

Exercises in connection with the Dedication of the New Wanamaker Building, New York, October, 1907, showing Rotunda of Stewart Building and Exterior of New Building.

## BOOK SEVEN.

### THE JOHN WANAMAKER STORE IN NEW YORK.

"I HAVE seen the stores of New York—and Wanamaker's," once said a visitor from the West.

Thus tersely she epitomized the feeling that the Wanamaker Store in New York City is a store of individual characteristics, fittings, merchandise, and ideals that make it absolutely original and without a counterpart.

Thirty years ago the great store of A. T. Stewart occupied the block from Ninth to Tenth Streets, Broadway to Fourth Avenue, and was known as the dry goods capitol of the nation.

Today Wanamaker's occupies this famous A. T. Stewart Store, and in addition a new building, twice as large—the two linked by tunnels and the Bridge of Progress, presenting the largest and best facilities for doing business in New York City.

The coming of the Wanamaker business to New York virtually fulfills a prophecy made by A. T. Stewart himself, when some forty years ago he said:

"There is a young merchant over in Philadelphia who is going to come to the front some of these days."

So remarkable has been the success of this New York

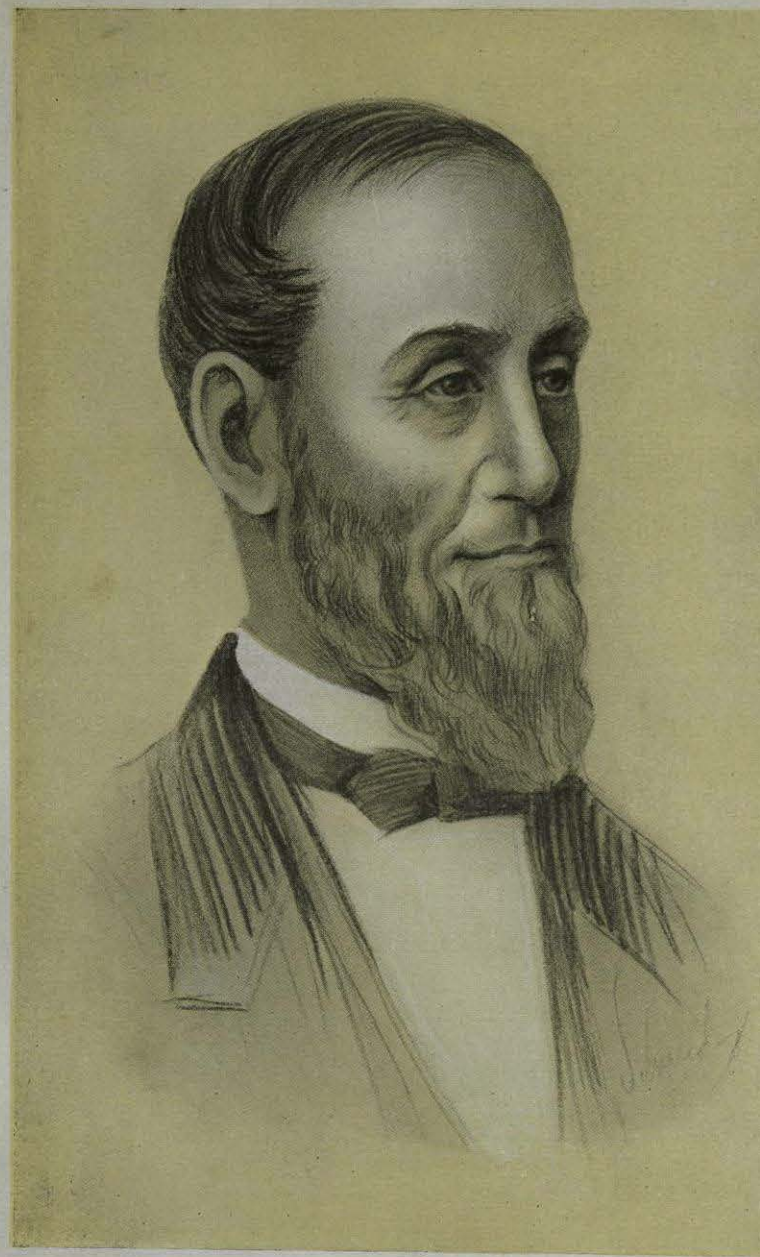
Wanamaker business under the present ownership that former President Theodore Roosevelt made it the text for a recent editorial in the *Outlook*, in which he said:

"Here in the city where the *Outlook* is edited, on Broadway between Ninth and Tenth Streets, is a huge dry goods store. The business was originally started, and the block of which I am speaking was built for the purpose, by an able New York merchant. It prospered. He and those who invested under him made a good deal of money. Their employes did well. Then he died, and certain other people took possession of it and tried to run the business. The manual labor was the same, the physical conditions were the same; but the guiding intelligence at the top had changed. The business was run at a loss. It would surely have had to shut down, and all the employes, clerks, laborers, everybody would have been turned adrift, to infinite suffering, if it had not again changed hands and another business man of capacity taken charge.

