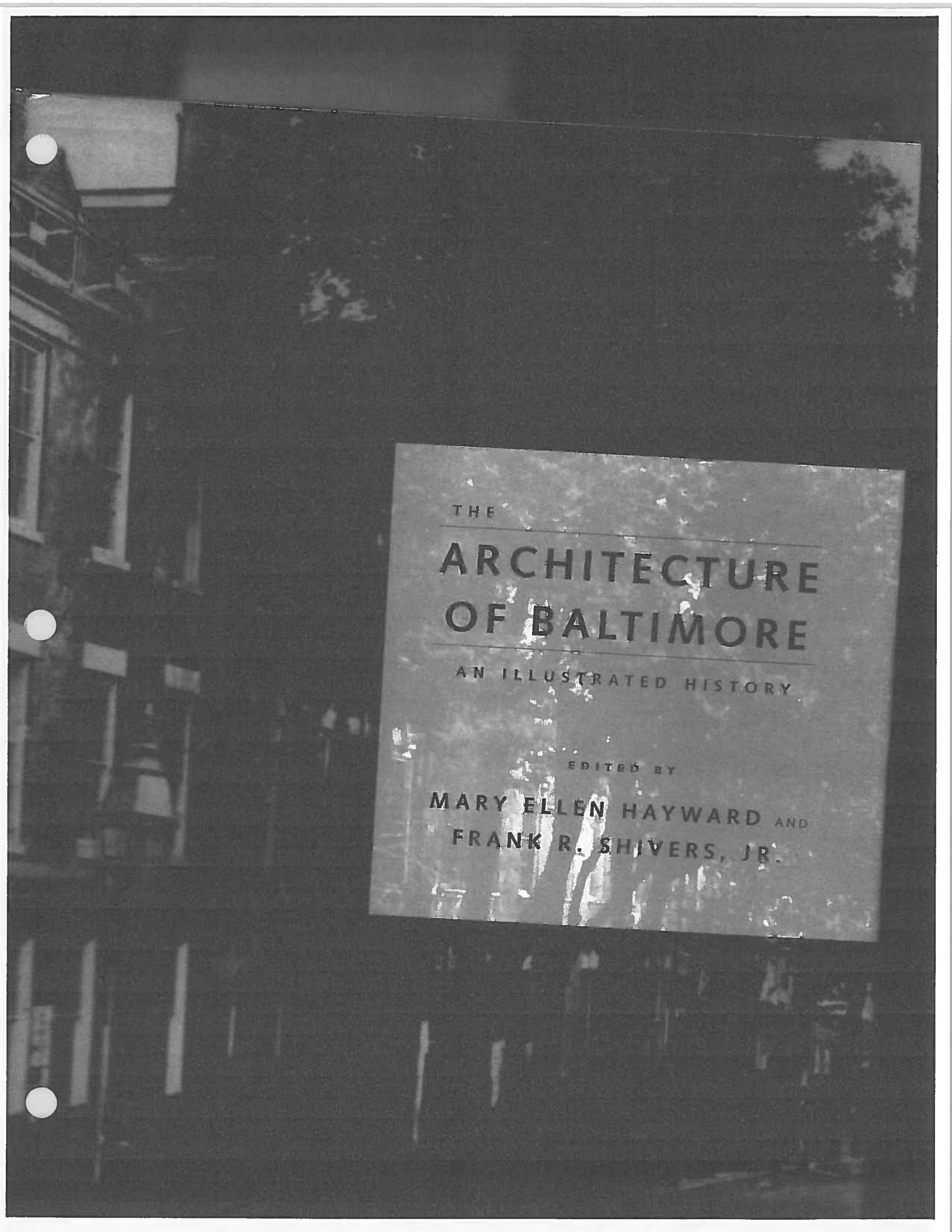
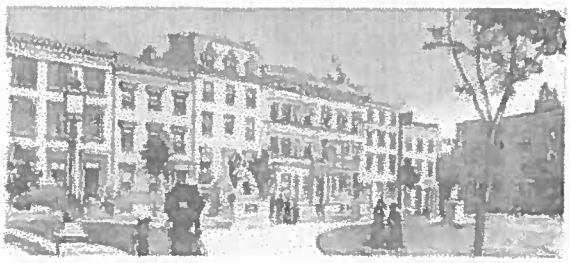

THE
ARCHITECTURE
OF BALTIMORE
AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY
EDITED BY
MARY ELLEN HAYWARD AND
FRANK R. SHIVERS, JR.

very picturesque, with wide, round-arched openings, recessed entryways, bands of stonework in contrasting colors with carved decorations, and a mixture of squared and rounded bays capped by appropriate roofs marked by dormer windows. More modestly scaled, rock-faced stone row houses with similar features, carried out in brownstone, granite, or marble, lined the upper blocks of Eutaw Place toward North Avenue and beyond, leading to the entrance to Druid Hill Park on Lake Drive.

