

HIGHLAND PARK.

A Visit to Atlantic Highlands.

A SUMMER AND WINTER RESORT WITHIN FIFTY FIVE MINUTES' SAIL OF NEW YORK CITY—LANDS THAT HAVE SOLD AT FROM 20 TO 500 TIMES THEIR VALUE IN THE LAST TWELVE YEARS—HOW LARGE PROFITS ARE TO BE MADE IN NEARBY SUMMER RESORTS, WHILE NEW YORKERS ARE RACKING THEIR BRAINS FOR SMALL PROFITS IN THE METROPOLIS—HIGHLAND PARK DESCRIBED—A SUBURBAN RESORT WHERE THE ASSESSED VALUATION HAS INCREASED THIRTY-FOLD SINCE 1880—POINTS OF INTEREST TO SUMMER COTTAGE-OWNERS AND INVESTORS.

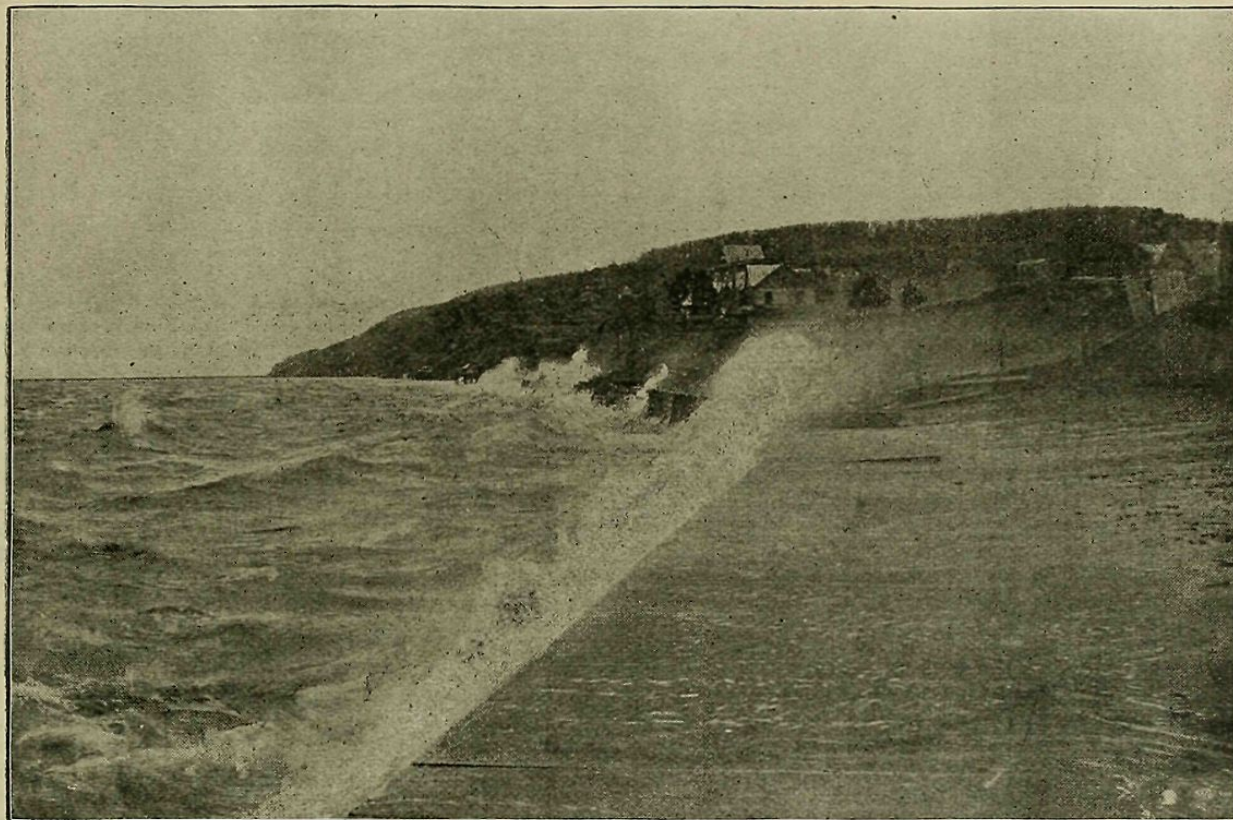
ATLANTIC HIGHLANDS, N. J., May 15, 1893.

