

LATEST

REAL ESTATE MATTERS.

That living in apartments finds favor with the highest social class is evident from the expensive houses of late erected; one which seems superior to its predecessors in spaciousness, convenience and that quiet elegance which finds favor with people of culture and wealth is numbered 290 and 292 Commonwealth avenue. The writer's attention was called to this house by an inspector for the building department, himself a retired builder. He remarked, "That granite curbing gives the key to the whole work; for length and quality that curb has not its equal in this city." The house, which covers the entire area of two lots, gives on one floor as much surface as is found on four floors of an ordinary Back Bay house. Entering, the unusual width of the halls—over sixteen feet—is very noticeable. This size, which is maintained to the roof, insures abundant light and spacious landings and corridors. The staircase in this hall, as well as one in the rear, is surrounded with brick walls, and the stairs and corridors are so constructed as to be considered practically fire-proof by the underwriters. Two passenger elevators of the Whittier company's latest designs furnish service for six stories from the front hall, and for eight stories from the rear hall. Many peculiarities are noticeable in the construction of this

building. One of the most striking is that the floors are of solid timber. Searching for a material which would prevent sound from passing from one story to another, the architect experimented with brick and iron, with porous tiles and with all the various constructive methods designed for this purpose. The result of his experiments was in favor of a solid timber floor as the best non-conductor of sound. The timbers are kiln-dried and treated to render them proof against fire and decay, then placed one-half inch apart and spiked together. On the under side of these is stretched a wire netting for lathing, and on this wire the plastered ceiling is worked for the room below; a mixture of liquid plaster and ground cinders is then flowed over the entire floor area, filling the narrow space between the timbers, uniting with the plastered ceiling below and floating over the timbers to a depth of one inch. On this is laid the usual floor of two thicknesses of boards. It is claimed that this is the most effectual vermin-proof, odor-proof, and fire-proof flooring known. Passing from the main hall, which is finished in mahogany, one enters a suite and finds first, a large and elegant music room. This is panelled with quartered oak. This wood is used for the other finish of this room. One feature, repeated in parlor and library, is a very beautiful band carried round the walls at the height of the carved caps over the doorheads, which answers the purpose of the usual picture moulding. A mantel reaching nearly to the ceiling, with a large open fireplace, and the most beautiful onyx tiling, stands opposite the entrance. The walls are covered with a very rich and harmoniously-colored paper designed by Fr. Beck of Fifth avenue. Mr. Beck and Edouard Leisner furnished the wall decorations used in the house. Connecting by very wide doors is the parlor, a magnificent room, finished in cream and gold; even the hearth and border to the fireplace are Volkmar's cream and gold tiles. Opening from the parlor is a spacious library, finished in mahogany. The mantel in this room is a most chaste design, and in perfect keeping with the general tone of the room.

At the left of the music-room is a very large sitting-room, so arranged as to be used as a principal chamber; this is finished in cream and gold, and is a charming room. Library, parlor, music-room and sitting-room are *en suite*, and furnish an opportunity for receptions or other entertainments found in but few of the most spacious residences. There are three large well-lighted chambers, the walls finished with choice papers of delicate designs. A very spacious yet homelike dining-room is panelled and finished in quartered oak. A tall mantel, with the latest idea for fireplace, the English grate, is a very noticeable feature. A large butler's pantry and a large china closet open from this room. The kitchen has every appliance for convenience and satisfactory service. The closets are so numerous and of such unusual size as to excite the astonishment of lady visitors. Large well lighted and heated rooms with closets are provided on the seventh floor for two maid servants to each suite. That the house was designed by Mr. Fred Pope and finished under his immediate personal superintendence is sufficient evidence that the appointments are complete and the decorative furnishing in low tones and in perfect harmony. The cost was \$200,000.