The architects most closely associated with picturesque-style residences on Eutaw Place often designed their clients' downtown places of business as well. Carson built residences in the 1880s for Levi Strauss, Levi Witz, and Solomon Frank; business buildings for Joel Gutman, Frank, and Strouse & Brothers, and in 1890 he designed the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation Synagogue at 1901 Madison Avenue and the Mishkan Israel Synagogue in the 2200 block of Madison. Cassell designed Posner's department store (later Stewart's) in 1899. By the 1890s Sperry had emerged as the architect of choice for the German-Jewish community, designing Oheb Shalom, the Har Sinai Temple at Bolton and Wilson Streets, and the McCulloh Street Temple, along with the Joel Gutman and Hochschild, Kohn department stores and, later, Jacob Epstein's Baltimore Bargain House, at Liberty and Baltimore Streets.

### *Returning to Renaissance Roots*

Even as local architects and their patrons were embracing Romanesque forms and building eclectic picturesque houses, New York architect Stanford White was in the process of bringing yet a new architectural style to town. In 1884 Robert Garrett and his wife, the former Mary Sloan Frick, hired White to remodel their Greek Revival–style townhouse at 11 West Mount Vernon Place. The house had been given to them as a wedding present in 1872 by Garrett's father, John Work Garrett, longtime president of the B&O Railroad. In 1883, when the elder Garrett died, Robert succeeded him as company president and also faced a social decision: whether to remain at Mount Vernon Place or move to one of the fashionable new neighborhoods in or just outside the city. The Garretts decided to stay, bought the house next door to the east, and commissioned White to combine the two old houses into one.

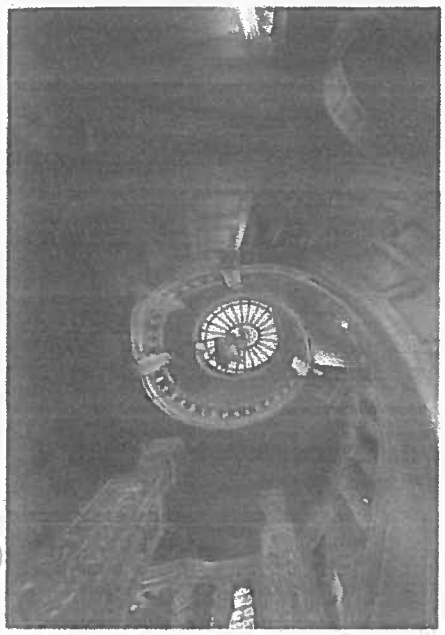


*View of West Mount Vernon Place showing the Robert Garrett house as designed by Stanford White in 1884. Lithograph from "In and About Baltimore,"* Harper's Weekly, *September 7, 1889, 716.*

Over the next nine years, White completely rebuilt the houses, inside and out, and gave the pair a completely new façade, one that introduced the new Renaissance Revival style to the city. Just as the eclectic, picturesque style had been a reaction against the monotony of the classically derived Italianate style, now a return to symmetrical, refined classicism seemed an appropriate antidote to the wilder excesses of the High Victorian Gothic, the Queen Anne, and their highly picturesque interpretations. McKim, Mead & White had first returned to Renaissance forms in their 1883 Villard houses, built for railway magnate Henry Villard in New York City. Actually, the design encompassed a group of houses arranged in a U shape facing Madison Avenue. A true High Renaissance Italian palazzo (modeled after the Cancelleria Palace, ca. 1500), the blocklike structure had simplified lines; a smooth, flat façade; symmetrically placed door and window openings; and a low, hipped roof. In Re-

naissance palazzo style, the building had a rusticated basement, with arched openings, and pedimented windows on the two floors above. The firm had recommended the use of a light-colored stone for the façade, to heighten the classical appearance, but Villard had insisted on the popular brownstone.

