MINNESOTA STATE HOUSES.

Historical and Reminiscent Review of the Selection of Site and Building of the First State Capitol.

Forensic Fights of Early Days, Parliamentary Maneuvering and Selfish Scheming Recounted in Graphic Style.

Burning of the Old Capitol Recalled, and Recital of the Exciting Incidents That Resulted Therefrom.

Hon. Joseph Rolette's Famous Coup in Favor of St. Paul as Viewed by a Legislator of Early Days.

By the terms of an act to provide a new capitol for the state of Minnesota, approved April 7, 1893, it would seem that the people of the state have at last realized that a state so grand in her growth, wealth, population and prosperity, some of whose founders are still alive and active in the state's future development, ought to have a state house equal at least to the wants and needs of the people of the state, and not an old rattle-trap building, hardly fit for a country school house. This being true, it would appear not improper to write something of the old capitols—for we have had two.

In the act of congress organizing the territory of Minnesota it was provided, "That the legislative assembly of the

HON. JOSEPH ROLETTE,

Now Published for the First Time.

territory of Minnesota shall hold its first session at St. Paul, and at said first session the governor and legislative assembly shall locate and establish a temporary seat of government for said territory at such place as they may deem eligible, and shall at such time as they shall see proper prescribe by law the manner of locating the permanent seat of government of said territory by a vote of the people."

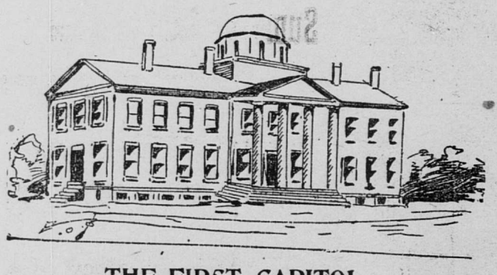
The first session of the legislative assembly of the territory of Minnesota met on the 3d day of September, 1849, in the old Central house, which stood on the lot now occupied by the Mannheimer building, on Third street, fronting, however, towards the Mississippi river on Second street.

It may be said that, among the members of the first session of the legislative assembly of the territory of Minnesota, were quite a number of brainy and aggressive young fellows, who had not come West for their health, among whom were ex-Senator Wilkinson, ex-Gov. Marshall, Hon. Henry A. Setzer, Hon. Benjamin W. Brunson and P. K. Johnson.

The legislative assembly had hardly got fairly to work before Mr. Johnson, of the house, from St. Paul, introduced a "bill to locate the temporary seat of government for the territory of Minnesota." This bill provided for the location at St. Paul. St. Paul, St. Anthony and Stillwater were in those days rival towns. The census of the June preceding gave St. Paul a population of 840, Stillwater 669 and St. Anthony 571. Ex-Governor Marshall, representing the little village at the falls, was of the impression that lightning might strike, and that the capitol, by a litte cunning wire work, would finally be located at Snantheny, as old settlers used to call the Falls.

Senator Wilkinson,

who had located at Stillwater under the belief that it was going to be the largest city west of New York (Chicago in those days was but a country village) was of the opinion that the oldest town in the territory had some rights that carpet-baggers ought to respect—hence they were opposed to the passage of a bill to



THE FIRST CAPITOL.

Destroyed by Fire March 1, 1881.

eating even temporarily the capitol in St. Paul, and in their boyish glee they dreamed no doubt of the time when their village homes would become great metropolitan cities in the new world. Within a few days after the introduction of the bill in the house, one was introduced in the council which provided for a submission of the question to the people as to where the capitol should be located. These two bills were considered and reconsidered, amended and recommitted from time to time during the session, when at last it was found the opposition was too strong. St. Anthony and Stillwater with an occasional lift from Sauk Rapids won the day, and the fight for the session was abandoned and the bills went where the woodbine twineth, and the secretary of the territory was instructed to secure rooms for the next session of the territorial legislature in St. Paul. Another year gave St. Paul more population and more power, yet a little lobbying had to be done. The original understanding was to locate the territorial prison at Saux Rapids, but it became necessary to do some trading to secure the capitol, and the deal was made with Stillwater, as St. Paul secured more votes for her bill thereby.