I have just spent one of the pleasantest days of my life at one of the most delightful suburban resorts near the great metropolis. For a number of years past I have made journeys to Seabright, Long Branch, Spring Lake and other resorts along the Atlantic coast, and, like many others, have often wondered what sort of a place was this Atlantic Highlands, where everyone landed on the steamer to change for points further south on the coast. I had observed, on many an occasion, the beauties of the scenery at the Highlands, and often wondered why it was that New Yorkers did not

P. M. It is to these boats that the success of this place is so largely due. What a comfort it is on a hot summer's day, when the thermometer has ranged from 85 to 95 degrees in the shade, and the humidity has been equally high, to recline on one of the camp chairs on the decks of the Monmouth and get cooled off in five minutes by the breezes of the bay and ocean. I have pictured to myself the difference between a journey home in the cars and on the boat. In the former case it is a question of hanging on to straps in a crowded train, either surface or elevated, in a hot and stuffy atmosphere, arriving home exhausted, while in the latter case it is a sail in a delicious, health-restoring breeze past the Staten Island shore, the Narrows and the Lower Bay, arriving home bright and fresh, with a chance for an ocean bath and a hearty appetite for supper. When such a place as this can be reached from Wall street almost as quickly as the upper wards of New York City, no one can doubt between which alternative numbers of people will make their choice in the future.

THE JOURNEY BY TRAIN.

While the pleasantest and quickest route is by water, there is also a route by rail, from the foot of Liberty street, via the Jersey Central road, in about seventy-five minutes, by summer time. These trains leave about hourly, from 4 A. M. to 6.15 P. M., returning from 6.30 A. M. to 6.15 P. M.



Storm Scene from Atlantic Highlands.

take advantage of such a place for residence purposes, as it was considerably nearer to the city than several popular resorts further south, and possessed much prettier scenery, taking land and water views combined.

And now that I have come here to examine into the character of Atlantic Highlands, and at the same time enjoy the ocean breezes, my curiosity has as last been satisfied. I find that I have long been mistaken in assuming that New Yorkers have not appreciated this delightful place, and most particularly its quick and easy accessibility to the business districts of the metropolis. On the contrary, I learn, for the first time, that some very prominent and well-known New Yorkers have bought ground and built their cottages at this place. Most of these live here with their families during four or five months of the year, going to town daily, while a number have made it their all-year-round homes, going to business and returning each day, just as the residents of Orange and other Jersey places go to town and return daily.

Besides this, a large summer population gathers here during the three warm months of the year, and this has resulted in the erection of fine hotels, the business of which increases each season as the advantages of the place become more widely known. It has been truly said that the best advertisement for a summer or winter resort is the commendation of our friends, and it is this sort of commendation which appears to have given Atlantic Highlands its increasing popularity.

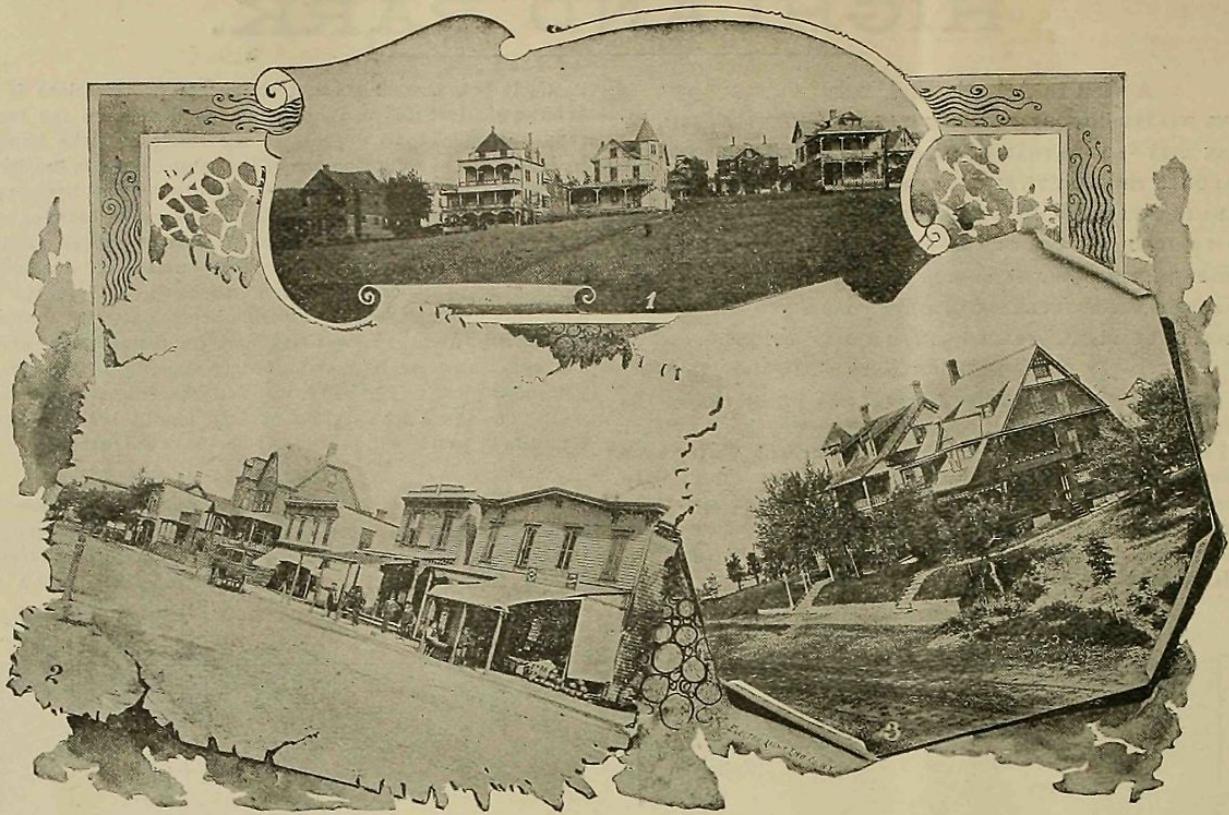
POPULARITY DUE TO ACCESSIBILITY.

