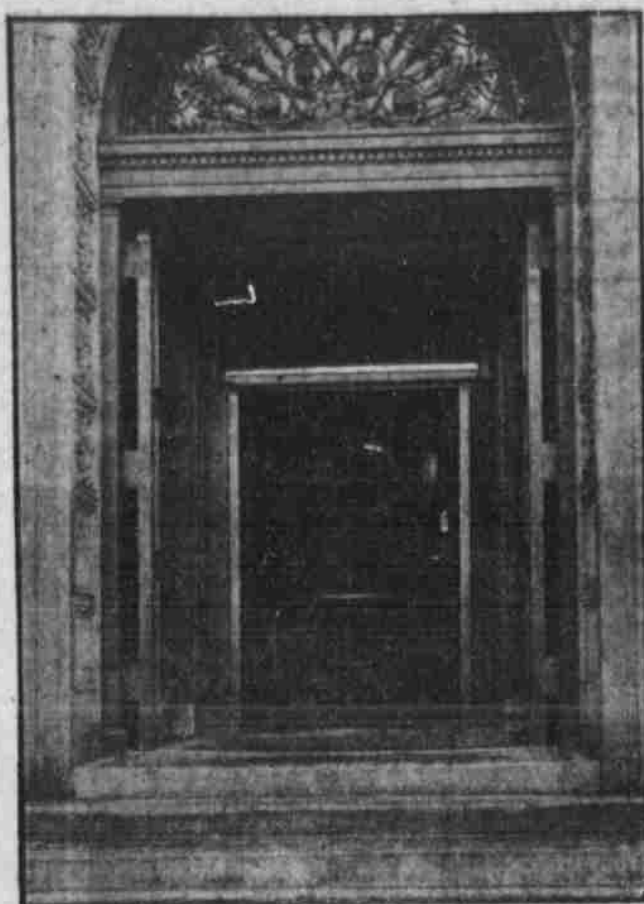


# Storm Doors and Their Relation to Urban Life During Winter Months



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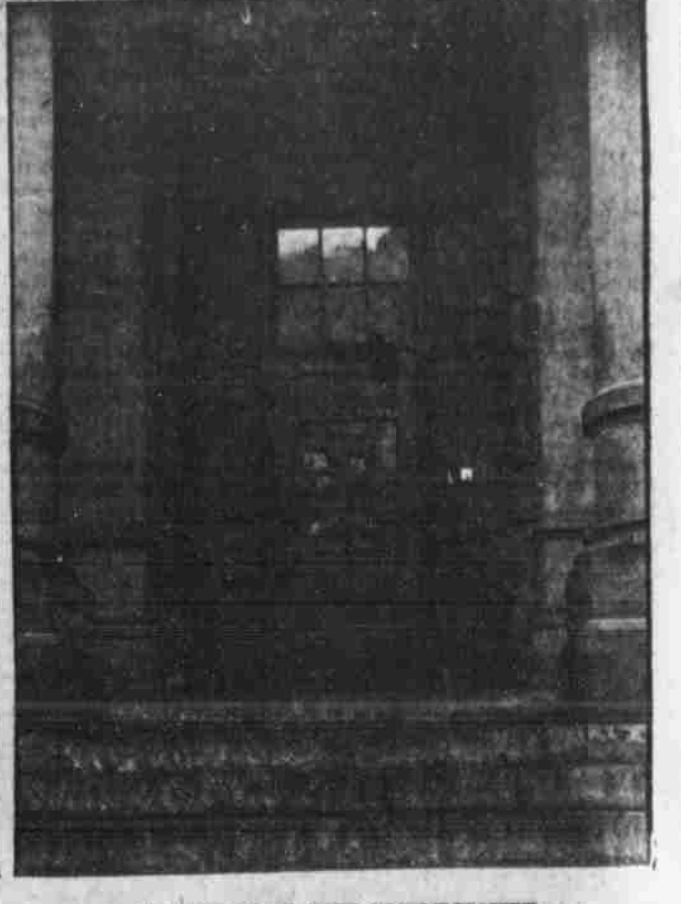
ENTRANCE TO THE GRAND THEATER.



ONE OF THE POSTOFFICE PORTALS.



MAIN ENTRANCE TO THE NEW YORK LIFE.



GATEWAY TO THE COURT HOUSE.

