

dollars the seat ; is obstreperously applauded, and has bushels of bouquets (made up in French fashion, and sold in Broadway) thrown at her every evening by all the most enthusiastic gents. This fashion has almost reached its culminating point of absurdity.

I am sick of this great granite Astor, with its columns, and interminable stairs and corridors. The vestibule, always lumbered by trunks going and coming, and their owners spitting in all directions—a row of them sit and enfilade the street, with smoking skirmishers drawn up, three deep, on the steps of the doors, staring at the Broadway *belles*, who run the gauntlet of their cigar and eye fire with a pleased confidence.

The girls look, to my English eyes, as thin as thread papers, but I must wait and see more of them. There are an immense number of French and Germans mixed up with the pure grit Americans. The variety is increased by the niggers and yellow ones of all shades ; but I must put on my American spectacles, and not be too hasty in conclusions.

This granite hotel is one of the great guns of New York. It is carried on by a company, like a rail-road, in shares, as most of these giant feeding places are in the United States ; a clerk or two presides in an entrance-office, and a head man over the waiters, who marshals them, like a company of soldiers, when all the bipeds are jammed together expectant at table.

A bell tinkles—in they march, two and two, bearing covered dishes ; another tinkle of bell—halt—each sets down his dish and cover, at *very* remote distances, of vegetables or something nobody is likely to touch, *hors d'œuvres* ; another tinkle—uncover. Each waiter divides his squad of hungry cattle off into the sixes or eights he has to feed. Those who feed him get first asked, one after another, what they'll have ? for nothing eatable is in sight. The fish, flesh, and fowl, is cut up and served out in another room, or at the extreme end of these great darkness-visible halls. You wait, in vain you turn your head, or try to catch a stray imp to get you something—anything. No ; I guess not ; you're in a fix. At last, when some of the first-served have nearly dined—they only take fifteen or twenty minutes—your particular feeder comes in a great hurry and asks you, insinuatingly, what you'd like ? The bill of fare has lots of good things ; but, one after another, he tells you, after another absence, "there's none left !" Well, in despair, you cram anything you can get down ; what enjoyment ! I forgot, that first they bring round a vile soup of some kind—mere hot water.

You are slow at feeding, still, don't trifle ; you see the tarts and puddings vanishing ; they are put on now, but the

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