In reviewing the conditions which surround this place, I have come to the conclusion that the main cause for its success, as a place of summer homes and a summer resort, is its quick and pleasant accessibility to New York. The landing pier at Atlantic Highlands is reached in fifty-five minutes from Rector street, New York, by the fast boats of the Jersey Central Railroad. These boats, for comfort and dispatch, are not surpassed in the country. The "Monmouth," "Sandy Hook" and "St. Johns" are, in fact, known all over the East as speedy boats. They run from Pier 8, North River, foot of Rector street, to Atlantic Highlands, almost hourly from 4.30 A. M. till 5.30 P. M., returning almost hourly from 6.15 A. M. till 7.30

They should not be used except in cases where a boat has been missed, or excepting where time can be saved by using them, as the water route is by far the most preferable. This remark holds good, of course, for the warm months only.

SOME FINE VIEWS.

On arriving here, the visitor finds himself in front of a beautiful panorama of water and land. A writer, in describing it, says: "If the views from Atlantic Highlands were to be had from some point on the English or European coast, 'Baedeker' would devote a page of description to it. It might be exaggeration to say that this green hill by the sea is unique, but it seems as if it must be. This bold headland has the peculiarity that it is not directly in the path of the ocean's billows. Some six miles further south, a long, sandy peninsula, ending in Sandy Hook, about opposite Atlantic Highlands, makes out from the main. It is about two-and-a-half miles across Sandy Hook Bay from Atlantic Highlands to this peninsula. Property, therefore, is not exposed to the ravages of the severe storms which sometimes break over the coast and have wrought so much damage on the beaches. The peninsula also serves an important purpose in the grand prospect from Atlantic Highlands. It forms a most picturesque middle ground in the panorama. One realizes this when emerging from the woody shades of Bay View avenue upon Point Lookout, when the view bursts upon the beholder in all its grandeur. On this point a Block House Fort was erected during the war of 1812. At the foot of the bluff the waves are ever breaking; yachts, clamming sloops and other small craft are spreading their white wings to the breeze or riding lazily at anchor in the Horseshoe or in Spermaceti Cove (so called because a whale was captured there in 1668), on the peninsula side. To the east, a bold projection of the Highlands meeting in perspective the low line of the beach closes the view. To the northeast, across the bay, lies the Sandy Hook peninsula, whose gray dunes are streaked and studded by lines and clumps of stunted, wind-twisted trees, with their dark-green foliage, among which can be seen near the point the light-houses, the life-saving station, the granite fort and the tower from which vessels are signalled to New York. A



1 and 3, Views on Residence Avenues.

2, An old view of the Business Street, greatly improved since.

streak of glistening white on the eastern strand marks the line where the surf is breaking. Then comes a narrow ribbon of green shoal water, and beyond it the blue of the deep sea, with its end'ess procession of ocean steamers and sailing vessels, and the light-ships, Sandy Hook and Scotland, ever rearing and plunging and tugging at their cables. It is easy to imagine what this view is during the ocean yacht races, or in a storm.

"To the north lie the Narrows. Long Island spread out to the east, with the blue hills of Staten Island to the west, and in the extreme northwest Raritan Bay and the Amboys are plainly seen. On the Long Island shore Coney Island is most conspicuous. The fireworks set off there during the season can always be enjoyed from Atlantic Highlands. In the extreme north the Statue of Liberty is distinctly seen on clear days. There is no view to equal this panorama of land and sea anywhere in this section of the United States, and probably none in this country—and it is only one hour's sail from New York."

REMARKABLE PROGRESS IN A DECADE.

Twelve years ago there were only forty permanent residents within the present limits of the borough. Now there are about 2,000. In addition to this there is a summer population of several thousand. In 1881 there was no communication with New York. Now Atlantic Highlands is the eastern terminus of the Freehold & Atlantic Highlands R. R., the northern terminus of the Navesink R. R., the southern terminus of the popular Jersey Central R. R. steamers, and the northern terminus of the Atlantic Highlands & Red Bank R. R., all branches of the Central Railroad of New Jersey.

Over one hundred cottages and other buildings were built last year and about a similar number are to be erected this year. A number of these I noticed already under way, to be completed in time for occupancy this summer. These cottages vary in value, some of them costing as high as \$15,000 each.