IF THERE is anything about winter that is hateful it is the storm door proposition. Architects say that storm doors were invented after profanity had been pretty well perfected, but it is reasonable to suppose the man who put the first cuss word on the market had a hunch that it would be mighty appropriate when the world got around to storm doors. Nobody ever went through a storm door without feeling he had been insulted.

Some of these arrangements are built so that a man going out often gets an opportunity to vent his spleen on a man coming in, by smashing the door savagely in the face, forehead and frame of his brother. The absence of a glass in the door greatly promotes this manner of getting even with the general conditions. In Omaha one of the most finished examples of the species may be found at the city hall. Here every autumn after the Al-Sar-Ben parades they box in the entrance arch with a black wood and glass wall. Two small doors admit persons. Usually one is kept nailed down, leaving the other in operation. This solitary door opens outward upon a flight of stone steps and if a person be detestful he can throw the man trying to get in down these steps. No one has been able to find anything beautiful or esthetic about the arrangement, but it is alleged to keep a certain amount of cold air out of the city hall corridors. Incidentally the storm door entrance is about half way down the entire flight of steps. The idea of putting it on a level with the all year round entrance apparently never came to anyone.

But it is not worth while to damn the city administration for the state of affairs in the city hall. Other local illustrations may be found without much trouble, that are equally satisfactory. Architects have been stewing and fretting about the problem for ever so long. They have succeeded in making some improvements, but they admit that perfection is yet a long way off.

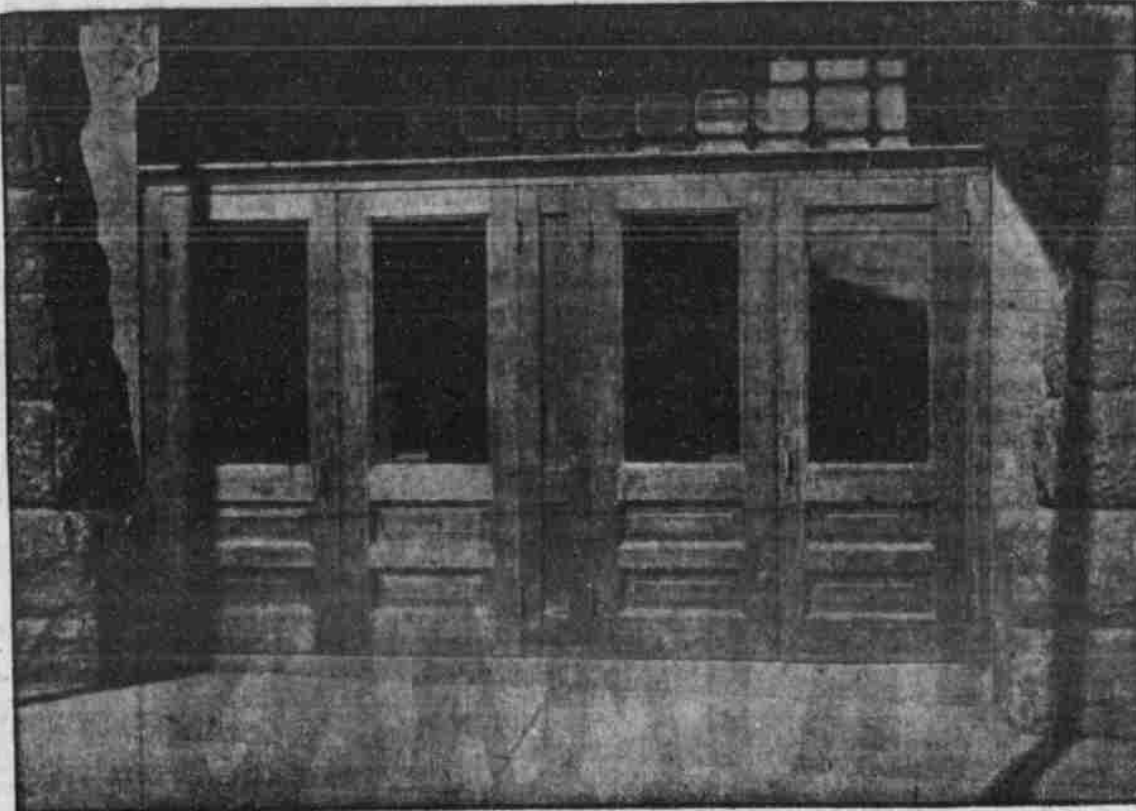
Hardly anyone needs to be told that the function of a storm door is to keep the cold air out. At the same time it might be supposed that a fair percentage of opportunity be given the people to get in. But that is not the case at all. People run second in this staggering perplexity to builders and designers. In many Omaha office and store buildings it requires almost as much exertion to force open the storm door barricades as to shove a ton of coal. Sometimes there are as many as three heavy doors to pull open before one gets safely inside.

