

AMERICAN LIFE.

THE latest aspects of the Keystone State, as Pennsylvania is proudly called, are, apart from passing politics, the amazing growth of her chief city, the creation of Fairmont Park, and the preparation for a centennial, to be held in the summer of 1876. The growth of Philadelphia is, in truth, amazing. Men are living in Walnut street who recall a day when she was not so large as Croydon. She is now bigger than Berlin—nearly as big as New York. In 1830 she was about the size of Edinburgh. Ten years later she was as big as Dublin. In another ten years she had outgrown Manchester. In 1860 she was ahead of Liverpool. At the present moment Philadelphia is more than equal to Manchester, Liverpool and Sheffield combined. If the population of Dublin and Edinburgh, York, Lancaster, and Chester were counted in one tale, they would hardly make up half the numbers who live in Philadelphia at this present day. If size is but another name for power, the City of Brotherly Love is metropolitan. Leaving out of our account the more than doubtful figures as to Chinese cities, Philadelphia claims to be the fourth city in the world, admitting no superior in size save London, Paris, and New York. She overlaps all other rivals. She is bigger than Moscow and St. Petersburg, the two capitals of Russia, put together. The three capitals of the Austro-Magyar monarchy, Vienna, Pesth, and Prague, fall far below her numbers; nay, she has left behind her in the race of progress the four combined capitals of United Italy—Rome, Florence, Naples, and Turin! She claims to have at the present hour a population somewhat exceeding eleven hundred thousand souls!

Yet there is nothing accidental in the growth of Philadelphia. She has not been made a Royal residence like Rome, the centre of a new Imperial system like Berlin. No great discovery of mineral wealth has drawn to her neighborhood the enterprising spirits of all nations, like San Francisco. She has not become the chief entry for immigrants from Europe like New York. She has not sprung into a fashion like Brighton and Saratoga. She has not owed her fortune to having been made a free port, like Livorno, or to her having taken the fancy of a Cæsar, like Madrid. Her growth is natural growth. We notice an abnormal growth in many towns. A railway bridge secured prosperity to Omaha; a line of docks made Birkenhead; a spring of oil gives life to Petrolia. Philadelphia owes her wealth to general causes, and her greatness is not jeopardised by the failure of a dozen industries.

The sudden growth of modern Rome and the enormous splendour of Berlin are not so singular as the growth and splendour of Philadelphia. Rome is, in point of population, a sixth-rate town. In three years, London adds to her numbers more people than cluster on the Seven Hills. In four years Philadelphia does the same. For one supposes that Rome will grow for ever as she is growing now. A new Government, with a court, an army, and a Parliament, cannot enter every year. Berlin has also grown with an amazing swiftness, and the capital of an imperial Germany may feel the impulse of events longer than Rome; for Germany is a bigger country than Italy, her state system is less parochial, and more of her chief citizens, both civil and military, will find their interest in being at the Emperor's court. Yet, in Berlin, as in Washington, Madrid, and other artificial capitals, the limit of this accidental growth soon be reached. Berlin is not, like London and Philadelphia, a great commercial centre, with a port sufficiently near the sea for purposes of trade. Berlin is land-locked, like Madrid. Few things are more certain in this age of change, than that the future capitals of the world will stand on both the elements, and be, as Constantine said of old Byzantium, accessible at once by land and sea.

Philadelphia can boast of her approaches both by land and sea; yet of a situation free from all the ordinary chances of assault in time of war. The other day I saw a calculation by a clever hand in Pennsylvania, showing that in twenty-five years Philadelphia will have passed New York, as she has already overtaken Constantinople, and in twenty-five years more will have overtaken Paris; so that she will then be in a position, face to face with London, owning no other rival on the earth. In England we are treated twice or thrice a year to extracts from American papers on the "phenomenal growth" of New York; and truth to tell, the increase of that city is so rapid that a man who has been absent from the island ten or twelve years may easily lose his ancient landmarks. A member of the late Cabinet, who had not seen New York for fifteen years, told me an amusing tale how he had tried to find his way about and lost his clues at every turn. The desert had become a park, the swamp had grown into a line of wharves. Where he had left a squatter's hollow he found a fashionable square. His friends had gone to live up town. Old men remember a time when Niblo's Garden was in a suburb, like Cremorne, and when the City Hall Park was thought as near the country as Central Park is thought to-day. It is not long since Bleeker street was a fashionable lounge. Some old families, who will not change their quarters every generation, still reside in Bond street, but a New York exquisite, with his villa on the borders of Jerome Park, affects the same ignorance of Bond street as the dandy in Park lane affects of Russell square. Ten years ago Fifth Avenue ended where the fashionable lady says it now begins. That portion of New York which forty years ago comprised the port or city is reduced to a mere congressional district, while the New York of the present day extends, not only beyond the Harlem River, but across the Hudson and the Sound. The circumference is not less than forty miles. In central mass and scattered groups it bears a rude resemblance to Stamboul, but the American city has already left behind the imperial capital on the Golden Horn.