There are now about twenty five hotels and private cottages for the reception of summer guests. Some of the hotels are quite large. One of these, the Grand View, accommodates about five hundred guests, so I am informed. The Portland, just being completed, is quite a handsome modern hotel, while among the others I may name the Bay View, Colonial, Cresson, Sea View, Columbus, Alpine, etc.

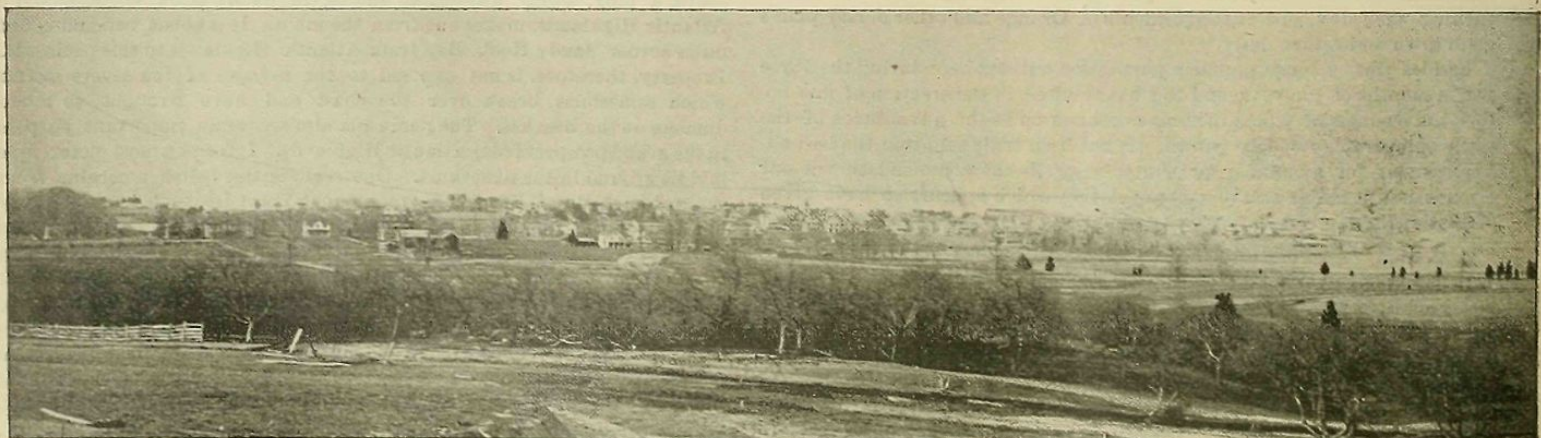
SOME COTTAGE-OWNERS.

Among those who own cottages or grounds and reside here during the summer or winter are several well-known New York business men. Among these are Messrs M. Murray, cashier in the Equitable Life Assurance Society; W. H. Montanye, importer; Chas. E. Crowell, lawyer; Wm. Baldwin, of the Methodist Book Concern, 5th avenue and 21st street; Hanford Crawford, of Jas. McCreery & Co, the dry goods merchants; Andrew Mercer, of the H. B. Smith Manufacturing Co.; James Halliday, of Lee, Tweedy & Co.; S. B. and J. O. Downes, commission merchants; Col. F. S. Benson, of the Nassau Gas Co., Brooklyn; Fred Orth, copper manufacturer; C. A. Anderson, editor; Adolph Strauss, importer; W. H. Thomas, of Thomas & Eckerson, the real estate agents and brokers; F. M. Gillette, of Griswold & Gillette, bankers; Geo. F. Lowrie, woolen importer, and others of standing in the metropolis.

REAL ESTATE—PAST AND PRESENT.

The most remarkable profits seem to have been made here during the last ten years or so. It is a curious fact that, while we have all been struggling to make money in real estate in New York City, the values of lands along the Atlantic Coast seem to have grown, as if by magic, to prodigious proportions. This is due to the increasing popularity of our nearby coast resorts among the populations of New York, Brooklyn, Jersey City, Philadelphia and other places. Lots now bring more than acres did a decade ago, and we seem to be only in the beginning of the upward movement in real estate values. For, as each year rolls by, hundreds and thousands of families will be added to the permanent summer populations along the Atlantic Coast. I use the word "permanent" in the sense that these people buy their lands, build their homes and live there from May or June till October. There are thousands of families who are now looking for summer homes, either on the water or inland, and for those who realize the value of the water and land breezes combined, the numerous places, from Atlantic Highlands onward, must find attractions that, owing to their accessibility, cannot be surpassed.

Hence it is that land values at Atlantic Highlands, keeping pace with the increasing numbers of people who have been attracted to this place, have risen at an extraordinary rate. A lot, 25x100, on 1st avenue, the main business thoroughfare, corner of Centre avenue, was sold to S. T.



View of Bay and Ocean, looking north from Highland Park.