The second session of the legislative assembly convened on Jan. 1, 1851, in the Rice house, a building which stood upon the present site of the Metropolitan hotel, on Jan. 16 Hon. Sylvanus Trask, of Stillwater, introduced in the house a bill to provide for the erection of public buildings in the territory of Minnesota. This bill not only provided for the erection of the capitol building, but the territorial prison—the capitol at St. Paul, the territorial prison at Stillwater. It had plain sailing, as it was in accordance with the ante nuptial contract, and after its several readings from time to time passed the house on Jan. 25. In favor of its passage, the yeas were 10; the nays were 8; those voting in the negative were Gilman, North, Olmsted, Patch, Randall and Sloan. This bill was transmitted to the council, had its several readings, passed—the only negative votes in the council being Rollins, Olmsted and Sturges — and was returned to the house, enrolled and transmitted to the governor, who approved the same on Feb. 7.

Old Settlers Mistaken.

I have given the negative vote on the passage of the capitol bill of 1851 to convince some old settlers, who take everything second-hand, that they are mistaken, and that there was no agreement, expressed or implied, at that celebrated conference held in Stillwater in 1848 as to a deal in regard to the location of the capitol, territorial prison or the University of Minnesota. The facts are that at that conference the location of the capitol was never mentioned, and as to the university, it was not dreamed of. Men were too busy staking out claims and securing daily bread to give thought to a university or a higher education than that taught by Governor Slade's schoolmarms. It will be seen that every member, in both houses of the legislative assembly, from St. Anthony and north of there, voted against the passage of the capitol bill.

It may be said that the first that was heard about a university was in the message of Gov. Ramsey in 1851, when he recommended the assembly to memorialize congress for a grant of lands to establish and maintain a university. During the session of the legislative assembly of 1851 George L. Becker, a young lawyer who had come to St. Paul some time previous—a graduate of the Michigan university, and who was of the opinion that a university was as necessary to the growth and prosperity of a new country as anything else—drafted a bill for a university charter which was given to John W. North, a member of the house from St. Anthony, and chairman of the committee on schools, to introduce in the house, as he had been beaten on the capitol question and wanted to satisfy his constituents that he had taken some scalps. As a favor he wanted St. Anthony Falls designated as the location of the university. As there had been no appropriation or a grant of lands for the building of a university, and the whole thing seemed mythical, there were no objections to his request, and the bill became a law.

In a day or two a memorial passed the legislative assembly asking congress for a grant of 100,000 acres of land to aid in the erection of a university at the Falls of St. Anthony. St. Paul and St. Anthony were the twins then. This was before Minneapolis, the female twin, was born. Before leaving the subject of

The Triple Alliance

it may be said that David Olmsted, who represented Benton county in the territorial council, felt as if he had not been fairly dealt with, and as his was the only organized county in the territory which had not been the beneficiary of some of the appropriations made by congress for the erection of public buildings in the territory, it was agreed that a memorial should be passed asking congress to grant a township of land for the erection of a court house, workhouse and jail, especially a jail, as the county was on the frontier of civilization, and as between the Indians and the criminal classes a jail was absolutely necessary to protect the settlers. The memorial was passed, but congress never honored the request.

Olmsted, however, must have been mistaken as to the necessity of a jail to hive the criminal classes, as three years later, upon the completion of the territorial prison at Stillwater, the commission for its erection reported to the legislative assembly that it only "contained two cells and was without workshops," going to show that Gov. Ramsey is correct in his statement that the pioneers and old settlers of Minnesota were all honest men, and that jails and prisons were unnecessary.

By the terms of the act of the legislative assembly authorizing the erection of the capitol at St. Paul, a board of five commissioners was provided for—four to be elected by the people, by districts, the governor ex-officio the fifth—whose duty was to select a site in St. Paul, procure plans, and to

Erect a Capitol Building.

