

JUNE 27, 1897.

PICTURESQUE FEATURES OF THE EXPANSE OF CHICAGO HOUSETOPS.



STUDY OF THE ROOFS OF DOWN-TOWN BUILDINGS, DRAWN BY H. G. MARATTA.

CHICAGO AS IT APPEARS WHEN SEEN FROM ABOVE.

SEEN in a bird's-eye view, Chicago is a city of roofs. At first thought this fact does not seem particularly strange, one that stamps the metropolis of the West as being different from any other city looked at from above. But it is a peculiarity, in amount, extent, and character of its roofs Chicago is unique.

Seen from an elevation, the business district here is practically nothing but roofs. This is due to the architecture of Chicago. While the suburbs and residence districts, the central portions of most cities, have many buildings with distinctive features and structural peculiarities which are visible from above and diversify the view, the downtown part is built on one plan of construction. Square buildings, designed to give the greatest cubic contents for their ground floor area and height are practically all that exist in the center of the city. They are all nearly alike in design, especially as to their rectangular, flat roofs. Seen from above, the breadth and extent of these level spaces is so great that the small apertures made by the street lines are hardly distinguishable. With a little stretch of the imagination the business district might be thought to be covered by one roof.

Second of the Wonder Spots.

A picture of this giant roof, as it appears from the Masonic Temple, looking toward the West, is shown in this issue of THE SUNDAY TRIBUNE. It is the second of the special sketches made by H. G. Maratta of the wonder spots of Chicago. To the astonishment of many people who have looked at this view and been merely impressed with its greatness and grandeur, the outlook will be found to be one of considerable beauty. It is a scene whose artistic possibilities have been up to the present neglected.

The great roof which covers the business district of this city has long been one of the problems of Chicago's growth and improvement. The enormous quantities of rain and snow which fall upon it, the great space which might be made available for practical use, and the possible unification and rear-

angement of the tops of the various buildings, have all been discussed for years. Yet few of the business-men in the city outside of the architects and builders ever take any thought of the great covering which, when seen from above, is Chicago.

The owners of the various buildings have begun to solve for themselves these problems regarding the city roofs. Roof gardens, and various places of amusement, lounging places on these hot summer nights, storage space for a hundred kinds of merchandise, and door yards for domestic purposes are all functions which the various roofs about town are now filling. It is a common sight from some of the high buildings to see dogs, chickens, men beating carpets, or even flower gardens on the tops of the lesser structures below. Janitors and their families spend the greater part of the hot weather on the tops of their buildings. With the modern demand for space, great innovations are constantly being made in the uses to which the roofs of Chicago are being put.

Scheme for Extending Roofs.

Within the last year or two a great deal of talk has gone the rounds of the architects regarding some method of protecting the city streets against the heavy snowfalls of the winter and the drizzling rains of the warmer weather. Many thoroughfares in the business district are now so overshadowed by the high buildings that it would not require an extremely elaborate construction to extend the roofs clear across them. This would result in giving sheltered streets the year around, and the idea is being agitated as a possible solution of several municipal problems. If it is ever carried out the great Chicago covering will take on added extent and importance.

The view of the Chicago roofs herewith reproduced is taken from the southwest corner of the observation platform on the Masonic Temple, and is looking directly west. Randolph street is the only thoroughfare that is visible through any considerable fraction of its extent. That it is shown from near the junction of Dearborn street to La

Salle street. Otherwise, the view is one of roofs, apparently unlimited in number.

Buildings in Sight.

In the foreground of the picture is a portion of the Masonic Temple facing the Dryden Building, and the Major Block. A little farther are the Unity Building, the Schiller Theater, the Ashland Block, and the City Hall. Farther away still the group of skyscrapers about the Chicago Stock Exchange rise up above their fellows, and here and there a stack or a group of buildings can be recognized by an experienced eye. The narrow sill of the river is lost entirely. The distance is an endless succession of roofs, making it appear as if Chicago extended on forever.