White about two weeks ago for \$9,000. The frame building on the site having cost \$2,500, the ground value, at the selling price, was therefore \$6,500. This same ground sold for \$150 an acre about twelve years before, which brought the cost at that time to \$12.50 per lot, allowing twelve city lots, size 25x100 each, to the acre, taking out streets. Thus, what was sold proportionately for \$12.50, was sold ten years later for \$6,500, an advance of 52,000 per cent in a decade. Of course this is a very rare instance.

Webster Swan bought 50x100 for \$150 about twelve years ago. Half of it sold for \$3,000 ten years later, and to-day it is worth \$5,000, an advance of 6,600 per cent.

Cottage sites, 50x150, on Bay View avenue, a residence avenue, are worth \$3,500 to-day as against \$150 in 1881.

Lots on 4th avenue, 50x100, sold for \$3,000 last winter, that were bought for \$500 in 1888.

Lots on Highland avenue sold last winter for \$1,500 that were sold in 1888 for \$200. Other instances of extraordinary advances might be multiplied.

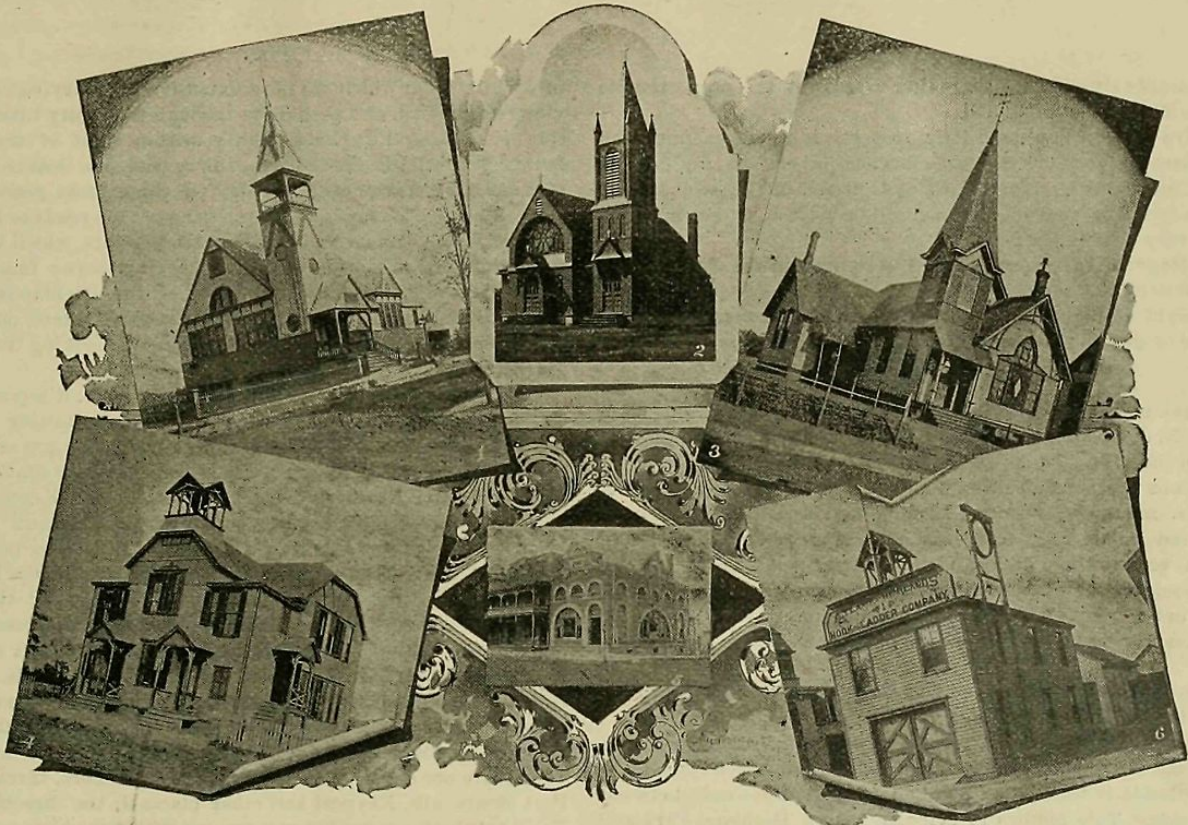
Most of the residence lots in the borough are 50x100 in size. But a demand has sprung up for lots of a larger size, and a number of well-to-do people, realizing the advantages of owning a summer home here, have endeavored to obtain plots of an acre or upward. It has been somewhat difficult, however, to obtain these, as the best residence avenues have been taken up and built upon. Not only are larger-sized plots scarce, but they are beginning to be costly. Hence, a number of New York gentlemen, prompted by a desire to build houses for themselves on one half an acre or

front rank of New York's wealthy builders; Andrew Little, now retired, but late of the far famed type foundry; Wm. R. Rose, the lawyer; Isaac T. Meyer, the well-known real estate broker and expert; John E. Foster, lawyer; D. A. L. Gondran, importer; Donald W. McLeod, importer; James W. Pringle, importer; James A. Rich, manufacturer; David B. Hart, capitalist; J. Wertheim, manufacturer; Augustus S. Pyatt, importer; Edward A. Kerbs, cigar manufacturer; John Gault, retired; Frank B. Hurd, of the firm of Geo. B. Hurd & Co., manufacturing stationers; Frederick St. Goer, banker; Henry Batjer, merchant, and many others.

