Sixty-sixth street; and Madison, commencing at Twenty-third street, lying between Fourth and Fifth Avenues, and running to Eighty-sixth street. Second and Eighth are the longest. Third Avenue is the main street of the east side, above Eighth street Eighth Avenue is the great thoroughfare on the west side Hudson street, of which Eighth Avenue is a continuation is rapidly becoming the West-side Bowery. Fifth and Madison are the most fashionable, and are magnificently built up with private residences, along almost their entire length. The cross streets connecting them, in the upper part of the city, are also handsomely laid off, and are filled with long rows of fine brown-stone and marble mansions.

The streets of New York are well laid off, and are paved with an excellent quality of stone. The side-walks generally consist of immense stone "flags." In the lower part of the city, in the poorer and business sections, they are dirty, and always out of order. In the upper part they are clean, and are often kept so by private contributions.

The avenues on the eastern and western extremities of the city are the abodes of poverty, want, and often of vice, hemming in the wealthy and cleanly sections on both sides. Poverty and wealth are close neighbors in New York. Only a block and a half back of the most sumptuous parts of Broadway and Fifth Avenue, want and suffering, vice and crime, hold their court. Fine ladies can look down from their

high casements upon the squalid dens of their unhappy sisters.

CHAPTER III.

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THE CITY GOVERNMENT.

The City of New York is governed by a Mayor, a Board of Aldermen and a Board of Common Councilmen. The Mayor has been stripped by the Legislature of the State of almost every power or attribute of power, and is to-day merely an ornamental figure-head to the City government. The real power lies in the Boards named above, and in the various "Commissioners" appointed by the Legislature. These are the Commissioners in charge of the streets, the Croton Aqueduct, Public Charities and Corrections, the Police and Fire Departments.

We do not seek to lay the blame for the mismanagement and infamy of the government of this City on any party or parties. It is a fact that affairs here are sadly mismanaged, whoever may be at fault.

In place of any statements of our own concerning this branch of our subject, we ask the reader's attention to the