

English 66H
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"NEW YORK'S FUTURE"

What can you predict about New York's future? To a New Yorker the city is both changeless and changing. In many respects it neither looks nor feels the way it did twenty five years ago and it won't feel or look the same twenty five years from now. Will it really look so different?

What is New York City really like? New York is a dirty city. It has a very unfavorable climate, its traffic is torture, and its competition is murderous. But there is one thing about it, once you've lived in New York and made it your home, no place else is good enough. No one can really foresee the future. The way I picture it, we have nothing to look forward to, that will be drastically different from now. It has always been the best organized city and it will be just as organized from years to come. New York is a city of movement but it will soon settle down. What will become of our landmarks twenty five years from now, or to places like Chinatown, Broadway and Greenwich Village? What will become of its inhabitants?

Despite the intrusion of Americanization, symbolized by hot-dogs, and hamburgers sold in many Chinese lunch rooms, Chinatown has retained its foreign atmosphere to a greater extent than any other racial settlement in New York. The buildings are typical New York tenements, old and dingy, but many have been decorated in the Chinese style of pagodas and other architectural styles. The Chinese are not easy to convert, and this has been shown by the attempts of the Protestants and Catholics in their attempt to Christianize Chinatown, but their success has not been overwhelming. Though most of them have never seen China,

they cling to their old culture. In twenty years from now, you'll go to Chinatown, and it will look and feel very much the same as it does now. Chinatown will always be a city within a city, set apart from the rest of the city with its different customs and architecture.

Broadway stands for an idea, an idea which touches everybody everywhere. Broadway shows the gay and sophisticated section of New York. Traffic has always been Broadway's headache, and despite the fact that it is no longer the street of primary communication, it is still heavily clogged. The magic and mystery of Broadway has worn off but it is still the greatest street in the world. I think in future years the glamour and fantasy of Broadway will have completely gone and it will be just like any other street in New York.

What really is Greenwich Village? Is it just a lot of old tenements inhabited by slobs which walf around unshaven and carelessly dressed? We don't realize it but the villagers are respectable people who work all week in uptown offices who find it pleasant to be able to go around unshaved and carelessly dressed on their day off, if they feel like it. We are quite envious of them because we don't have this privilege. We don't accept their way of living. The Village permits, perhaps encourages, an informality of dress not found in other parts of Manhattan. We would all like to have this privilege of informal dress. Eventually in years to come, instead of the inhabitants of the Village to conform to our ways, we would probably all have this informality of dress and all of Manhattan will be like Greenwich Village.

We had many landmarks to be proud of and we still have some left. Sooner or later all the landmarks will be obsolete. We nearly lost Carnegie Hall; and Ebbets Field was thrown down to put up some apartment houses. That's all our city is interested in, is to put up an apartment house in any hole in the ground. It has become so congested;

it will soon come to a point when you won't even be able to see the sky, with all the houses built one on top of each other.

What about our problem of slums, do you think it will ever be solved? In my opinion, no matter how far advanced our city is there will always be slums. They are trying to move these people into new low rent apartments just built in order to throw down the slums and rebuild the houses. But these people are turning these houses into slums. The inhabitants of New York will not change much. But they will have more leisure time and they won't be in such a hurry to go nowhere as they are now. There is one thing that will remain with us and that is discrimination. No matter how hard we try to avoid it there will always be discrimination.

New York's future is really both changeless and changing when you come down to it. The change will be so slight we won't even realize it. We should take for granted these changes.