RESTRICTIONS.

The object of laying out Highland Park being to found a delightful summer settlement of homes on this beautiful hillside for a number of fairly well-to-do people and their friends, every precaution has been taken to make it a pleasant centre in every sense of the word. The entire park is restricted to the erection of private houses. Owners are, however, permitted to build stables in the rear of their plots for their own use. The restrictions hold good even against hotels. A New York hotel man offered to buy a large plot on the property and erect a handsome hotel on the site, but the offer was refused, the terms of the Highland Park Improvement Company forbidding the acceptance of such an offer. This secures a colony of cottages of a strictly private character.

No house is allowed to be built on less than half an acre, and at less cost than \$3,500. Every plot is so laid out that any cottage built on it will



1, 2 and 3, Churches.

4, School House.

5, Bank.

6, Hook and Ladder Company.

more, have joined together in an association and have purchased 117 acres of ground a little distance from the borough, yet near enough to be within a few minutes' walk or drive from two railway stations and the steamboat landing.

HIGHLAND PARK.

This property they have called Highland Park, and have appointed as their local representatives Messrs. Wm. Foster & Co., real estate agents and brokers, and the company has also opened an office on the property, where maps and information can be obtained. Particulars can also be obtained at the office of Isaac T. Meyer, the president and manager, Room 85, 111 Broadway, New York. Highland Park is situated on the finest part of the highlands overlooking the borough and the ocean. The view from every point of the property takes in a varied scene, with a valley of undulating pasture and wooded lands, with the Atlantic Ocean beyond. The panoramic view described on the first page of this letter is here seen to perfection.

The character of the ground is well calculated to make it a park of handsome villas. It starts, at the point nearest to the borough, at an elevation at the lowest point of about 50 feet above high tide-water, and gradually slopes upward in easy gradient to a height of 150 feet above sea level. Nature has laid it out as though it had been destined for villa sites, and artifice is now doing the rest. The entire park has been laid out by George Cooper, the well-known civil engineer and landscape architect, who also laid out Hollywood for John Hoey, the beautiful Rumson road, and the finer part of Long Branch.

The Park is laid out in 190 plots, ranging from half an acre upward. Of these thirty have already been sold and are to be improved within the coming year. Yet it is only a few months since the property was placed upon the market. Should the same ratio of sales be continued, the property will all be sold by the end of next year. The alacrity with which plots were taken for improvement is the strongest evidence of their desirability for residence purposes. This evidence is strengthened by the character of the purchasers, many of whom are well-known in the metropolis. They include Messrs. Cornelius W. Luyster, who stands in the

have an unobstructed view of the beautiful panorama of land and water to be seen from the park.

IMPROVEMENTS.

Six miles of streets, with sidewalks, curbs and gutters, have been opened. The avenues are all 50 feet wide, with 10-foot sidewalks on each side. They are laid out at right angles and curves, the whole conforming to the idea of a park. The improvements under way and contemplated are most extensive, and include water, sewers and electric lighting. The water pipes are to be connected with the borough water system, which consists of a pumping station, with a capacity of 750,000 gallons per day; a stand pipe 30 feet in diameter and 58 feet in height, the base of which is situated on an elevation 245 feet above tide level, and giving a head sufficient to supply water to the top story of the highest building on any elevation in the park. The water is obtained from four large artesian wells, sunk to a point below surface filtration, thus supplying pure water.

Though at present the local lighting is with gas, a company is about to be organized to supply electric light to Highland Park and the Atlantic Highlands generally.