Incidentally, there has been legislation on the subject. The laws say that the doors of the main exits shall swing out. This is with the idea of permitting rapid egress in case of fire. But there the legislature stopped. It didn't go into the bowels of the matter and protect the rights of the people as it should. It left altogether too much option with the landlord. Hence one may stand outside of a big office building and keep himself warm as best he can until a whole elevator-full of passengers has been discarded through the narrow openings. Then he may go in if he has strength remaining to drag open the massive creations of metal, wood and glass, or his arms contain not too many bundles.

Another storm door idea is that pertaining to the automatic check. This is a pneumatic device that has three objects in view. First, to force the door to after it has been thrown open; second, to check the progress of the door just before it touches the jam so that no fingers may be nipped in the closing; third, to make it harder for the public to pull the doors open, for the power necessary to close the door is generated by the person who opens the door, and in that act. In some cases the pneumatic business is replaced by springs, but it is the same old weary bunco game on the public-it winds up the springs.

No mention has yet been made of the revolving storm door—a turnstile-like apparatus that strikes terror to the heart on first trial, but grows pleasant as proficiency and familiarity increase. When the revolving storm door was invented and placed on the market about ten years ago it was hailed with whoops of joy. Everybody thought the old problem had been solved at last. Here was an arrangement that absolutely prevented cold air from getting into the building. That point is still admitted. Secondly, it would respond to the public to a slight pressure—hardly more than a forward stride, and the same modus operandi was good going in or coming out. The turnstile with partitions reaching to the top was confined in a round or octagonal box, rubber strips making it practically air tight. So attractive did the whole thing appear that the sole manufacturers asked as much as \$700 or \$800 per door. The east made a jump at it even with these prices. Later the charges have sagged and now run from \$400 to \$500.

But the public was doomed to a partial disappointment. It was found very speedily that dogs, small boys and rascals had to be educated to use the revolving doors. Frequently a female rube got tangled up in the whirling and her skirts were torn, her hat smashed and her bundles crushed and scattered. Every once in a while a dog got caught on the edge of a propeller and sliced neatly in two. Small urchins had a habit of leaving their feet and hands strewn about where they had no business to be and getting bruised and pinched. In course of time it was determined that where a large and unsophisticated traffic was prevalent attendants were needed to direct the operations of the revolving doors. They are still in great favor in hotels and many other places.



FRONT DOOR OF THE BEE BUILDING.

The first storm doors built consisted simply of double or single doors in front of the main door under a shed or coop. A

few of these may be still seen in use in Omaha. A vestibule is formed, but the scheme is rather awkward and contributes

nothing to the artistic sense. A prominent Omaha architect, observing the defects in the old-style storm doors

and the revolving doors, originated the use of very small doors for the outer side of the vestibule, making the whole affair

either permanent the rear round or at least substantially constructed. These doors are two and one-half feet wide by six

feet high and admit only one person at a time. They are arranged in tiers, with posts between and the inner vestibule doors swing outward, or in the same direction. Good examples can be found in the Union station and at the Boston store. The doors do not have an exceptionally elegant appearance, but they are extremely serviceable. Being light they are opened easily, and if a person loads up with bundles in the store he can easily push them open. Radiators are used to heat the air in the vestibule to high temperature, because the heat is constantly exhausted by the frequent opening of the doors. In the new Hoagland building the storm doors and vestibules are arranged on this plan, with a decided improvement in the doors proper.

The most difficult building from which to exclude the cold air is a department store. In eastern cities three sets of double doors are used in place of two, forming two vestibules. Where radiation is not used air is blown into the vestibules by fans, creating a plenum so that when the doors are opened air rushes out instead of in.

The essence of the successful storm door, according to Architect John Latenser, is that it be small and narrow, only sufficiently large to admit one person, so that no more cold air may come in with him than is absolutely necessary. The ordinary double door, he contends, has no more capacity than a single door.