The commissioners were Louis Robert and D. F. Brawley, of St. Paul; E. A. C. Hatch, of Benton county, and I. McKusick, of Stillwater. The board organized on the 19th day of May, 1851, and the next day commenced receiving offers from property owners of a site. No propositions were entertained unless without cost, a free gift to the territory. There were three propositions submitted to the board—one by Louis Robert, of block 12 of Robert and Randall's addition; one by Henry M. Rice, of block 7 of Rice and Irvine's addition and a bonus of $2,000, and one by Charles Bazille, of block 6 of Bazille and Guerin's addition, which last proposition was accepted. (Will the St. Paul capitalists who are working up a boom for the location of the new capitol on the bluff be as liberal in their offer of a site, or will they want about two prices?)

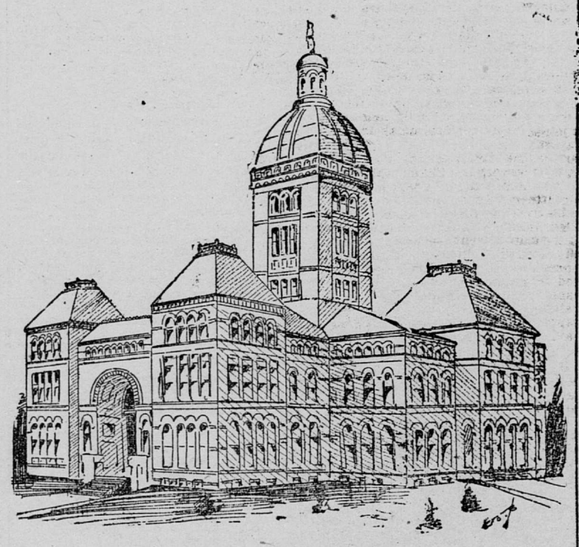
Four plans were submitted by different architects. The one by N. C. Prentiss was accepted and approved, for which he received $50 in full compensation.

The contract for the erection of the building was awarded to Joseph Daniels, who in those days was a carpenter and a builder, but who eventually came to the conclusion that he had mistaken his calling, as he afterward read law, and for many years past may be seen gliding around the lobbies of congress as a claim agent. The building was completed during the summer of 1853, and accepted by the legislative assembly which convened on the 4th day of January, 1854. Costing less, perhaps, than what will be paid to the architect of the new capitol, it answered all the purposes for which it was erected. It was the home of all the territorial officers, and the territorial library—its council chamber and representative hall satisfactory to the pioneer men who legislated wisely and well for the future of Minnesota, and they can point with pride to our public schools, our charitable institutions, our system of railroads and the economy of our earlier territorial and state governments as part of their work, and which added much in making Minnesota what she is today.

Scheming for Removal.

Not long prior to the meeting of the legislative assembly which convened on the 7th day o January, 1857, a number of thrifty politicians, who had not come West looking for a sanitarium, and a few Western statesmen had confederated together and unanimously resolved that St. Paul was not the proper place for a capital, and that there was money for the gang if they could succeed in removing it.

The combine sent out their agents to look up a site for a new capital, and, after some time, they returned and reported that they had selected a lovely site next west adjoining Traverse de Sioux. A purchase of some 300 or 400 acres was made, and the land platted. The next thought was to give the place a popular name. In those days everybody was for Saints. It was thought that a town that was not named after some saint would never amount to much. The name of St. Gorman or St. Dodd—two prominent citizens—it was believed



THE PRESENT CAPITOL.

would sound well for a name, but on consultation with Father Ravoux the name of no such saint could be found in the calendar of saints, and, to take no chances on the doubtful saint, it was finally agreed to call the village St. Peter.

The site having been selected, the child christened, the combine commenced manipulating the legislature, and by the 6th of February the work had been done, for on that day W. D. Lowry, a member of the council, opened the fight by the introduction of a bill for the removal of the capital from St. Paul to St. Peter. While the friends of St. Paul fought the bill at every stage, they were powerless, for by the 27th it had passed both houses and sent to the enrolling committee to be compared with the original bill.