"The business was the same as before, the physical conditions were the same, the good-will, the manual labor the same, *but the guiding intelligence had changed, and now everything once more has prospered, and prospered as had never been the case before.*"

When the Wanamaker business began in Philadelphia fifty years ago Alexander T. Stewart had already made his name well-known in American merchandise, and had paved the way for the tremendous volume of business he built up in later years.

Stewart was a Belfast Irishman—transplanted to America. "Look out for the transplanted Irish—they will rule the world." At the age of twenty, after taking a degree at Trinity College, he landed in New York at



Alexander Turney Stewart

the Battery in 1823. His first employment in America was teaching school in Roosevelt Street near Pearl.

The turning-point of his life was the loaning of a small sum of money to a young man friend to open a small dry goods store. It was a part of the patrimony his father had left him, which he brought with him from Ireland. His friend was unable to make a success of the business, and Mr. Stewart concluded he would undertake it himself. He took the balance of his little fortune; went to Ireland; bought a stock of Belfast laces, amounting to about \$3000, and the *New York Daily Advertiser* of September 2, 1825, announced in an advertisement—

“A. T. Stewart offers for sale a general assortment of Fresh Dry Goods at 283 Broadway.”

This store, which was opposite his later wholesale warehouse, was a 25-foot front building, of which he occupied but half, and his lodging room was in the rear of his little half-front shop. In 1826 he moved to 262 Broadway, a larger store, and not long afterward to 257 Broadway.

In 1848 Mr. Stewart built the marble store at Broadway and Chambers street. In 1862 he bought part of the old Randall Farm, bounded by Ninth and Tenth Streets, and Broadway and Fourth Avenue, and erected a six-story iron building with two basements for a retail store. The cost of lot and structure, as stated at the time by the *New York Tribune*, was \$2,750,000. The same article stated that “the two stores at lower and upper Broadway, which Mr. Stewart built, are the proudest monuments of commercial enterprise in the country. The trade transacted in them is almost fabulous.”

After the death of Mr. Stewart, the wholesale business was discontinued at Broadway and Chambers street, and the retail business was confined to Tenth and Broadway, and continued, in one form or another, until 1896, when the building and the stocks of merchandise became the property of the present owner, and the sign went up on the building:

JOHN WANAMAKER  
FORMERLY  
A. T. STEWART & CO.

The business immediately swung back to its old Polar Star and began its new career. Mr. Stewart once said: "My business has been a matter of principle from the start. That is all there is about it."

To restore the abandoned work of New York's greatest merchant and light up the empty house that cost nearly three million dollars, and bring to life again what was said to be a dying neighborhood, is now a part of the history of the greatest Commercial City of the world.

When Stewart built that business palace at Broadway and Ninth street folks said:

"Oh, it is too far up-town, people will never go there to trade!"

When John Wanamaker bought the A. T. Stewart Store in 1896, the children of the folks who made the remark just quoted said:

"Oh, it is too far down-town, people will never go there to trade!"

Both were wrong.

Both men made the same Scotch-like reply: "Wherever McGregor sits, is the head of the table"—and proved it!

The decade from 1896 to 1906 brought to New York its greatest real estate boom, and several of the large retail stores moved into splendid buildings in new neighborhoods.

The ten years' growth of the business at Tenth and Broadway overloaded the old Stewart building and compelled impossible enlargements or removal to another neighborhood. The Wanamaker business resolved to stop at the old neighborhood, the owners having satisfied themselves of the possibilities of the old location. Cheaper leaseholds were an advantage, so a whole block next adjoining was secured for nearly one hundred years, upon which has been erected a mammoth fireproof building, built expressly to convenience and safeguard throngs of people.

This new building was specially constructed for a particular purpose, to install a new kind of furnishing and decorating business. Excepting only the main floor, it is devoted exclusively to furniture, draperies, carpets, china and glass, and pianos and organs, housefurnishings and the spacious, light and large work-rooms required to economically make draperies, mattresses and housefurnishings.

