

## NOTES AND CLIPPINGS.

**THE MARYLAND STATE HOUSE.** — The State House at Annapolis, erected more than a hundred years ago, is being restored by Mr. George A. Fredericks, a Baltimore architect. Complaint had been made of the state of decay into which the building was falling, the bad ventilation, poor heating-arrangements, etc.; so that the last Legislature made an appropriation of thirty thousand dollars for its repair. The walls were found in some places to be dangerously impaired in strength; and they are being made secure by underpinning and strong girders where required. The floors of the entire building have been renewed, and a new slate roof will be put on. The building has been newly roofed three times, as was discovered on examination; and each time the old roof of shingles or tin has been allowed to remain, and was merely covered over by the new one. New heating-apparatus will also be put in. But with all the improvements, care will be taken not to alter the appearance of the Senate Chambers, the scene of Washington's surrender of his commission after the glorious end of the Revolutionary War. All features in the building that are calculated to excite the veneration of visitors will be preserved as far as practicable.

**ANOTHER SCAMPED PUBLIC BUILDING.** — The following report upon the condition of the North Indiana Penitentiary at Michigan City, Ind., was recently presented to the directors: "We, the undersigned architects and builders, have made a full and thorough examination of the outside wall of foundation of the north wing of the cell-house of the Northern Indiana Prison, recently constructed, and find the same to be laid in mortar of a very inferior quality, and of small stone not of proper size, and very poorly bonded, and not in accordance with the specifications on file; and we deem it necessary for the safety of the building about to be erected, to excavate said outside wall foundation, and replace the same with proper material; and believe the interest of the State will be benefited thereby. — Thomas Miles, superintendent of works; D. Kennedy, city and government engineer; O. Schnieder, architect; Thomas Culburt, builder; Philip Ersling, builder; E. J. Green, builder." The rebuilding of this piece of work will delay the work of building the cell-houses some three weeks, and cause a loss to the State of about \$5,000. Mr. William Myers of Fort Wayne was the builder, and received \$7,000 for the same. The commissioners that accepted the work were unacquainted with this kind of work, and were therefore unable to detect that the builder was swindling the State; thus furnishing one more example of the inadvisability of intrusting important works to the supervision of a general building-committee.

**THE THOMAS GARDEN PROJECT.** — The subscription books of the Thomas Concert Garden Company are filling up beyond the expectations of the projectors. Already over thirty retailers have made arrangements to secure shops in the arcade on the street floor. The subscription of Mr. William H. Vanderbilt, which was promised by him before his departure to Europe, but which had not been placed formally upon the books, has been the subject of cable correspondence, and Mr. Vanderbilt has telegraphed that upon his return he will immediately make good his promised subscription.

**A TRADES-UNION SUIT.** — Judge Barrett of New York has recently given a decision which is quite important to trades-unions. Two men were expelled from the membership of a society organized under the general law of New York for the incorporation of charitable and like associations, to which they had paid assessments, because they violated a by-law which provides that its members shall not work for less than forty cents an hour. These men worked for thirty cents; and thereafter the society refused to receive their regular dues. They accordingly brought proceedings for a peremptory mandamus to compel their reinstatement. After hearing the case, the judge decided that such a by-law is "unreasonable and oppressive, and contrary to public policy. It limits," he declares, "the man's right to earn a livelihood in his own proper way, for conduct which is not inherently wrong, nor subversive of any benevolent or charitable purpose, and is therefore void." Judge Barrett issued a peremptory mandamus requiring the reinstatement of both men.

**NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICAN RAILROAD.** — We learn from *La Semaine des Constructeurs* that a scheme for a railroad connecting Buenos Ayres with San Francisco is now preparing in the latter city. The line would be about 6,000 miles in length.

**THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT.**—It is the determination of the friends of the Washington Monument project to complete the monument on its present foundation. The president has accordingly requested the engineers and officers composing the commission to investigate the stability of the foundation to meet in New York at an early day to consider and report upon the practicability and cost of giving additional spread to the foundation, so that the subject may be presented to Congress at the extra session in October next.