The Garretts, too, preferred brownstone, but otherwise, the façade design is strictly academic. The flat roof, with its classical cornice and deep frieze, complemented the horizontality of the composition, which the wide window groupings and belt courses between floors further accentuated. Classical details abounded: pedimented windows, a block modillion cornice set above a frieze decorated with swags, Corinthian columns articulating the porch, and balustrades running across both the main and porch roofs. The "monstrous" entrance, which protruded onto the sidewalk, departed so severely from Mount Vernon Place norms as to rouse neighbors, particularly the owner of the building to the west, who complained that it eliminated his first-floor view of the Washington Monument and sued to halt construction (Niernsee testified that this extension perfectly suited the design).[33]

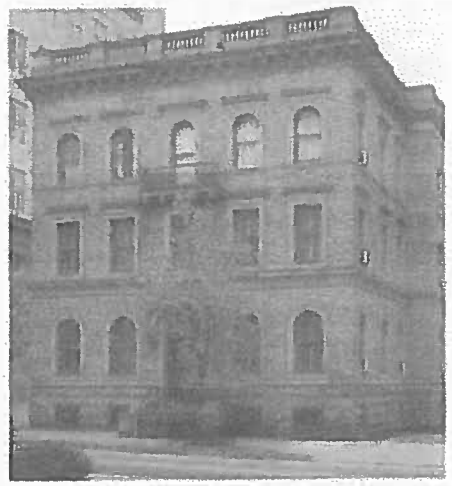


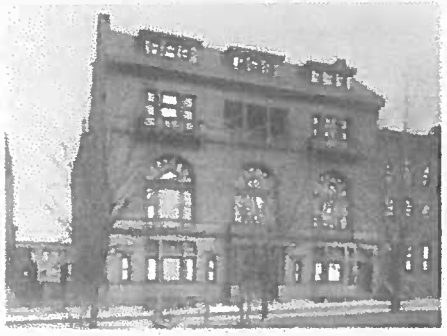
*Carved staircase with skylight, Robert Garrett house. Maryland Historical Society*

White gave the Garretts, or Mary Garrett demanded, an interior that eclipsed any in Baltimore. Beyond the controversial entrance portico the mosaic-floored vestibule welcomed visitors with a fountain and an oversized Tiffany stained-glass window. One then proceeded into an oak-paneled two-story hall, with an impressive fireplace and a balustraded gallery along three of its sides. The formal dining room lay to the rear of the hall, in the original house. To the east, White created a spacious, well-lit (by the new bow window) drawing room by combining the front and rear parlors of the old house the Garretts' had just purchased. White filled it with furniture he ordered from Paris. A carved wooden spiral staircase, brightened by a Tiffany skylight, rose to the floors above. The family dining room, its walls covered in tapestry, and a room for the after-dinner entertainment of female guests, its walls red and ceiling domed, occupied the first floor of the Garretts' original house. Newly designed bedrooms were in the new house.

While working on the Garrett house White designed another Renaissance Revival–style house in Baltimore which was to have a much greater effect on local architecture. The Reverend Dr. John F. Goucher hired White to build a new dwelling for himself in the 2300 block of St. Paul Street, just opposite the college buildings. Instead of the grey stone, Romanesque-influenced style of the college, White gave Goucher something entirely different—a massive Renaissance town palazzo of yellow Pompeian brick topped by a flat roof, classical modillion cornice, and stone balustrade. The square, five-bay-wide block was crisply symmetrical, with three ranges of arched and pedimented window openings, belt courses, and a central, third-floor stone balcony. Florentine in exterior design, the house on the inside duplicated the opulence of the Winans residence. White chose woods and marbles for their unusual colors, and, to show their intrinsic beauty, he presented them with a maximum of polished surface.

Even before the Goucher house was completed in 1892, other local architects were fol-





TOP:
*Dr. John F. Goucher house, 2313 St. Paul Street, designed by McKim, Mead & White, 1892. Photograph by Mary Ellen Hayward*
BOTTOM:
*Phoenix Club, 1505 Eutaw Place, designed by Charles L. Carson, 1890. The Jewish Museum of Maryland Institutional Archives*

The Phoenix Club, closed in the 1950s, was demolished in 1963 to make way for a union hall.

lowing its lead in their institutional, row-house, and town-house designs. J. Appleton Wilson designed two Renaissance Revival–style rows in 1890, one just south of the Associate Reformed Church at Maryland Avenue and Preston Street, the other in the 1100 block of Calvert Street. The latter was chastely academic, carried out in brown brick with white marble trim, with a flat roof, elegant balustrade and modillioned cornice, sharply cut window openings, round-arched marble entryways, and two Palladian windows.

In 1890 Charles Carson provided a classically influenced design for the clubhouse of the Phoenix Club, an elite social organization for the city's German-Jewish business leaders, at 1505 Eutaw Place. With a first floor of brownstone and upper floors of red brick set in black mortar with brownstone trimmings, the symmetrical façade featured a classical entrance portico; a principal floor lit by wide, arched windows articulated with pilasters; and a central, third-story loggia. Delicate balustrades framing window balconies, connected by belt courses, provided the horizontal notes to the composition, which was topped by a low, red-tile roof with Italian-style dormers. Slightly projecting bay windows, with stained-glass transoms reminiscent of those at the Garrett house, marked the ground-floor level.

