

Luxury's Last Work on Man's Dwelling Place

LUXURY'S last word is spoken nowadays largely by help of brick and stone, marble, carved wood, cunning work in gold and silver and copper and iron, in miracles of the dyer's art and the weaver's skill; somewhat also by help of sunlit airy spaces, for unhindered sunshine within city gates is golden in more sense than one. Where every extra foot of site space stands for many good hard dollars, even multi-millionaires may well think twice over the securing of elbow room, let alone ample prospects.

Notwithstanding, a good few of them secure such prospects. In proof one has but to walk leisurely through the ultra fashionable precincts of New York. Even the crush and severe line of Fifth avenue, especially in its upper reaches, are now and then broken by wholesome fripperies of green open spaces, jealously walled and sparingly planted. But it is on Riverside Drive and its scattered relatives that one sees them at their highest, as one sees also at the highest the reward and usufruct of diligence combined with pure luck.

Fancy a house standing upon a boldly swelling corner where a crossway makes into the drive proper. It is tall, it is wide, it is big everywhere, but so fine in line and proportion it takes study to realize the mass of it. Strong but light and beautifully wrought iron grill work guards the open space round about, where the turf is truly velvet in spite of covering a ramp sharp enough to provoke drouth.

Broad, easy marble steps go up the ramp, leading to a pillared entrance. Behind the pillars one catches the gleaming of bronze doors cunningly wrought. They open upon a great hall, floored with the costliest mosaic and set round about with genuine antique columns. The big fireplace has a mantle, also antique, plundered from a ruined palace across the sea. The great stairway came from another palace, but somehow the architect has managed it so the two shall not mournfully war with each other. Perhaps they dare not quarrel in presence of the rugs which lie between. Some of the rugs are 300 years old and simply priceless—eastern fabrics without a duplicate anywhere in the world. They set the pace in furnishing—all else is in keeping.

Each of the five occupants of the house has a separate special suite—bath, bed-chamber, sitting room, dressing room and snugery, for playing at work, or working at special play. Some of the baths have tubs with silver gilt fittings, others have marble pools big enough to swim in, with marble divans running round the edges of the room. There social bathers can lie at ease, smoking, gossiping, drinking black coffee, after they have done with the plunge and the needle spray and the skilled kneading of the masseur. The dressing rooms are all in silver, silver gilt and rare odoriferous woods, each so treated as to bring out every detail of its natural beauty. Cedar, camphor, sandal—each and all are preservative. The clothes presses have drawers of camphor wood, and the closets are supplied with electric lights automatically turned on by the opening of a door.

There is also, of course, a library, a dining room, a breakfast room, a drawing room and a cosy parlor, but no ball room, for the master of all this is evangelistically austere. Still, austerity does not forbid a billiard room nor a music room, richly harmonious, whose frescoed ceiling alone represents a tidy fortune. Every manner of musical instrument sanctioned by classic taste harbors there, along with the objects of art, pictures, bronzes, engraved gems and antique gold plate, whose cost would endow a hospital. There is a small conservatory whose flowers appear shamefaced as though they felt themselves some-

what put out of court by the bronze and jewel glass enclosing them.

The building is about an open court, glass roofed in winter. It has, besides the great stairway, back stairs and two electric elevators—one for the master, one for the servants. In the basement there is a complete electric plant for lighting, laundry work, some special cooking and the recharging of automobile batteries. There is also an automobile room, big enough to hold a dozen machines. It is below street level and the gay-colored monsters ride up and down upon a special lift all their own.

The big kitchen, which matches and balances in a way, the electric plant, has a cold-storage chamber attached, and is floored with tile, walled with vitrified brick and furnished throughout in black real English oak. All the cooking vessels are of brass, copper, silver or vitrified china. To make use of them there are a chef (whose salary approaches that of a diplomat), two masculine under cooks—one especially for bread and pastry—a woman vegetable cook, a kitchen housekeeper and a brace of scullery maids. Altogether the number of servants is between thirty and forty, without counting the companion, two private secretaries and the almoner, who dispenses charity and investigates such appeals for aid as are not upon the surface fraudulent. The electric engineer lives outside, although his helper is reckoned among the household staff.