**THE LAST OF THE CENTENNIAL BUILDINGS.**—There was something very suggestive of the growth of mushrooms in the way the small buildings grew into being upon the Centennial grounds a year ago,—a growth whose rapidity has been outdone by the rapidity of their destruction. The Park Commissioners having found that certain buildings had not been removed from the grounds attempted to serve notices upon their various owners; but they had been sold and resold so many times that it was impossible to trace out the present owners, so notices were posted upon the buildings calling for their removal within five days. At the end of this time Gen. Thayer with a hundred and fifty laborers appeared upon the ground, and under the protection of a squad of the Park Guard proceeded to pull down the obstructing buildings. Their summary method of procedure was shown in their treatment of the Municipal Building, which was brought down by three pulls. Among the buildings so treated were the Michigan building, the Arkansas building, the Spanish barracks, several booths, stands, etc. Unfortunately among the buildings so destroyed was a building belonging to the United States Government and used for the exhibition of powder-testing machines, electrical apparatus, etc. One of its peculiarities was that, in case of the explosion of any material within, it would fall to pieces; in fact, the building was once demolished by an explosion of two hundred pounds of powder, and was reconstructed at Philadelphia, to show that the effect of an explosion within would merely cause it to come apart without the destruction of the material. Its second dissolution seems, however, to have been accomplished with less expenditure of force. This interference with its property the Government has resented; and the matter has been placed in the hands of the Attorney-General with instructions to proceed against the Finance Board of the Exhibition to recover damages.

**FALL OF A CHURCH BELL.**—As the sexton of the Congregational church at Newburg, Vt., was ringing the bell (which weighs about one thousand pounds) for evening services, June 3, Sunday, the iron standard upon which it is supported spread, and the bell fell with a crash about two feet, and would have crushed down through the bell-room and entry to the cellar, had it not been for the bulkhead door, which was partly open, and rested on some strong timbers. It was a narrow escape for the sexton. It is rather curious that an accident similar in its nature to the one which our New York correspondent mentioned lately as having nearly occurred at Binghamton, N.Y., should have happened so nearly at the same time.

**THE WAR DEPARTMENT BUILDING.**—Secretary McCrary has annulled the contract for the completion of the War Department building, and made a new one which will save thirty-three per centum.

**THE PILGRIM MONUMENT.**—The Hallowell (Me.) Granite Company has nearly completed the Goddess of Liberty which is to surmount the Pilgrims' Monument at Plymouth. The figure is forty-five feet high, and the stone from which one arm alone was cut weighed sixty tons. The company have also a colossal statue of David and Jonathan, which is nearly finished.

**THE LAST OF TABLE ROCK.**—On the 24th ultimo the last of what was so long known as Table Rock, at Niagara, broke off and fell into the river. The mass weighed nearly sixty tons, and up to 1876 over four thousand names of visitors had been carved upon it. The part which fell on the 24th composed only half of the original rock, the rest having fallen in. On Saturday, Jan. 1, 1829, a surface of the rock supposed to be the size of half an acre, forming the bed of Maiden Walk, broke loose, and was precipitated into the immense chasm below. The crash was heard for a distance of five miles, and the effects in the immediate neighborhood resembled the shock of an earthquake. The water running under the bank is supposed to have caused the fall on the 24th, and the shock when the rock struck the water was distinctly felt three miles from the fall. Several of the trees which stood on the rock are now seen standing in the river as erect as when in their original places on the rock. Where the rock shelved off from the bank, at a distance of twenty feet from the top, can be seen the root of a tree estimated to be two feet in diameter. It attracts considerable attention. — *Syracuse Standard.*

**ALMOST AN ACCIDENT.**—It is not an uncommon thing to test a bridge or floor by marching soldiers over it; and the anecdote that is told of the way that the theatre of the Palais Royal at Paris was tested in 1781 is known to our readers. It seems quite as heartless to test a society hall under the guise of friendship and fellowship, as was seemingly done at Shelburne Falls, Mass., on the 8th inst., where, during the dedication services of a new Odd Fellows' Hall, whereat a large number of visiting brothers were present, one of the girders of the building broke, causing the floor to settle. The audience was quietly dismissed, and no serious mishap occurred.

**STATUES FOUND ON THE ISLAND OF MELOS.**—Four marble statues have lately been found on the island of Melos, on the property of Mr. Nostarki. Among them is a statue of Poseidon in good condition. Other finds are reported.

**THE SALON OF 1877.**—Of the 4,616 works of art to be exhibited in this year's salon at Paris, only 83 are architectural designs.

**CONCRETE BRIDGE.**—At Seaton, England, a three-arch bridge is being built of concrete, on a new principle invented by Mr. Brannon, of London. The idea of the inventor is that concrete will for such work prove far more enduring than stone. The toll-house at the end of the bridge is being built on arches. Mr. Brannon suggests that by constructing cottages on arches, instead of on the solid ground, all fear of fever caused by exhalations from the soil would be avoided; and it is understood that Sir Walter Trevalyan, on whose estate the bridge is being built, is about to have a number of workmen's cottages built on that principle at Seaton.

**CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE.**—The exhumation of Cleopatra's Needle has been completed. Eighteen inches of the apex are gone, and the corners are somewhat damaged; but otherwise it is in a fair condition.

