

# Dendur-in-New York

A letter on this page today questions the wisdom of adding the Temple of Dendur to the present Metropolitan Museum of Art agglomeration in Central Park, along with a new American wing and uncalculated future expansion. The museum has the right to do any and all of this within the land granted to it under its 1876 agreement with the Parks Department; and there is a good chance, with its proposed program and the architects selected, that it would do it well.

What is raised is a much larger and more important issue—the way in which the Temple of Dendur could be used to enrich the city far beyond making it one more jam-packed treasure in Fifth Avenue's awesome supermart of art. To use it as a city planning tool, a cultural focus and point of beauty for any one of the many parts of New York that need it far more than Fifth Avenue and Central Park, is a challenge that should surely be explored.

It is not enough, today, for the museum merely to keep clutching newly accumulated glories to its ample bosom. The fact that its motley magnificence is to be restudied and reorganized as the first step of the new program is proof that the museum is aware of this. Mr. Hoving, who helped the city acquire the superb Egyptian temple, has already demonstrated the kind of vision that could take on the job of turning a great work of art and architecture into a functioning, creative urban asset.

The "rethinking" of the museum's collections that is to start the Metropolitan's expansion program could well begin right here.