Truly up-to-date housekeeping apartments offer all the discomforts of a home, along with the splendors of a hotel. Incidentally, there are also many comforts. One can have apartments of two stories. There is an imposing entrance. Light and air are in bewildering plenty. Some big houses are built around a great central court with four passenger elevators, one in each court corner. Others are in shape somewhat of a letter H; still others approximate the Maltese cross. No tradesman's wagon may stop the way for my

lady's carriage, for there are separate driveways for such vehicles, and clean out of sight.

The ground plan of one of these big costly apartments is as intricate as that of a country house. There are foyer halls, passageways, arches and alcoves, bay window conservatories, floors of hardwood or mosaic, mail chutes, telephones, hot and cold water, hot and cold air, gas and electric ranges; two to three bath rooms, with separate servants' toilets and elevators; a blessed plenty of closets for every conceivable need; open fireplaces, brave in tilework and brasses; mirrors wherever they should be, and occasionally where they should not, and walls hung with whatever stuff the fancy of the occupant may demand. Nearly always the windows supply enchanting outlooks.

Rents rise with the floors. The higher one goes, the more one pays. The construction is supposed to be fireproof, a fact that is largely considered in the rents. Some few of the houses have automobile rooms in the basement and charge batteries from the surplus of their electric plants when lights are not required. Nearly all have perfectly equipped laundries independent of the tubs in each kitchen. Store-rooms are, of course, provided. But guest apartments are rather new. These are suites set apart to be rented in single rooms to tenants hospitably inclined, but who lack space for guests. Servants' quarters outside of and apart from the main manage recommend themselves as an innovation equally desirable. So do the sun parlors which crown some of the roofs. These furnish excellent play places for little folks and old folks in stormy weather.

Everywhere there is a laudable attempt to let in the light and make the most of it. In the upper streets and avenues of New York, which are almost solidly apartment built, one sees nearly every imaginable device for ventilation and brightness. The days of the air-shaft are plainly numbered. Even in tenement construction there is a chance that the central court may oust it.

But it is a far cry from tenements to the costly piles where rents for a single suite vary from \$3,000 to \$20,000 a year.

This is the merest outline of a few salient points. The house, with its furnishings, represents an investment a little beyond \$3,000,000. That is far less wonderful than that it is hardly exceptional. It is merely a conspicuous type among the palaces built for the modern captains-of-industry. There are finer ones and very much costlier, where the owners are connoisseurs, with a weakness for collecting objects of fabulous cost. These gentlemen collectors often store within a single room art riches surpassing a king's ransom.

Possibly the owner of millions prefers to display them mainly in a great country estate. Then for the scant city sojourns he wants only what the French happily call a foot of earth, a place where he can rest and poise himself between flights. It must be luxurious, of course, even in camps and lodges, so-called, there is a palpable trail of gold dust over everything. He has choice between several excellent things, all warranted costly enough, yet not entailing too great burdens. He may establish himself at one of the great hostels, built, says an irreverent wit, "to provide exclusiveness for the masses." Or he may set up his foot of earth in an apartment hotel; or, if he is willing to go to the level of mere millionaires, he may live under his own vine and fig tree, in a cosy apartment, renting for anything between \$3,000 and \$20,000.