Joseph Rolette,

of Pembina, was chairman of the committee. Satisfied that the other fellows had been having all the fun, he thought it was time for his side to strike up the music with a full band. So after having had the bill placed in his hands he quietly put on his coat, placed the bill in his pocket and walked down to the banking house of Truman M. Smith, on the corner of Seventh and Jackson streets. He said to Mr. Smith that he had just received some valuable papers from Prairie du Chien which he wished he would place in his safe until he was ready to go home, which was done. Joe then disappeared. The next day when the council met, the St. Peterites began to realize that there was a good-sized darky in the woodpile, so A. D. Balcome, of Winona, (a gentleman who afterwards made a speech of over one hour to demonstrate that nine was two-thirds of five), offered a resolution requiring Rolette to report the capital bill back forthwith, and, if he failed to do so, that the next member on the committee (Mr. Wales, of St. Anthony) be ordered to procure one and report the same, and moved the previous question.

Hon. H. N. Setzer (now of Stillwater) moved a call of the council. A motion was made at once to suspend the call, on which motion the yeas were 9, the nays 5. At that time it required a two-third vote to suspend a call, so the motion was declared lost.

From that time for the next five days, and until the close of the session, the council remained under the call, eating, drinking and sleeping in the council chamber.

The sergeant-at-arms, John Lamb, was instructed every morning that it was his duty to report Rolette in his seat

Either Dead or Alive.

The fact was, however, that Lamb was near-sighted, and perhaps would not have been able to recognize Rolette across a card table. The air was full of rumors as to what had become of Joe. A Red river courier stalked one morning into the central house and stated that on his way to St. Paul from Pembina he had passed Joe at Sauk Rapids going north with a double team of dogs hitched to his sled. A half-breed from Wabashaw said that Joe had passed that place in the night on his way to Wisconsin. It was hard to tell whether Joe was going north or south.

The fact was, however, that after Joe had seen the capital bill in a place of safety he stepped into the Fuller house and told the proprietors, the Long Bros., that his health required him to retire from public life for a few days, and that he wanted a room where no "unfriendly cuss" would be able to find him. Long, who understood the situation of affairs, provided rooms on the top floor for his distinguished guest—where for the next five days he held high revelry—by day recounting wondrous stories to the chambermaids of life on the frontier—at night playing poker and pinochle with the boys.

On the last night of the session the president had hardly declared the council adjourned sine die, when Joe

Marched Into the Council Chamber

with as much indifference and carelessness as if he had not been absent te-minutes, ready to report the bill as corn rectly enrolled. But he was too late. While Joe was in retirement the friends of the capitol bill had one enrolled from a copy, to which Hon. John B. Brisbin, president, and Hon. Mr. Furber, speaker of the house, refused to attach their official signatures. The bill was approved by the governor, however, and published as one of the laws passed by the legislature.

The St. Peter company, being of the opinion that the law was valid, erected a small frame building at St. Peter for a capitol building, and then applied to Judge R. R. Nelson for a writ of mandamus to compel the territorial officers to remove their several offices to St. Peter. Judge Nelson, in a lengthy opinion, after reviewing all the facts, held that in his opinion there had been no law passed by the legislative power of the territory removing the capital from St. Paul to St. Peter. And thus the curtain was rung down upon a legislative struggle which, at the time, led to a great deal of ill feeling.

Unique Records.

It may be further said that in the office of the register of deeds of Nicollet county may be found the marketable value of nearly every member of the legislature who voted for the bill. Some of the members received two lots, others three, four, five or six, as the case might be; first-class hustlers received a block, and in two cases five acres of suburban property is added.

The earlier members of the legislature were simple-minded fellows who did not hesitate to take deeds of town lots, railroad stock or checks—our generation is more wide-awake. Nothing will go now but bankable funds in sealed envelopes, and even those in some cases have to be placed under a stone.

Perhaps it may not be amiss to say that it was on the front portico of the old territorial capitol that Gov. W. H. Seward in addressing the people of St. Paul in 1869 said: "I find myself now for the first time upon the highlands in the center of the continent of North America, equidistant from the waters of Hudson's bay and the Gulf of Mexico, from the Atlantic ocean to the ocean in which the sun sets;" and he might have added that within a third of a century the seat of empire of the great Northwest.

