## THE STUDY OF THE U. S. CAPITOL AT WASHINGTON.

The American Aloe developes its perfect flower only after the slow growth of a century. In its laboratory are utilized the dews and sunshine of a hundred tropic summers—the calm and rest of a hundred southern winters—before the splended blossom rewards the decades of silent toil. So the magnificent building for the use of our national legislators, at Washingson, is the growth of a century, rather than a structure designed by one architect and completed by one set of workmen.

The first Capitol building, with the exception of the dome, was designed by Dr. Thornton and the plan approved by Washington. The south-east corner stone was laid by our first President in 1793, accompanied by the splendid and impressive ceremonies of the masonic ritual. The apron worn by Washington as Grand Master, upon that occasion, was embroidered and presented to him by the wife of Gen. LaFayette. It is now in the Masonic lodge-room at Alexandria, Va.

The old building forms the center of the new structure and only the wings were completed for occupancy by Benjamin Latrobe, architect and engineer, in 1811. The interior of the Capitol was burned by the British in 1814, but the walls were left standing. The next year the task of re-building the wings and completing the entire edifice was undertaken by Mr. Latrobe. In 1817 the work was placed under the superintendency of Mr. Chas. Bulfinch, who discarded the plans of his predecessor and finished the building according to the designs of Dr. Thornton. The foundations of the central portion of the building were laid in 1818 and the whole structure completed in 1827.

As the Republic increased in size and population, the two Houses of Congress grew in proportion, and it was found necessary to enlarge the building devoted to their use. In June, 1851, President Fillmore approved a plan submitted by Mr. Thomas Walters, architect. On the 4th of July, the same year, the corner stone of the extension was laid by the President, assisted by the Masons of Maryland. Daniel Webster was the orator of the occasion. Edward Clark, the present accomplished architect of the Capitol, superintended the work, which was completed in 1867.

The dome of the original central building was constructed of wood; but was removed in 1856 to be replaced by the present stupendous structure of cast iron, which was modeled after the magnificent dome of St. Peter's church, at Rome. The dome is crowned by a superb bronze statue of Freedom, modeled by Crawford, that is 19 feet six inches in height and weighs 14,985 pounds.

The central building was constructed of sandstone, painted white, from an island in Aquia Creek, Virginia. The material used for the extensions is white marble slightly veined with blue, from the quarries at Lee, Massachusetts, with white marble columns from Cockeysville, Maryland.

The main building is 352 feet long in front, with a depth of 121 feet. The extensions are placed at the north and south ends of the central building, with connecting coridors 54 feet long by 56 feet wide, with exterior flanking corridors. Each wing is 142 feet in front by 233 feet in depth. The entire length of the building is 751 feet.

The principal story of the Capitol rests upon a massive rustic basement, which supports an ordonnance of pilasters, rising to the height of the two stories above. Upon these pilasters rests the entablature and beautiful frieze, and the whole is surmounted by a marble balustrade. The centre building has a portico 160 feet wide on the east front, with 24 columns, of soft sandstone, painted white; and so arranged with a projecting gable in the center as to form a double facade.

On the west there is a projection of 83 feet, including a recessed portico of ten coupled columns. The east front of the two wings has each a portico of 22 monolithic fluted columns, of white marble, with a projection of ten feet in the center. There is an octostyle arrangement of the pillars supporting the gables of all three front porticoes. That in front of the central building has three rows of pillars and the projections in front of the wings have two rows of pillars. There is also a portico of ten columns on the west end of each wing, and similar ones on the north side of north wing and the south side of the south wing.

The main entrances are by the three eastern porticoes, being made easy of access by broad flights of stone steps, with massive cheek-blocks and vaulted carriage-ways beneath to the basement entrances. The check-blocks to the central portico are ornamented by two fine groups of statuary. The group on the right represents the discovery of America, and is by Persico, an Italian artist. Columbus is represented as holding aloft a globe in his right hand, symbolic of his discovery of the New World. He is clad in a suit of medieval armor, which is said to be a faithful copy of that worn by him. An Indian maiden crouches beneath his uplifted arm, her face expressive of the surprize and terror manifested by the aboriginal race at the appearance of the the whites.

The group on the left is called "Civilization" and is by Greenough. "A terror-stricken mother, clasping her babe to her breast, crouches at the feet of a stalwart Indian warrior, whose arms, raised in the act of striking her with his tomahawk, are seized and pinioned by the husband and father, who returns at the fortunate moment, accompanied by his faithful dog, which stands ready to spring to the aid of his master."

The pediments of two of the porticoes contain magnificent groups of sculpture. The central pediment contains a group in alto-relievo, which was desined by John Quincy Adams and executed by Signor Persico. "The Genius of America, crowned with a star, holds in her right hand a shield bearing the letters U. S. A., surroundeded with a glory. The shield rests on an altar inscribed with the date date, "July 4, 1776." A spear is behind her within reach and the eagle crouches at her feet. She is gazing at Hope, who stands upon her left, and is directing her attention to Justice on her right, who holds in her right hand a scroll inscribed, "Constitution of the United States," and in her left the scales.