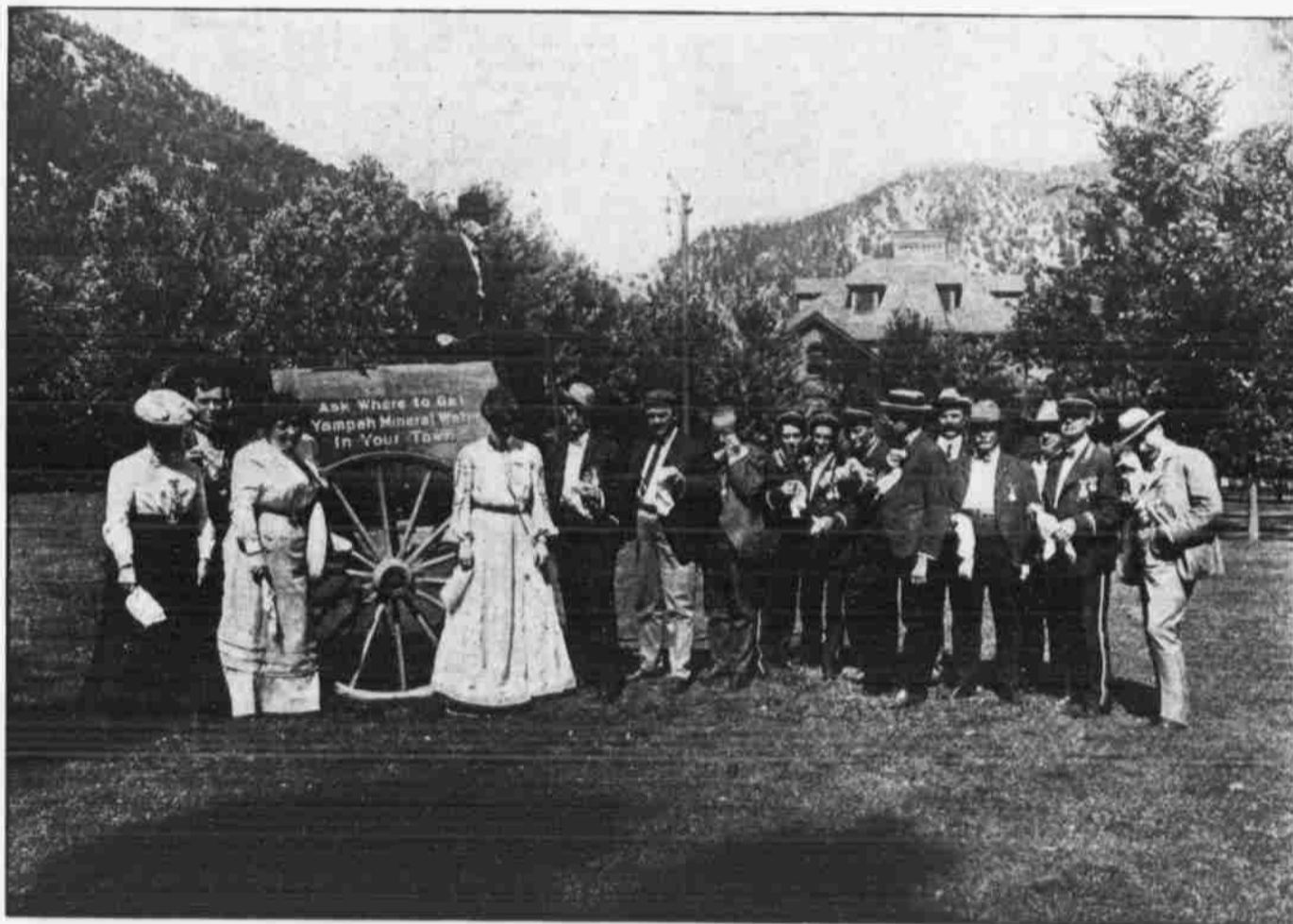
It is the big hotel which most often catches the cream of the gilded cream. Life goes tripping there, with a holiday aspect, to the liveliest piping. The very spectacle is inspiring and better than half those the play houses offer. That is, to a mind wholly material and seeking succor from vacuity, with no sort of mental or emotional strain intermixed. If the indweller is newly rich and yearns to be known and noted, he has but to make himself severely exclusive in order to become the center of interest. He may rent

the state apartments; the cost is but a paltry thousand a week, and several gentlemen have tried to take them upon yearly lease. That will set all the folk who know of it to staring and talking whenever he ventures forth, so that all in a breath the state apartment's occupant finds himself a celebrity. He can increase the celebrity by having his meals served in private and if he wishes to approach a semi-sensational climax there must be a man in the corridor keeping a weather eye upon all who approach the door. Privacy of this severe and unbending description brings a reward of publicity truly grateful to aspiring climbers.