This wonder is familiar to our thoughts; but we so rarely hear a word about her rival on the Delaware that four persons in every five who read these lines will probably be amazed to hear that, like New York, Philadelphia is so vast a place that she has left such

ancient and historic capitals as Vienna and Constantinople far behind her in the race. And yet, her growth seems no less sound in bole than high in branch and rich in foliage. On coming back into the city after some years' absence, you are caught by a surprise at every turn. You may not like to say you left the city clay, and find it marble; yet the saying would not seem a great perversion of the facts. Eight years ago, I left many of my friends in brick houses, who are now dwelling in marble palaces. Take, as an example, my friend G. W. Childs. At the time of my last visit, he lived in cosy lodgings—very cosy lodgings, I admit; but he now resides in an edifice that would not need to veil his face before the luxury of Apsley House. The thoroughfares are rising into pomp and show. I do not speak just now of public buildings of exceptional character and excellence—such edifices as Girard's College, the most perfect classical building in America, or of the new Girard bridge, over the Schuylkill river, the widest and perhaps the handsomest iron roadway in the world—but of ordinary structures, such as clubs and banks, churches and law-courts, masonic halls, hotels and newspaper offices. Two or three of the new banks are equal to the best things lately done in Lombard street, while the great Masonic Temple puts the residence of our own Grand Lodge to shame. No newspaper office in Europe can compare with the 'Public Ledger' office in Chestnut street. The new churches are mostly good in style, and rich in material, nearly all being faced with either rough greenstone, or polished white marble. The new buildings of the University of Pennsylvania—partly completed, are fine in exterior, being built of the rough greenstone peculiar to the place, faced with red sandstone, as well as rich in apparatus and collections, the department of physics being particularly good. Broad street is not yet a rival of Pall Mall, but Penn square is both larger and better built than St. James's square. Market street is not yet equal to the Strand, but Chestnut street is not unworthy to rank with Cheapside, and in a few years the business quarters of Philadelphia will vie in architectural effect with that of the best parts of London, even Queen Victoria street and Ludgate hill.

But banks are banks and clubs are clubs. A special beauty may be gained in one part of a city at the expense of others, as we have seen in Bloomsbury and Belgravia, when thousands on thousands of the poor were routed out in order to make room for New Oxford street and Grosvenor gardens. Such things may occur in great cities without being signs of growth. The pulling down of Paris, under Louis Napoleon, was no evidence of public health, but rather of a hectic glow and morbid appetite for change. How are the ordinary houses built? How are the mass of people lodged? These are the questions which a statesman and a moralist ought to ask. It is not enough to ask whether, behind these banks and palaces, there are any Field lanes and Fox courts; it is of more importance to see how the average classes of mankind are housed.

In no place, either in America or out of it, have I seen such solid work—such means of purity and comfort—in the ordinary private houses, as in Philadelphia. There seem to be no sheds, no hovels, no impurities. In almost every house I find a bathroom. Let no reader think the presence of a bathroom in a house a little thing. It is a sign. A bath means cleanliness, and cleanliness means health. In oriental countries we have seen the baths of sultans and pachas; basins of marble, in the midst of shady trees, with jets of flashing water; luxuries for the rich, not necessities and conveniences for the poor. Here we have baths for everyone who likes to pay for water; and I have read in the Water Company's report that more than 40,000 heads of families in Philadelphia pay that company the water-rate for household baths. That record is a greater honor to the city—as implying many other things, the thousand virtues that depend on personal cleanliness—than even the beauties of Fairmont Park. Yet Fairmont Park is, in its way, a wonder of the earth, even in these days of public parks.—'Dixon's Life in America.'

SOME few weeks since Father Chevalier was received [by the Holy Father. Our readers will remember that this esteemed priest is the Superior of the Society of the Sacred Heart of Notre Dame d'Issoudun. In June last he visited Rome to beseech the Holy Father to consecrate the entire Church to the Sacred Heart. The Pope at this time gave him every hope that he would consent to do so, and the father on his return to Issoudun wrote to all the archbishops and bishops of the world and invited them to induce their flocks to sign an address to his Holiness, entreating him to fulfil his promise. It was to present these signatures to the Pope that Father Chevalier obtained the interview we are about to describe. The signatures are inscribed in thirty huge red volumes, and amount to no less than 3,000,000 of names. Of these, 160 are those of bishops. Each volume contains miniatures of the patron saints and arms of the various cities whose inhabitants have signed the petition. The binding is of scarlet leather, and bears the arms and monograms of His Holiness and also those of our Lady's convent at Issoudun. Father Chevalier had not been long in the Vatican before the Pope made his appearance, surrounded by his court. Whilst listening to a fine address read to him by Father Chevalier, tears were observed to flow down the cheeks of the august Pontiff: "Three million of signatures!" he observed at the conclusion of the address. "That is an army. I will place myself at its head and we shall conquer the world. What I say on earth I desire and hope will be recorded in heaven. We are still awaiting the hour of victory, and it will surely come. We must wait patiently and God will deliver us from our enemies. Let our banner be that of truth, for truth is sure to succeed and trample upon falsehood in the end." The Pope has not given any definite promise as yet to Father Chevalier, as to when he will dedicate the Church to the Heart of her Spouse, but everything tends to make us believe that the important event will take place before long.