Additional problems are met with in designing storm doors for use in school houses. The door must be small and light with hardware low enough for a small child to grasp it, and a window low enough for the youngster to be seen from within and assisted if he has trouble. Most of the Omaha grade schools are equipped in this way.

But after all has been said, storm doors remain an abomination in their present status. A great opportunity waits for some one to make his name famous by the origination of an entirely new plan for letting people in and out of a large and much used building easily and conveniently and without chilling the interior.

## Seven Mimis in New York Ambitious to Charm

THERE IS usually one opera dear to the heart of the prima donna every season. It used to be the heroine of Gounod's "Romeo et Juliette" that they all wanted to represent. Whether they were young or old, fat or thin, tall or short, they sighed to sing Gounod's amorous setting of the diluted Shakespearean phrases. Some of them learned the part at a very mature age, one prima donna, after she had triumphed as Brunhilde and Isolde, spent \$4,000 in costumes for the part of Juliette in the hope that M. Grau would let her appear as the girlish daughter of the Capulets. That wise impresario, however, persuaded her that the public interest in the opera had been satisfied and that it would be best to let it drop from the repertoire for a season. So narrow was New York's escape from a 200-pound Juliette.

Suddenly the enthusiasm of these operatic women to appear as Juliette came to an end. The number of Juliettes diminished until it was with difficulty that one could be found. One prima donna had forgotten to have her Juliette costumes packed up when she came here. Another found the music no longer suited to her voice. Another called the attention of the impresario to the fact that Juliette no longer figured in the list of roles she was required to sing. Thus the overplentiful supply of Juliettes at the Metropolitan faded away.

What caused the loss of interest in a part that was once so alluring? Why did the women grow weary of this role? Jean de Reszke ceased to sing in the opera. In that fact lies the explanation of the end of Juliette as a popular heroine. Adeline Patti used to sing Juliette with her husband, Nicolini, and Italo Campanini had the part of Romeo in his repertoire when he was admitted in New York as Enrico Caruso today. But that did not gain popularity for the opera. It became a managerial tradition that "Romeo et Juliette" could never be made popular in New York.

When Jean de Reszke came and appeared as Romeo the tradition was smashed and the opera suddenly became one of the most popular in the repertoire. The woman who sang in it with M. de Reszke was sure of appearing before a crowded house, she would share in the triumph of the evening and was certain of the applause of the audience.

When the Polish tenor abandoned the opera for the Wagner roles or removed to Europe to rest for a season no effort could galvanize the work into public favor. As one of the great attractions of the season "Romeo et Juliette" has disappeared with M. de Reszke.

M. Selvas was able to do more than any other singer. The opera languished in the offices of MM. Alvaras, Roussellere and Naval. M. Soubeyran met with shipwreck in the work.

Mr. Grau never had less than half a dozen Juliettes in his company. The part of the heroine has been sung during the last ten years by Meses. Sembrich, James, Melba, Saville, Susanne Adams, Marie Engle, Aino Ackte, Bessie Abbott, Camille Seygard and Sibly Sanderson. This list excludes few recent sopranos outside the Wagnerian class.

Now it is Mimi in "La Boheme" that the women of the operatic world all want to sing. They have no such excuse as the cooperation of a popular tenor, for this desire, because they are all willing to sing Mimi with any tenor. The role must be sympathetic to them and suit the voice, as there is no other apparent explanation for their infatuation.

for the sake of singing Mimi's plaintive role of Mimi, because the duets are so suited to her voice. She is nowadays the most buxom of all the Mimis. She heard the Puccini opera in London, decided to sing the role and then brought the work out in Boston. Singularly enough, the opera drew very small and unenthusiastic audiences during the first few years it was in the repertoire at the Metropolitan.

She succeeded at the Metropolitan by Mme. Sembrich, who appeared in the role first five years ago. Mme Sembrich is going to give the opera in Berlin and Vienna. She has never sung the role in the European cities heretofore and will

It was necessary for the public to become accustomed to the music. Bessie Abbott and Geraldine Farrar are the two Americans who have sung the part abroad. Both are shown wearing the dress of Mimi in the first act and a very pronounced coiffure of the period of 1830.

Mme. Donalds is shown also in the first act dress, and so is Mme. Cavallieri, with her swan-like neck exposed to view by Le-

low collar.