New York City has no other 16-story mercantile building, of such extent, fireproofed from top to bottom—floors, roofs, walls and fixtures, from sub-cellar up—devoted to the furnishing and decorating of the home. And, so far as is known, there is no such establishment, of equal extent, in the world.

The spirit of public improvement during the last

decade that gave birth to the greater Columbia College, the splendid Library of the City of New York, the great Subways and mighty office edifices, has also given birth to a new mercantile enterprise of commanding influence to New York City.

The old A. T. Stewart business now seems small and antiquated in comparison with the present organization and equipment of the Wanamaker business in New York, which now consists of

#### THREE COMPLETE EXCLUSIVE STORES.

FIRST—The Woman's Store, wholly for Dry Goods and Wearing Apparel.

SECOND—The Man's Store, on the entrance floor of the new building, exclusively for Men's and Boys' Wear.

THIRD—The entire new building, from the first gallery to the roof, devoted exclusively to Furnishing and Decoration.

The two buildings—the Stewart store and the new Wanamaker structure—are now connected by three large underground passageways and a fine, artistic large overhead, double-deck covered bridge, known as the Bridge of Progress. Passage from one to the other is now so easy that the two buildings actually seem one.

The great new building is a series of galleries which fulfilled the long-cherished purpose of the owner and builder and constitute the Wanamaker Galleries of Furnishing and Decoration, giving to New York a new kind of a furnishing establishment altogether different from the old department store sort.

#### "THE HOUSE PALATIAL"

is built and furnished in the center of this little world of Furnishing and Decoration. Outside of the House Palatial, its hall, staircases, twenty-two rooms and Summer Garden—finer than many \$250,000 Fifth Avenue mansions—there are also now ready forty-four furnished rooms, representing various periods, to enable architects and home-makers to study and select proper furniture and house adornments, and to enable them to individualize their homes from the mere commercial furnishing way; also a series of still more simply decorated rooms—artistic, but economical.

No event in the mercantile world in recent years has attracted more widespread attention than the opening of this House Palatial and the wonderful galleries of furnishing and decoration.

More than 70,000 visitors attended on the first day. On the second day the attendance was almost as large and on the third day even larger.

In the unfolding of these plans it was determined to eliminate some of the methods usual to the furnishing craft, to show decorative schemes in a large and concrete way with specimens of the pieces to be used in the room, and not depend on little sketches, which are often misleading and do not enable one to test the comfort of a piece or see its construction and finish; and to employ only successful, experienced specialists and expert "assemblers" and colorists, in all the various styles and periods; but to make no charge for this taste and skill.

As though all this were not enough, there was built, of solid masonry, as part of the plan of the galleries, this House Palatial of twenty-two rooms, hall and staircase,

representing the home of a family of taste and wealth; the best of its type that can be seen in Fifth Avenue, or Hyde Park, London.

It has cost, with its furnishings and art works, over a quarter of a million dollars.

As an educational feature that will enable house-owners and architects to judge decorative schemes and furnishings, it is perhaps without parallel in the world.

The Auditorium (Wanamaker Hall), also built into the new Wanamaker building, is three stories in height and will seat fifteen hundred people on the main floor and gallery. The Hall is free of all supports except under the balcony, and the decoration is in Italian Renaissance.

The Austin Pipe-Organ in the Auditorium is a large self-playing organ, having four banks of keys, sixty-two speaking stops, as well as swells, couplers, etc. Among the stops are a chime of bells, a snare-drum, cymbals, triangle, etc. An echo-organ is in the rear of the Hall, operated from the same keyboard.

When A. T. Stewart began the white store building at Tenth and Broadway he built the finest business house that architects knew how to make. It has no superior to this day. Then he filled it with the best goods he could find, selling them on the fairest principles.

Though captains changed when John Wanamaker took the helm, the old Stewart Ship still kept the same route, sailing a straight onward course by the fixed stars of business methods from which there are no deviations.

In the natural course of events, business steadily grew upward and required the erection of the new Wanamaker building on the adjoining block, assembling in it all goods classed as Men's Wear, which are on its main floor, and

the installation of the furnishings, decorations of a house, and the work-rooms in connection therewith upon the upper floors. These changes left the women's goods in the much improved Stewart building, where henceforth only such articles as properly belong to the use and adornment of women and girls will be found. It is therefore exclusively a Woman's Store.