A curious feature which strikes the observer regarding the architecture of the city roofs is the general unfinished appearance everywhere. The sidewalks of the buildings run up beyond and through the roofs, ending in a strip of stone or sheetiron in a manner which leaves much more to be desired in appearance. But in reality these are exactly as intended by the architects, and to the eye educated in the making of skyscrapers they look perfect.

If the City Smoke Inspector should chance to make a visit to the top of the Masonic Temple he would likely have had dreams for nights to come. With a heavy east gale blowing clear air in from the lake, the view of Chicago to the west is sometimes fairly clear to the eye, though a camera has hard work in showing anything but smoke beyond the fifth block. But take a time when a west or southwest wind is prevailing and the amount of smoke in the air is fairly appalling. From every stack and chimney clouds of white steam and yellowish fumes are rising, while here and there are ascending clouds of black soot. From over in the direction of the Stock-Yards comes a black wall of smoke, hiding everything in that direction from view. Altogether a heavy mist of steam and smoke hangs over the city, making all the outlook dim, and closing down like a curtain over the distance. Almost it appears as if Chicago was surrounded by a great lake or ocean which stretched out to the end of the eyesight in every direction. It is—by an ocean of smoke.

Beauties of the Scene.

Yet, with all the smoke, dirt, and soot, the view of the city from above is one of especial beauty and magnificence. The de-

markation of light and shade, the many colors of the buildings showing through the mist of steam, above all the immense scale on which the work is laid out, strike the observer with the most pleasurable sensations. Down hundreds of feet in the street below the cable cars look like little dry goods boxes, and the pedestrians appear to be small and extremely awkward in soldiers. The observer feels himself distinctly apart and away from the great swarming hives, and looks on the view as an unreal scene, painted on canvas. When he thoroughly realizes the size and grandeur of the performance he is looking at he is overcome with awe at the complexity of the city life and the immensity of the city itself.

Such is Chicago from above, an entirely different looking place from what one has been accustomed to think it. It is a metropolis of business buildings and of magnificent distances. Its center is below the observer's eyes, with its limits beyond the extent of vision resting in the clouds.

FREAKS OF THE RIO GRANDE RIVER.

One of Them Was to Shift Its Bed from the East to the West of Mesilla.

"It's a freakish river, the Rio Grande, and no mistake; for sudden turns and capriciousness woman herself can't equal it," said a former federal official of New Mexico, talking of the recent floods at El Paso.

"For the 1,500 miles of its course its character is everything but tame. From navigable waters to dry land. At its head, in the mountainous San Juan country, in Colorado, it is a cold, clear trout stream; in northern New Mexico its waters are brown with sand in solution; further south, where the liquid mud of the Rio Puerco (Dirty River) pour into it, its waters become densely muddy, and all along, on its long way to the sea, the queer river takes on one or another new feature different from anything that has preceded it."

"The Rio Grande's habit of going underground here and there along its course, leaving a dry channel above, from which it reappears anywhere from a mile to fifty miles below, has recently been told in the Sun, which also has published accounts of its quicksands and burrowing eels and catfish. But there is one performance by this

river that never to my knowledge has been written except in local history or in the record of some land case in court. It is the way it served the Town of Mesilla, in southern New Mexico. The place is a picturesque, dignified-looking old Spanish-American community, built about a plaza, with orchards and vineyards surrounding, and stood in the beginning on the west bank of the river.

"Before the railroad came it was an important point in the wagon freighting trade, and its people were prosperous and happy. But they had one cause of complaint. The routes of all the traffic from Texas and the North lay on the east of the Rio Grande, and stages and wagons must ford the river in getting to and from Mesilla. This was inconvenient at all times and involved danger and delay in times of flood.

"'Que lastima' (what a pity), the people often said. 'If only our town stood on the east bank of the brave river!'

"Their wish came to pass at last in a startling way. There was an unusually heavy snowfall in the mountains of the upper country one winter, and the spring opening warm, the snow melted rapidly, with the result of tremendous flood in the lower Rio Grande. The waters overspread the level valley until Mesilla, which, luckily, had been built on an eminence, became an island, the refuge of those persons from the lower lands who had not been thrown before they could reach it. The waters at last subsided and then the discovery was made that the Rio Grande, instead of keeping to its old bed on the east, was flowing past the town, a mile to the west of the plaza.