Miss Farrar sang the part of Mimi in Monte Carlo, but never in Berlin, where the opera is not in the repertoire. Bessie Abbott, who was coached in the role by Jean de Reszke, never makes her debut in any other role if possible, and she selected Mimi as the vehicle of her first important appearance at the Metropolitan.

Pauline Donalds sang Mimi soon after she made her operatic debut in Nice, and has appeared in the opera there several times. She is a Canadian, a native of Montreal. Thus it happens that four of the

Mimis shown here belong to English speaking nations. With two Americans and two English women, honors are easy.

It may be observed that none of these ladies would think of singing the role in English, as such a thing would be below her artistic dignity. Miss Abbott and Miss Donalds both sing the role in French as well as Italian. Susanne Adams is another American who used occasionally to sing the part with the Grau company.

"There is no other part today that so much interests the critics and the public as Mimi and there are enough of them between the two opera houses to give a series of 'Bohemian' cycles and not require the same soprano to appear twice. The work is soon to be heard at the Manhattan in spite of the attempt to drop it from the repertoire. Mmes. Melba and Donalds will embody the heroine of Murger, Illica and Puccini in the Manhattan performance, while Mmes. Sembrich, Farrar and Abbott are at the Metropolitan.

### The Man with the Beard

"I've got nothing against the barbers," said a bearded man, "but let me tell you how much money I've made for myself by letting my beard grow.

"When I was shaving I used to have to get shaved every day, which cost me a quarter; it costs for the week and cut for the barber, \$1.50 a week, \$8 a year. And then every two weeks I got my hair cut, which cost me in course of the year \$19 more, because every time I got a combination hair cut and shave I paid out 60 cents; the price of the work was 40, but I gave the barber 20. Twenty cents may seem an extravagant tip, but it was a double job, and as I figured it, if the barber ought to get any tip at all he ought to get for a double job a double tip.

"So my barber bill amounted to \$100.10 a year.

"Then I thought I'd let 'em sprout, and I did; and I haven't had 'em shaved off since. Every two weeks I drop in at the barber's and get 'em trimmed, and my hair cut at the same time, a double job again—counting the beard trimming same as a shave—for which I pay 40 for the shop and 20 for the barber, 60 cents, or making now a total of \$15.60 a year, instead of \$100.10 I had paid in when I got shaved daily, hair cut bi-weekly.

"When I first started the whiskers I got me a nice strong soap box and cut a little slot in the top of it; and every morning since I have dropped into the box for the soap that I had formerly paid daily for my shave, except that every two weeks when I got my hair cut and my beard trimmed I omitted the quarter for two successive days, and put in only 15 cents on the third, keeping out this 60 cents for the present job of hair cut and beard trim; that is, the equivalent of the former hair cut and shave.

"It is ten years now since I began the 'van dyke,' and on the last rainy Sunday, which happened to be the tenth anniversary of the starting of the same, I got out the soap box, broke it open and counted the contents thereof, finding them to amount to the net altogether negligible sum of 95¢ which I had saved in ten years by letting my beard grow instead of shaving.

"I did think I'd buy a house and lot with this money, but I don't know now but what I'll buy instead a nice second-hand automobile and get out on the road and let the wind blow through the whiskers that hang on to my face."



NELLIE MELBA.



PAULINE DONALDO.



MARCELA SEMBRICH.



GERALDINE FARRAR.



EMMA TRENTINI.



BESSIE ABBOTT.

do it with an Italian company next spring, as she has refused to learn the text in German.

Her liking for singing the part is due in a measure to the beauty of the text. Illica is a true poet, and all his Italian texts taken from other stories are literary to an unusual degree for operatic librettos.

Both Mme. Melba and Mme. Sembrich are shown in the costume of the fourth act when they are outside the Barre d'Enfers. Mme. Trentini, the little soprano of the Hammerstein company, is also shown in the costume necessary for the snowy landscape of the scene, but she is less afraid of the cold than the two more famous sopranos, as she is willing to go out in the stormy night with her dress cut very low.

Mme. Melba says she is in love with Mimi in the popular operatic embellishment of a tatra. During the first and second acts she is in the dark most of the time, and she is dying all through the last act.

She is compelled to wear a most unbecoming coiffure; the style of 1830 is always trying in every particular to any but the loveliest and youngest faces. Those facts are not important. The singers are all willing to run the risk of looking like Tante Alzore from the Rue de Provence