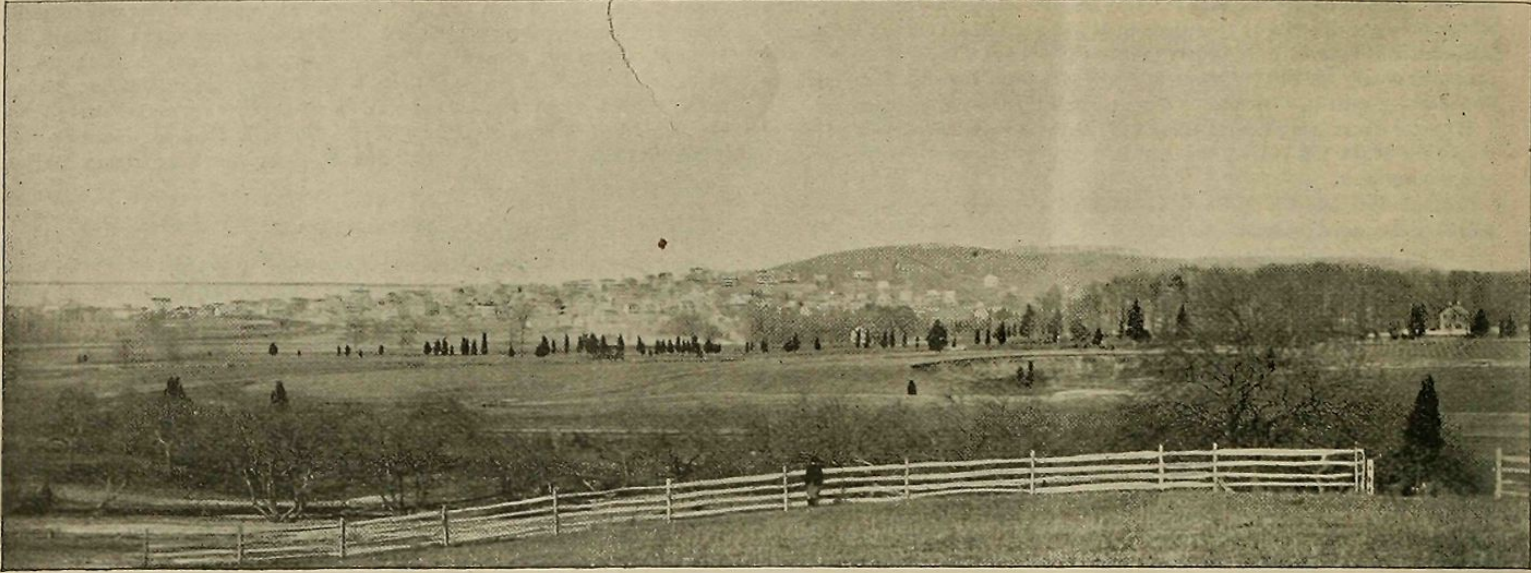
The title to the property is insured by the Title Guarantee and Trust Company, of 55 Liberty street, New York.

A CASINO CONTEMPLATED.

A casino, with tennis courts, a billiard and pool room, bowling alleys, etc., is proposed, including a hall for hops, receptions, lectures, etc. This is to be for the use of residents at Highland Park and their friends, and for subscribers at Atlantic Highlands properly introduced.

THE PRICE OF LOTS.

With all these advantages it might be presumed that the prices placed on plots in this park are higher than in the less desirable parts of the township. They will no doubt be in a year or two, but at present they are not. Agent Foster tells me that plots 100x200 in Highland Park are offered at a lower price than plots 50x100 can be bought for on the more crowded avenues. In other words, Highland Park property to-day, with its attractive prospects and restricted character, can be bought at one-quarter the



View looking east from Highland Park.

price of less desirably-situated lots; in other words, at the proportionate rate of less than \$190 per lot of 25x100.

The prospective value of Highland Park property is much enhanced by the fact that there are very few desirable lots left for cottage building in the borough. This makes Highland Park plots desirable for purchase for a rise as well as for improvement, as they will be certain to be in active demand in the very near future.

The thirty cottages already contemplated to be built in the Park are to cost from \$5,000 to \$15,000 each.

In addition, eight cottages are to be built on plots just sold by I. T. Meyer, on a site of sixteen acres adjoining.

SOME POINTS.

Atlantic Highlands is a borough in the Township of Middletown, Monmouth County, N. J. Highland Park is 40 feet outside the borough, and is to be taken in shortly.

The Borough has a separate sanitary sewage system, with iron outlet sewers and Y's, manholes, flush tanks etc., and a water system, comprising seven and a-half miles of sewer and seven and a-half miles of water pipes. There are three fire companies, namely—a hook and ladder company, a chemical engine company and a hose company.

The tax rate in the borough is 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents per \$100 and in the township 93 cents per \$100, on an assessment of from one half to two-thirds the value of property.

The Mayor and other officers receive no salary, the rents and salary list for last year being nominal—namely, \$100.

The borough had no debt until recently, when it issued 4 per cent twenty-year bonds for \$100,000 to pay for the water and sewer system.

Atlantic Highlands is the highest point on the Atlantic Coast between Maine and Florida. This applies principally to the Highland Park and surrounding property. The ground is sandy and of a very healthy character, the drainage being to a large extent natural. Neither malaria nor mosquitoes are to be found here. The ground is so porous that in fifteen to twenty minutes after a rain shower all signs of water have disappeared.

SCHOOLS, CHURCHES, ETC.

The growth of a community is generally indicated by the number of its churches and schools. Atlantic Highlands has three good private schools and one public school, and steps have been taken to locate a graded public school here. There is also a circulating library, and a Town Hall is soon to be built.

There are six churches, two Baptist, and Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist and Catholic. Another Methodist church is about to be built, at a cost of \$25,000.