"It was what the people had said they wanted, but it took them some time to become used to the change and get their landmarks and points of the compass to tally with the new order of things. Many a peon or Mexican of higher degree going or coming from the plaza with a load of agricultural implements inside his skin got an unexpected ducking in the river when he had looked for dry land, or walked gingerly across the dry channel where the river used to run, wondering why he could not find the Rio Grande. Tales of such misadventures were stock stories in the lower valley for years after the flood. There was a more tragic aspect of the business in the epidemic which took its rise in the exhalations from the extent of river bottom left exposed by the change of channel. Several hundred people died from this cause in the succeeding summer and autumn.

HE IS A SURVIVOR OF THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

Living in the busy City of Lynn, spending the last days of a dramatic life, honored by all who knew him, is John Henry Beard, one of the few survivors of the battle of Waterloo.

This man, nearing the century mark in life, is still in possession of all his faculties and is looking forward with much pleasure to June 21, when he will be the special guest of the Englishmen of the commonwealth at the celebration of the anniversary of the coronation of Queen Victoria.

Having taken part in this battle, fighting on the side of the victors, is of itself a great distinction, but being among the last survivors of this battle, in which over 250,000 men took part, is to have honor thrust upon him, Mr. Beard thinks.

Few men have lived a more dramatic life than Mr. Beard, and he delights in telling to the younger generation of the exciting times when Napoleon was spreading consternation throughout Europe, and England was almost at his mercy. It is with a keen eye, a ready smile, and a steady hand that he greets his friends and acquaintances, and is never at a loss to tell a story about any particular time in the history of the century. He can recount and picture events and scenes in the early parts of the nineteenth century with as much accuracy as a man who was a participant in a stirring event in 1870 can tell of it now. It is like reading history to converse with Mr. Beard for a few moments, only vastly more real, for you talk with a man who has taken part in the events. At the age of 15 the need of soldiers was so great that he and other boys were notified that they must enlist in the regular army. Being the son of a Colonel, he was given the extra privilege of joining any regiment in the country. He selected that commanded by his father, and a few days after he had celebrated his birthday he was a regular soldier in the service of England and a member of the Sixty-sixth Regiment.

"I was a boy," Mr. Beard said, when asked about his first experience in the army. "There were many men in the regiment who had taken part in battles, men wounded, and who had stood in the front of a battlefield,

Some of the men had but lately returned from America, where they fought in the war of 1812. There were but very few 'green hands,' or recruits, in the regiment, but I was one of them. My father was very strict, and immediately after enlistment I was compelled to give up my residence under the officers' roof in the fort and go and live with the soldiers in the barracks."

For four days before the battle of Waterloo he says that his regiment marched back and forth from one place to another, and were almost always within hearing distance of the French guns. They were not called upon to enter the conflict until the decisive day, when orders came early in the morning to march to the front. Young Beard was in the front ranks of his father's command, and remembers, as if it were yesterday, the squares formed by the English soldiers, where the French cavalry "foamed itself away."

Beard was wounded three times in the hip, being struck by two bullets at nearly the same instant and being hit again as he lay wounded on the ground. He was carried to the rear and there saw Napoleon as the latter was on his retreat toward Paris. A number of English soldiers were lying on the ground when Napoleon passed. He saw them and approached within a short distance and then rode away, surrounded by a number of his men.

Shortly after the battle of Waterloo young Beard's regiment was ordered to Quebec, and he accompanied it there. It was soon after he reached the age of 21 that he secured a leave of absence for a few days, ostensibly to enjoy hunting in the woods. He had heard stories of the fabulous wealth to be secured in the "States," and resolved that his experience in the army should cease. With this intention he left Canada and walked to Richmond, Me., where he married and has since resided, except when in Lynn with his daughter.

AT THE RESORT.

"Are there sharks as far North as this?" "Considering the service you get, yes," Detroit Journal.