It is from this portico that the President of the United States delivers his inaugural address upon his accession to power. Two martyr-Presidents have stood beneath this splendid colonnade and addressed an admiring crowd of their fellow-citizens, who had called them to the solemn duties and grave responsibilities of the Chief-Magistracy of this grand confederation of States. How lately the "Genius of America" looked down unmoved upon the throng of mourners who passed across this pillared portico to gaze, through tears, upon the face of the beloved dead; as calm in its final rest as the marble features of this sculptured emblem of our country's greatness.

In the northern pediment is Crawford's famous group, representing the progress of Civilization in the United States. The southern pediment is to be ornamented by a group, representing the discovery of America by Columbus. The sculptor is William Barbee.

Standing in front of the Capitol, and at a distance sufficient to take in the whole view, the effect is indescribably grand. The massive dome, with its series of galleries supported by slender pillars and pilasters, has an appearance of lightness and grace that make it seem like the shining crown of one of the enchanted palaces of eastern romance. The facades of the central building and the two wings—have each the classic simplicity of a Grecian temple. The pure white columns, with their ornate Corinthian capitals, are not unworthy copies of those famous structures on the Acropolis at Athens, that have served as perfect models of architectural beauty for more than a score of centuries.

M. L. B.

SHAVING THE FACE.—Thirty years ago, a few persons of foreign birth appeared in New York with hair on the upper lip, and were objects of curiosity and sometimes of public ridicule. In 1850 some of the young swells of the metropolis began to wear moustaches, but for some time no clerk would venture to imitate them. In one case a merchant on Pine street who had just engaged a clerk for twelve months, or during good behavior, discharged him for wearing a full beard, claiming that the adoption of the fashion laid the clerk open to dismissal under the good behavior clause of the contract. About the same time a number of leading merchants gave notice that they would employ nobody who wore hair on their upper lip. As late as 1851 the senior proprietor of the *Journal of Commerce* made his cashier shave off an incipient moustache, and soon after brought his own son under the razor. In the church of Dr. Bethune on Brooklyn Heights an elder who was suffering from a lame wrist allowed his beard to grow rather than submit to a barber. The habit, beginning in necessity, continued on account of the increase of comfort which it afforded, and the elder flaunted his beard before his congregation constantly. The result was laughable. Many of the brethren called upon the pastor to insist upon doing away with such a scandal as a full beard elder. He led them to his library and showed them how some of the early fathers had pleaded against cutting off his beard. "He turned to Lactantius, Theodoret, St. Augustine and St. Cyprian, who had stoutly contended for the growth of the whole beard. He quoted from Clement, of Alexandria, the assertion that "Nature adorned men like a Lion, with a beard, as the mark of strength and power." When one of the vistors asked him how would he like it if the clergy assumed the moustache, Dr. Bethune referred him to a decision of the fourth Council of Carthage (A. D. 252, can. 44) where it is positively enacted that a cleric shall not shave his beard, and to the statement made by Luther in discussing this subject, that "all the Protestant martyrs were buried in their full beards." This did not settle the matter, for substantially the ladies put in their protest. But in a few months a venturesome lawyer let his beard grow after the manner of the elder and in a little while smooth shaven faces were no longer the rule but the exception.

### *Shropshire Sheep.*

In its report of the sheep classes at the late Royal Agricultural Show, the *Agricultural Gazette* (London) says of the Shropshires. "These sheep were undoubtedly the feature of the sheep show. In numbers they dwarfed every other breed into insignificance. Thus, while there were 39 entries for Leicesters, 31 for Cotswolds, 39 for Lincolns, and 29 for Oxfords, there were 152 entries for Shropshires. The Shropshire, no doubt, appeared on his own ground, as he has shown himself to be the sheep of the midland counties. But how is it that the Leicester was not equally well represented? Is it not that the Leicester is a thing of the past, whilst the Shropshire is a sheep of the present and the future? Looking at the number of exhibitors, the case is still more strikingly illustrated; for while the Leicesters represented seven flocks, the Shropshires were drawn from as many as thirty-seven flocks. Nothing could more conclusively show the rapid strides which this comparatively recent breed has made. Its advance has been due to its intrinsic merits as a profitable sheep to the tenant-farmer. Taking the classes as they stand, we have first the shearling rams, a noble class, comprising eighty-six individuals. Hard, indeed, must have been the task of the judges to pick out the best from such a number. That they eventually succeeded in so doing is open to doubt. The Shropshire judges have always insisted upon a close-fitting helmet of wool, dark features, and freedom from greys in the fleece, especially at the poll and rump. The heads, in some cases, were too bare, but the type of sheep shown was creditable, and indicated progress.

### *PILES.*

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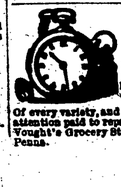

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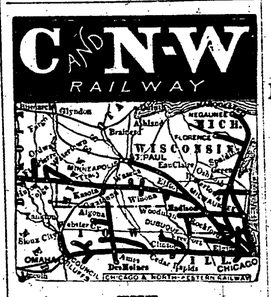


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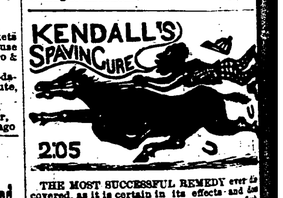


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