A new railroad station is being built, to cost \$15,000, the present depot to be used for freight.

There is a Board of Health and a Board of Trade, and there are several resident physicians and lawyers. There is also a national bank.

EXCELLENT MARKETS, ETC.

The future residents of Highland Park, and Atlantic Highlands generally, will have no cause to complain of the scarcity of vegetables and dairy products. Monmouth County is known all over the country as being one of the greatest dairy and kitchen garden producing counties in the East. Not only are there good stores on the main business avenue, where everything in the way of food can be purchased, but the farmers will bring to your door each day fresh vegetables, eggs, cream, etc., and at prices that are "way below" city figures.

BEAUTIFUL DRIVES.

There are picturesque drives in the vicinity. I cannot do better than quote a writer who is thoroughly familiar with them. He says: "All through the shady recesses of the Atlantic Highlands and the country back are beautiful drives and walks over excellent roads. It is possible to drive to most points of interest and return without retracing more than a small portion, if any, of the route. To reach, for instance, the new county bridge crossing the Navesink from the Highlands to Rumson Neck, one can continue up Bay View avenue and along the edge of that remarkable depression in the hills, known as the Auditorium, to the top of 'Break-

neck' hill, from which the most extensive and varying marine and inland views can be had, and then drive through the pretty little village of Navesink, in the Clay Pitt Creek Valley, within sight of the picturesque All Saints' Memorial P. E. Church, which, with its Gothic Architecture, its peculiar dark-orange hued, ivy-draped stone, looks peacefully down from a green knoll. It stands at the meeting of the roads to Locust Point, the 'Water Witch' House, and the Highland Lights, which latter are reached through the Hartshorne Woods. The Hartshorne family—which came into possession of virtually the whole of the Highlands of Navesink in 1670—still hold a considerable portion of the old estate, on which is located the 'Elephant, Chestnut,' a gnarled, grotesque looking tree, said to be over 400 years old.

"Once across the bridge and on Rumson Neck, it is possible to continue on by the Port-au-Peck road to Long Branch, returning along the Ocean front, through Monmouth Beach to Seabright, and crossing from there by the Jumping Point Bridge to Rumson Neck again, or continuing on through Normandie and Navesink Beach to the bridge which crosses the Navesink to the Navesink Highlands, at the foot of the Highland Lights, whence it is an easy drive to Atlantic Highlands. It is also possible, instead of driving to Long Branch, to continue from Oceanic (the Rumson terminus of the Locust Point Bridge) along the river shore or the 'ridge road' to Red Bank, and crossing the North Sbrewsbury there, reach Atlantic Highlands by way either of the northern bank of the river or Chapel Hill, an elevation of some 160 feet, back of Atlantic Highlands. Here is a light-house, from whose tower a superb view may be had—the green slope to the water, the azure expanse of New York Bay, dotted with white sails and bounded by the delicate-hued shores of Staten Island and Long Island. Then there are drives over a long reach of shore, through Leonardville, Port Monmouth, Keyport and other places in the direction of Matawan. No one with an eye for the picturesque will fail to linger for a look at the little light-house known as Conover's Beacon, near Leonardville. It is a graceful red and white tower on a low sandy point—a beautiful foreground against the blue sea beyond."

OUT-DOOR AMUSEMENTS.

Besides the walks and drives, there are numerous bathing pavilions, there being both still and surf bathing.

There is the Pavonia Yacht Club, with a membership of about two hundred, and a pretty club house, with dining, smoking, billiard and sleeping rooms.

The Highlands are a rendezvous for steam and sailing yachts, and it is no uncommon sight to witness sixty or seventy of these off shore on any summer day. Regattas are held from time to time, and are sources of attraction to residents and visitors.

There are numerous tennis courts attached to the cottages and hotels, and these are used by the younger set on fine days.

There is also the Highland Club, with a membership of about one hundred. This is a social club, comprised mainly of residents and their sons and daughters.

There are also bicycle, baseball and football clubs. Good livery stables are also on hand for those who are fond of driving.

The *Atlantic Highlands Journal* and the *Monmouth Press* are the two local weeklies, and chronicle all the news.

LOW FARES TO NEW YORK.

The New Jersey Southern division of the Jersey Central R. R. has issued a schedule of commutation rates that is remarkably reasonable. Sixty-trip tickets are issued for three months at about 23 cents per trip each way; for four months at about 22 cents, for five months at 20 cents, and for six months at 18 cents and for a year at about 13 cents per trip. Tickets are good by either boat or rail. School rates are equally low.

I think I have covered pretty well all the points that an investor or summer cottage builder would like to know about this charming and healthy place. The reader must now complete the story by indulging himself in the delightful treat of taking a sail over to the Highlands on one of the fine steamers of the Jersey Central R. R. running from the foot of Rector street, and judge for himself, better than it can here be described, the advantages of residing at this nearby Atlantic resort. OBSERVER.