A royal atmosphere and a truly royal disregard of cost mark and dignity state apartments. There are, perhaps, ten rooms in them—music room, parlor, breakfast and dining rooms, reception cabinet, private secretary's den, chamber, dressing room, and a bath fit for a Roman emperor. All the woodwork is solid mahogany, the floors are decked, the walls hung with brocade at \$10 the yard, or priceless, genuine, antique tapestry; or paneled in rich woods and overlaid with marvels of the potter's skill. The big bed stands upon a dais, out of deference, possibly, to a royal shade, for it belonged originally to a famous king. The rugs came straight from Persia, and more than half the furniture is costly antique stuff. The other moiety is all handmade and beautifully wrought. Each room has a separate color note, but all melt insensibly into an indescribably harmonious whole. Here is something beyond the glare and gilding, the flamboyant frescoes, onyx and brasses, and mosaic, so plentiful elsewhere in the great structure. Taste and genius, severely refined, wrought here for the perfecting of all things. It is not strange that some few occupants find themselves out of harmony with their surroundings, bored, and in a degree envious of the folk who have lighter and gayer, if less distinguished, quarters. These mingle with the throng in palm room and smoking room, mount with the awed sightseers to the dizzy heights of sun parlors up in the fifteenth story, and take afternoon tea in the palm room and the corridors where the dress parade warms the hearts' coxles of feminine onlookers, while men play softly on stringed instruments as the tea drinking and gossip go forward.

The apartment hotel is very unlike all this. It is no more than an ordinary handsome apartment, with exemption from housekeeping cares. Materially, it is less gorgeous than the big hotel, yet more ornate than the average apartment house. In it one can be truly a private person if one chooses. One can also dine in public with almost the same show of damask, glitter of silver and glow of flowers inevitable on the dinner tables of the bigger places. There are great ball rooms, foyers and roof garden dining halls. The buildings are light and airy throughout, well built, but each bears in some subtle fashion the earmark of its construction era. Change is the apartment hotel's law of being. What was the height of fashion five years back is distinctly out of architectural fashion in this present year of grace.

One can rent here apartments complete to the finest detail, or wholly empty, or only partly furnished, so as to leave room for one's special Lares and Penates. The tenant has little to do beyond paying the rent. Light, heat, service, meals, all are looked out for by the management. It is an easy life, and so easy that it often ends by becoming strenuous. Variety is impossible in the menu, or rather that sort of variety which satisfies palates strongly individual. So in the main it is a life suited only to very lazy, or very busy, people. There must be a great plenty of such folk, for apartment hotels continue to multiply and flourish.



MEMORY OF A MERRY TIME IN UTAH—COLONEL J. J. DICKEY "ON THE WATER WAGON."

Episodes and Incidents in the Lives of Noted People

GENERAL DEWET, in his recently published book, tells this story of an attempted transaction on the battlefield at Nicholson's Nek during the heavy firing: A man who had been a merchant before the war came up to a burgher who was lying behind a stone, on a piece of ground where boulders were scarce. "Sell me that stone for half a crown," whined the man. "Loop!" the Boer cried. "I want it myself." "I will give you 15 shillings," insisted the other man. But there was no sale.

Last July Congressman Williams of Mississippi, "the poet of the Yazoo," was a guest at Congressman Sibley's summer home on the banks of Lake Champlain. The other day he said to Sibley: "Join, I'm writing a poem about that place of yours. It's about a young couple sitting on the fence of that fine park and making love in the gloaming." "Oh, that won't do," protested the Pennsylvanian. "Why not? Don't the young men and women of northern New York make love?" "Of course they do, John, but it's a barb-wire fence."

In his biography of Alexander Dumas Harry A. Snurr says that the improvident French author, who hated avarice, was once waiting in line for his cloak at a soiree, when he saw a millionaire give a tip of 10 cents to the servant who handed out his palatote. Dumas, getting his cloak, threw down a \$20 note. "Pardon, sir, you have made a mistake, I think," said the

man, offering to return the note. "No, friend," answered Dumas, casting a disdainful glance at the millionaire; "it is the other gentleman who has made the mistake."