Several years had passed after the attempt of the St. Peter Land company to kidnap the capital. Senators and representatives came to and went from the sessions of the legislatures, satisfied that the quaint old capitol would answer every purpose until Minnesota would become more wealthy, and the people in a better condition to pay taxes. During the winter of 1868-9, the legislature of Wisconsin invited the legislature of Minnesota to visit Madison—the legislature of Wisconsin then being in session—which invitation was accepted.

The new capitol of Wisconsin had just been completed, so much larger, better adapted to the wants of a state as a capitol than ours, with all modern "conveniency," as my friend James Dillon would say, that the Minnesota Solons became infatuated with having

A New Capitol.

A member of the house from Minneapolis, having acquired a large holding of real estate in Kandiyohi county by marriage, which land adjoined some six sections which some yerrs previous had been granted by congress to the state of Minnesota for state purposes, came to the conclusion that there "were millions in it," and, taking advantage of a general feeling for a new capitol, commenced agitating the question of the removal of the capitol from St. Paul and the erection of a new one on the state lands in Kandiyohi county, claiming that part of the lands could be platted and sold for a sufficient sum to erect a capitol, a state institution or two—besides—and that by a little manipulation making every member of the syndicate a quasi-millionaire. A further inducement was held out, that St. Paul was a wicked place, and that country members were susceptible of being led astray from the paths of virtue and morality. In the wilds of Kandiyohi county there was no opportunity.

The necessary vote having been pledged to secure its passage, Hon. Charles H. Clarke introduced a bill into the house on the 4th day of February, 1869, for an act to relocate the seat of government and to provide for the erection of public buildings thereat.

The bill went through the two houses like a dose of salts. When, however, it reached his excellency William R. Marshall, then governor, the pet bantling

Struck a Snag.

The governor doubted the propriety of locating the capital in the wilderness, where the members could not have the benefit of the stated preaching of the gospel, and where it would not be as central to civilization and population as at St. Paul; and, as the question of removal of the capital had not been discussed at the preceding election, it was one of the matters that would not suffer by lying over until the next session, as the land would hardly get away. He thereupon returned the bill without his approval. This ended the second attempt to relocate.

From this time on the old capitol was as before, the trysting place of legislators, politicians and statesmen. Every now and then there was some kicking and growling among members of the legislature and state officers, who said it had to go—referring to the erection of a new capitol building—and it did go. On the night of the 1st of March, 1881, within three days of the close of the session, about 9 o'clock at night, while both houses were in session, the alarm of fire was given and in a few minutes

The Old Capitol Was Gone.

It is no part of my purpose to describe the scenes and incidents connected with the fire. It is enough to say that it was laughable to see grave and dignified senators playing the athlete by trying to jump out of the windows with their arms full of legislative plunder, acting just as other fellows would have done under like circumstances, while the fire was still in progress and the fire engines were playing here and there on the doomed structure. The writer of this article met Hon. William Dawson, then mayor of St. Paul, and suggested to him that we tender the use of the new market house to the state for the meeting of the legislature the next day.

"Have we the authority?" was his reply?"

"Authority be d——d. We will exercise it and take our chances."

Whether it was the profanity or the gravity of the occasion which startled him is not known. His reply came with some deliberation, as if he was discounting a note:

"Yes, You Are Right."

A moment later we were being driven rapidly to the Metropolitan hotel, from which the mayor telegraphed Gov. John S. Pillsbury, at Minneapolis, that the city of St. Paul tendered the use of the market house to the state for the meeting of the legislature tomorrow. This telegraph message from the mayor was the first intimation the governor had of the destruction of the capitol. It is said by some wag at Minneapolis that when the governor first received the message that he was of the opinion the use of the market house was for a prize fight.

Quick Work This.

When the governor understood the situation he accepted the offer with pleasure. It then became necessary to prepare the building for the meeting the next day. Going at once to the Merchants' hotel, as its proprietor, Hon. A. Allen, was a member of the common council and chairman of the committee of public buildings, and in charge of the erection and completion of the market house.