**THE VENDÔME COLUMN.**—It is stated that M. Courbet has at length decided to pay for the re-erection of the Vendôme Column, asking only to have sufficient time granted him for the purpose. He is to be allowed to refund the expense of re-erecting the column, which was 323,091 francs, in yearly instalments of 10,000 francs.

**STATUE OF BLANCHE OF BRITTANY.**—A very curious specimen of statuary has just been placed in the Hotel Cluny at Paris. This is a statue of Blanche of Brittany, the wife of John I., Duke of Brittany, taken from her tomb in the Abbey de la Joie, near Hennebont. At the time it was made the art of casting in bronze was only known to bell-founders; hence this statue was wrought from copper with the hammer, and the pieces were soldered together upon a core of wood.

**THE PNEUMATIC CLOCKS OF VIENNA.**—A practical clockmaker, Mr. J. Fattorini, gives the following account of the system of regulating clocks which has been introduced into Vienna by an Austrian engineer, Herr C. A. Mayrhofer, who has hit upon the expedient of pneumatic tubes as a means of securing uniformity in the time of clocks in any part of the city: Tubes are laid in the street from the central station, in which is the "master clock," or rather two clocks working together; and should one get wrong, the other keeps in motion, and an alarm bell is rung to indicate to the attendant that something is wrong, and he at once rectifies it. The air is pumped from the station, and just as gas or water can be taken into houses by means of pipes, so can the pneumatic tubes be laid, and people can receive their time just as they get their water or gas, the tubes being always kept fully charged with air. Branches can be taken in any direction. A simple contrivance connected with the tubes and the clocks lets off a puff of air every minute or half-minute, and the fingers of the clocks are in that manner pushed forward with unerring accuracy, in accordance with the time indicated by the standard timepieces of the Observatory, so that exact uniformity can be maintained without difficulty in the time shown on any number of dials. Housekeepers and others can be relieved of the trouble of winding up their clocks, as nothing of this kind is required in the pneumatic system, which is worked in much the same way as the supply of gas or water, with this difference, however, that the clocks are self-acting in letting off the time. Endeavors have been made to use electricity in this way, but the changes of temperature and other difficulties have formed an insuperable bar to the adoption of electricity as a motive-power for any number of clocks. The weather has no effect on the air, so far as the working of the pneumatic clocks is concerned; and be it hot or be it cold, the little valve lets off its puff of air, and the clocks go accurately, in defiance of atmospheric influences. A small yearly charge is made for the clocks, and there is no further expense or trouble. The system has been in operation in Vienna for nearly four months, and has worked without a single hitch, so that people are beginning to realize the idea that time can be "laid on" in their houses as readily as either water or gas. Mr. Fattorini says that after a minute inspection, and inquiries made in every direction, he is of opinion that the inventor has solved a great difficulty, and that the adoption of this excellent system of timekeeping throughout the world is merely a question of time; as the merits of the invention become better known, its simplicity, cheapness, and accuracy being its principal recommendations, it would prove, he thinks, especially useful for public clocks.

**THE PODESTÀ AT FLORENCE.**—A correspondent of the *Academy* writes from Florence: "For some centuries now, the authorities here have been engaged in destroying the great works of their great artists. The clergy especially have done infinite mischief, and generations of bad artists and bad architects have been employed to degrade and in many cases irremediably injure some of the grandest and most beautiful works of their predecessors. . . . As yet the only successful restoration made in Florence is that of the palace of the Podestà." The Podestà, or Bargello as it is often called, was erected, as it now stands, in the fourteenth century by Agnolo Gaddi.

**MOTIF.**—The French word *motif*, used in an architectural sense, is newer even than the verb *motiver*, which was admitted into the Dictionary of the French Academy only since 1740. The substantive has three significations: (1) *Motif*, equivalent to our word "motive," (2) *Motif*, a term in music; for instance, *Motif principal, la phrase de chant qui domine dans tout le morceau*. (3) *Motif*, a term of architecture, "se dit," to repeat M. Littre's words, "de certains sujets de sculpture—'Près du cercle international se trouve le parc anglais dont le motif principal est une pagode de l'Inde.'" The word should never be used in the sense of "detail."

**WHITE CEMENT.**—Herr O. Fahnejehn recommends as a white cement a mixture of 75 parts carefully washed chalk and 25 parts of washed kaolin, to be first calcined to a red heat, and then ground. The resulting powder is snow-white in color, or if the heat has been too great, of a bluish tinge. Either alone or mixed with a small percentage of gypsum, it makes an excellent hydraulic cement.