Mark Twain is said to be pondering on just how far a humorist's duty to his fellow men extends. This unusual line of meditation has been suggested by receipt of the following letter from Baltimore: "Mark Twain, New York: Some people think you are immortal, but if you really ever do intend to die it is certainly your duty to go to h—. Funny men are needed there, but they are very small potatoes up in heaven. You have always preached philanthropy and now you have the chance of a lifetime to demonstrate your consistency." Mr. Clemens acknowledges that this letter is "full of suggestion," but he more than intimates that the writer must have been full of something more substantial when he indited it.

When President McKinley was considering the appointment of a successor to John Russell Young as librarian to congress, ex-Representative Barrows of Massachusetts was a candidate for the place. John D. Long was his most persistent champion, and Mr. Reed inquired of a friend the reason of Mr. Long's insistence. "I suppose," was the reply, "that it is due to the secretary's interest in things pertaining to the Unitarian church. You know Mr. Barrows is a Unitarian minister?" "You don't say

so?" responded Reed. "Why, I thought Barrows was a religious man." The absurd humor of this remark is heightened by the fact that while Mr. Reed was not a member of any church, he and his family attended the Portland (Me.) Unitarian church and helped support it.

By way of illustrating one of the differences between Lords Roberts and Kitchener they are telling this story in London: Just before "Bobs" left Capetown he assigned an officer to a particular duty and asked how soon it could be done. The colonel said in about a fortnight. Lord Roberts said pleasantly: "I know you will do the best you can." Later the colonel told Kitchener about the matter. "Now, colonel," said the new commander, "if you can't do it in a week we shall have to see about sending you home." The job was done in the time set by Kitchener.

If large ears are indicative of honesty, then the possessor of the greatest amount of that noble virtue in Massachusetts is Governor Crane. When an ambitious politician learned that there was a vacancy in the capitol he saw, in imagination, those ears. They were a token of honest dealing in political reward. He mentioned the vacancy and the ears to a friend and received the encouragement "that those ears are too big not to lend themselves to an appeal from an honest man." Some weeks later the acquaintance elicited an explanation from the disappointed office seeker.

"I thought the governor was an honest man," he said disgustedly, "but he's too honest for me. The governor admitted that he had retired a clerk, but there was no vacancy. He had divided the work among the other clerks, and thus exacted from them a good day's labor."

Major Charles Dick, who intends to be the next republican candidate for governor of Ohio, says he got a lesson when trying his first law case which has kept him humble ever since. He was a student in a law office and was getting nothing for his time except opportunity to associate with lawyers. His first case was in a petty court and he indulged in some skyrocket oratory. After the trial an old man who had known him all his life said: "Charlie, be you makin' much at the law business?" "No, I am not getting anything, being only a student." "Well," said the old man, "strikes me ye're gittin' purty well paid, anyhow."

Congressman Hepburn was very busy at his desk in the house one morning when a page announced: "A gentleman in the lobby to see you, sir." "Tell him I'm not in my seat," said Hepburn after looking at the card. The boy, a sturdy-looking chap, did not move. "But you are in your seat, sir," he answered in matter-of-fact tones, "and I can't say you are not." The Iowa man looked at the lad angrily, but seeing that he was in earnest moved into the vacant chair of his neighbor. "Now tell him

I'm not in my seat." "Yes, sir," said the boy briskly and went to deliver the message.

The Critt publishes a skit purporting to reproduce a conversation between Andrew Carnegie and King Edward. The former confides his "rule of life" to the monarch in the following words: "It may be summed up in the phrase, 'When in doubt found a library.' I find the rule admirable and most restful. If I receive a begging letter and don't know how to reply to it I found a library and when that is over the solution is simple. If I miss a train I found a library. If dinner is late I found a library. The other night I couldn't sleep. I got up and founded three libraries. On wet days when I can't play golf it's something fearful the number of libraries I found."

The crown prince of Siam seems to be a sort of financial agent for his government and an advance agent for his royal father, who, it is said, is to visit us this year. The prince has been sounding several New York capitalists with a view of interesting them in the development of his country. While being shown through Columbia university the other day the prince had his attention called to the chair of Chinese literature and history. "That is good," said the royal tourist, "and where is that of Siam?" The professor who had him in tow diplomatically replied that as yet only a beginning had been made in the oriental department.