Col. Allen agreed with the mayor in regard to having everything in readiness by morning, and they at once went to work. The heating plant had not yet been completed, but one of the boilers being in place, and, for fear that would not furnish the necessary heat, stoves were secured and put up; furniture stores were visited and desks and chairs were procured, and by morning the two halls were properly heated, the desks and chairs in place, and by the hour of the meeting of the legislature the printed matter for the day was upon the members' desks, and to an outsider the two halls that had been fitted had every appearance of having been used all winter.

A Gloomy Outlook.

The second day of March, 1881, while it was a bright, crisp day, to the people of St. Paul was gloomy. The capital was destroyed, and it seemed questionable whether there was sufficient time before the legislature adjourned to pass a bill making an appropriation for its re-erection. On the earlier trains quite a number of active fellows from a neighboring town arrived in the city—and later in the day from other villages—to look at the ruins, but in fact to prevent any appropriation for a new one.

A member from Minneapolis, who is now a member of congress, attempted the feat of riding two horses going different ways. With tears in his eyes, you would have thought the sorrow of a lifetime had struck him—but behind closed doors he was advising country members to hold on, for if there were no appropriation made then the governor would be compelled to call an extra session which would give the country members an opportunity to visit St. Paul along about the dogdays and have a good time, and to those in sympathy with him he perhaps added, and in the meantime we may be able to improve on the site and make something out of it. There were some other members who joined in the howl for delay and an extra session.

Early in the day Hon. John S. Pillsbury, then governor, reached this city from his home in Minneapolis, and within fifteen minutes after he had laid aside his overcoat the old Roman, with a determination to have no nonsense about the matter, sent a messenger after A. M. Radcliffe, architect, requesting his presence. As soon as Mr. Radcliffe arrived the governor informed him that he wanted, without any delay whatever, an estimate of the cost of rebuilding the capitol, which was furnished during the day.

Determined Action.

On the morning of the 3rd of March he communicated to the legislature a message recommending the rebuilding of the capitol, an estimate of the cost, and referring to the absurdity of an extra session, as an extra session would cost more than the rebuilding of the capitol. At a later hour in the day, he supplemented his message by personal interviews with members, telling them in his bluff, old New England way that there would be no extra session, and that they must take the responsibility of a failure to make an appropriation before the sun went down. With but a few exceptions, the legislature passed a bill appropriating $75,000 for rebuilding the capitol (which was increased by another appropriation of $75,000 in 1883).

The people of St. Paul owe a debt of gratitude to Hon. John S. Pillsbury for his heroic and manly action at that time. A word from him would have defeated any appropriation, and no one can say what the outcome would have been if it had failed. He forgot he was a Minneapolis man and remembered only that he was the governor of Minnesota. It is to be hoped that the people of St. Paul will not forget the stand he took to protect her interests in what he believed to be right, and that his name ought to be as dear to them as that of one of her own sons.

This article has already been spun out to a greater length than the writer intended. In a future article we may write of the present apitol.

William F. Murray

Cutting Affray in the Court Room.

BASTROP, Tex., June 7.—At Red Rock, W. Wilson, under arrest, attempted to leave the justice court in which he was being tried. Deputy Sheriff Ed McClure attempted to stop him, when Wilson tried to stab the deputy. D. Harris, father-in-law of Wilson, took a hand. On summing up it was found that Wilson was cut to death and Harrison probably fatally stabbed. Deputy McClure was arrested but released on a nominal bond.

Chase Indicted.

KOKOMO, Ind., June 7.—The Howard county grand jury made its report to the criminal court this evening, and among its bills are three indictments against the Greentown bank. The first indictment is against John W. Paris, as president of the Farmers' bank, and has five counts. The second indictment is against ex-Gov. Ira J. Chase, a director of the Farmers' bank, with three counts. Officers will go after Gov. Chase and Paris at once.

HOME OF THE HILLS.

The Regal Residence Just Completed by the Railway Magnate.