Laid out to be the very opposite of the so-called "Department Store"—a much misused and misfitting term when applied alike to all stores that sell more than one class of goods—the Wanamaker Store for Women has the old-time air of refinement, elegance and comfort which made the A. T. Stewart Store a "Business Palace."

Here each section is a specialized store, many of them the largest and finest in their respective fields.

Here shopping may be done unhurried, uncrowded, undisturbed, in roomy salons. It may seem that some of the sections could be crowded into smaller places. But comfort and convenience—not condensation—are the first considerations, and spaces are never permitted to be miserly screwed up to the discomfort and inconvenience of customers, nor is merchandise ever shown in any deceptive ways.

The foundation of the Stewart business, Dress Goods and Silks, remains to this day the backbone of the Wanamaker business.

A woman is certain to find in these salons at all times a complete assortment of new goods, and many weaves are sold exclusively by the House of Wanamaker.

The Linen Salons are a delight to women, who love a pretty dinner table, with fine napery. From Ireland, from Scotland, from Belgium, Germany and France,

from all the flax countries, this store calls out supplies of practical linens for solid wear, or finest things for daintiness and beauty. They are all shown to advantage in light and airy spaces.

Through the salons of Women's Dress runs a thread of electricity from Paris, the Land of Fashions, that makes a woman tingle in response—costumes of great variety, Wanamaker exclusive importations and adaptations that may be tried on leisurely in the quiet fitting-rooms.

The selection of hats—always a matter of importance to well-dressed and particular women—may be made at leisure, and privately if desired, in the beautifully appointed Millinery Salon, where the latest Paris ideas and Wanamaker models are always shown. It is quite apparent that here is a distinctive character to millinery.

Specially designed Paris and American Corsets, which long experience has taught are best, will be fitted in the Corset Salons.

Among accessories of dress—gloves, shoes, ribbons, neck finery, furs, lingerie, blouses—none of these is lacking in a Woman's Store that knows what women want.

Each section of this building is occupied with a well-selected assortment of each particular class of goods presented, and in sufficient quantity to more than match any other exclusive store.

The Tea Room is to be considered more in the light of a courtesy of accommodation to customers, accustomed to the best cooking and dainty service at luncheon or dinner. With so much shopping to do, it would be a hardship to many to go without luncheon or go out of the building for it.

## CONCLUSION.

AND now, step by step, the story of the Wanamaker Stores has been told in this Golden Book.

Their foundation stones of Principle, hewn by Penn from the quarries of Quaker honesty; their far-back beginnings in men and measures leading the world up from false standards and trickery to fair dealing; their birth in the determination of a boy unfairly dealt with, and their growth into vast agencies for economy, comfort and convenience—all this has been truthfully set down.

From a mustard seed of Mutuality to a wide-spreading tree of Mutual Benefits—such is the record of these fifty years.

What a half-century it has been!

Progress, pulling on ten-league boots, has shelved horse-cars as relics of a snail age, rushing forward on the tail of Franklin's kite, burrowing under the cities; sweeping through the air.

Steel rails and steel hulls have eliminated distance and made all men neighbors. With the perfected telegraph, the telephone and the wireless—all products of this wonder-period—continents now converse as easily as did men across the street when the Wanamaker business began in little Oak Hall in the spring of '61. Automobiles and aeroplanes are bringing Time to terms!

The sewing-machine, the rotary printing press, the linotype, the phonograph, electric lights, the typewriter—all these have been born of this Golden Era of Business.

Learning, five decades ago a luxury, has become a compulsory necessity.

Trade, centering all material wants and needs, has been transformed from bickering barter that took advantage of every turn to open dealing with advantages evenly balanced.

As if by magic, in a mere minute of the ages, humanity's working-plan has been redrawn.

The magic is man's daring, man's perseverance.

Those who have studied and analyzed this great change credit the Wanamaker System as one of the transforming forces. They own its pioneering and leadership in many and vital advances. They count its influence on Trade and Commerce as part of the history of modern progress; as epochal.

Always Wanamaker's has been more than a mart for buying and selling; more than a source of supply. Always it has reached out for something higher than money profits.

Its aim has been the practical application of Economics to Merchandising; the teaching of Conservation and Thrift; the broadening of Knowledge, Taste and Appreciation.

It has educated!

It has done more than this.

By helping men and women to change their ENVIRONMENT it has won place among the master-forces of evolution.

And the gold of its fifty years of service is but the sunrise gleam of its day of larger SERVICE.

"Let those who follow me continue to build with the plumb of Honor, the level of Truth, and the square of Integrity, Education, Courtesy and Mutuality."