The opening of the club seemed such an important occurrence that the Baltimore *Sun* gave it a complete page of coverage, including a drawing of the façade. The newspaper reported that "the architecture is the Italian renaissance, and this has been faithfully carried out even to the smallest details." Inside, the *Sun* noted that the rooms "will be superbly arranged for social purposes and richly furnished." The main hall was "floored with mosaic work and paneled in quartered oak." To the north lay the reading room, "finished in ivory white," with Mexican onyx mantel surround and to be furnished with "massive mahogany" pieces; on the south side the ladies' reception room was finished in "oiled mahogany" and would have "gilded and crimson furniture." Behind the reading room there was a social hall, a "general place for lounging and smoking," with a private dining room adjoining. A café extended across the entire rear of the building. The second floor contained the major rooms—a grand banquet hall occupying the entire front, with a music gallery at mezzanine level, and, at the rear, a magnificent grand ballroom, also with mezzanine gallery, as well as a stage on the east side and a dome of opalescent leaded glass, from which hung a gilded chandelier. Private dining and card rooms were located on the mezzanine level between the second and third floors. The basement contained a gymnasium, billiard room, bowling alley, wine cellar, barber shop, and toilet rooms; space on the fourth floor was reserved for servants' sleeping quarters.[34] That same year Carson also designed the Levi Witz house, a Renaissance Revival–style town house at 1800 Eutaw Place.

Meanwhile, Mount Vernon Place experienced a spectacular resurgence. The Garretts, having stayed there, joined forces with William Walters in relandscaping the west square of Mount Vernon Place, installing a fountain, and setting out bronze sculptures. In the decade after 1885, well-to-do young people bought many of the comparatively plain, forty-some-year-old Greek-Revival houses in and around the four squares, enlarged the interiors, and

*George Graham house, southwest corner of Washington Place and Madison Street, designed by George Archer, 1888, and behind it, the Stafford Hotel, designed by Charles E. Cassell, 1893. Peale Collection, Maryland Historical Society*

upgraded plumbing and mechanical systems. Several owners of houses on the north side of West Mount Vernon Place also hired architects to remodel their homes with new Renaissance Revival façades.

A half block away, in 1888, George Archer designed a new white marble town house at the southwest corner of Washington Place and Madison Street for George Graham; it harked back to the chateauesque forms of the Winans house but also showed some classical detailing. It is most notable for its corner turret with conical roof and the deep end wall facing Madison Street, which features an end gable framing two of the upper stories and centered on a Richardsonian Romanesque round-arched window. The Ionic-columned granite portico with its roof balustrade, the classical friezes that provide horizontal accents to the façade, and the swag frieze beneath the roof turret are all classical in inspiration and reflect the influence of the nearby Garrett house.

As White finished work on the Garrett house, in 1893, Mount Vernon Place braced itself, with some vocal objection, for the construction of a new hotel. The Stafford Hotel went up, despite resistance, on the western side of North Washington Place, on land that had belonged to Dr. William A. Moale, a descendant of the Moale who first pictured Baltimore as a fledgling port. Charles Cassell designed the ten-story hotel, whose exterior combined terra cotta, brownstone, and yellow brick and followed the example of the Beaux-Arts-trained American architect Louis Sullivan. For his design, Cassell used an essentially classical vocabulary, articulating the façade with pilasters, sets of arched windows, and balustraded balconies. The use of brown Roman brick for most of the façade was in keeping with other city exercises in Renaissance taste; the brownstone base recalled an earlier era, but the wide terra cotta frieze near the top of the building bespoke a knowledge of the latest fashions. "The main entrance leads to a tiled hallway decorated in Romanesque designs," the *Sun* reported, after commenting on its "commanding position" on Washington Place. "Soft mono-tints of the walls and ceilings are relieved with friezes and borders in conventional patterns flecked with gold."[35] Cassell followed the Stafford with the nine-story Renaissance Revival–style Severn Apartments, at the northeast corner of Cathedral Street and West Mount Vernon Place. Built of Roman brick with brownstone trim, the building drew all its details from the classical vocabulary: deeply projecting bracketed cornice, stone panels decorated with swags, and balustraded balconies.

### *Business, Technology, Taste*

By the 1880s business—whether wholesaling, retailing, financing, or overseeing industry and transportation, all of growing importance in the Baltimore economy—brought noteworthy developments, forcing ever more people together in ever larger buildings. In the na-