A Magnificent Castle, With Scarcely a Superior in Existence.

Briefly Sketched Description of the Summit Avenue Mansion.

A Collection of Rare and Valuable Paintings Fit for a King.

No one would think of pointing out the beauties of St. Paul and omitting the splendid and baronial mansion of James J. Hill, in the aristocratic center of Summit avenue, overlooking the majestic sweep of the Mississippi river. It is not only the most magnificent residence in St. Paul, having cost in the neighborhood of a million dollars, but is outranked by very few homes in the country. It is of heavy, uncut brown stone, and resembles a baronial castle in its solidity and durability. In its outward aspect it is surpassed by many less pretentious homes, but its interior magnificence is scarcely approached by the residences of any of the bonanza kings of America.

The building is absolutely fireproof in the largest sense of the word. The roof is a mass of iron joists and beams, filled between with terra cotta, and covered with three-eighths of an inch of Monson sawed slate, and all the floors and partitions throughout the building are of the same material, as to iron and terra cotta. Competent judges pronounce the heating and ventilation of the house beyond anything in this country. The heating is done by the indirect hot water system leading from the basement, while the ventilation comes from a powerful exhaust fan in the atic, which constantly forces delightful cool air through every room in the house.

Imagine ten miles of wire to light a house. Our grandfathers would have said it was impossible, but this is the exact length of copper turned into all sorts of angles to feed the hundreds of incandescent lights in the Hill house, and there is no other house in the world that contains such perfect electric appliances.

The wood finishing of the house is unique and elegant. The parlor and music room are done in enamel over the wood; the dining room and library in mahogany; the hall, the art gallery and breakfast room in oak, while the chambers are in oak and prayavera, or white mahogany.

Who can describe such magnificence fitly? Each room with its different designs and massive furnishings, would do grace to a palace. The rugs alone cost $250,000—rugs of the finest texture that the celebrated looms of Persia could make, and of the most wonderful patterns and coloring. Hangings that would do the

Eye of a Connoisseur

good, so fine is the texture, and so magnificent is the design. Take the brocha tapestry between the hall and drawing room—what could be more beautiful than the soft ivory tones, with the rich gold running through it? It was made in Paris, and designed by the great Philip de le Salle. But it is no grander than the drawing room, which the heavy silken draperies separate from the great hallway. It is at once both classic and unique, done in white and gold, with a suggestion of Louis XVI. What could be more exquisite in texture and design than the brocha, Lyons tapestry tieize? It is but thirty inches wide, still it cost $75 a yard.

Then, too, the music room. What a beautiful room it is—done in the Adams style, with its paneling of pale sea green and ivory satin, and furnishings that remind one of the crest of a sea wave, so exquisite is the coloring.

What a superb room the dining room is for grand dinners, where beautiful women, with costly array and sparkling jewels, and brilliant men, with their flow of wit, gather around the festive board, neath the glow of numerous incandescent lights, making merry the room, with its ceiling of pure gold and its magnificent walls of illuminated blue.

But the real grandeur of the house is the magnificent hallway, 86x100 feet—as large as an ordinary dwelling. What a delightful place to linger. The broad stairs and vaulted archway, fretted and jeweled with renaissance terra cotta work done in soft creams from end to end; each doorway has its lacework, each window its carved setting. And yet the design of the whole is so artistic that no effect of the statelness or grandeur can be diminished through all the costly furnishings or ornament.

Passing down the hall through the heavy tapestried portiers at the end, one finds himself in Mr. Hill's magnificent art gallery, which is probably the finest art collection in the West, and it is safe to say there is no finer private gallery in this country, unless it be Mr. Charles A. Dana's or Dr. Cottier's gallery in New York.

What a magnificent room it is, large, high-vaulted, well lighted, and finished in richly carved antique oak. At one end is a large pipe organ of antique oak and silver pipes, while at the other end of the long gallery is an old English fireplace, done in onyx and dull ocher mosaic, surmounted by a high mantel of dark, richly carved oak, over which hangs Ribot's great picture of "Christ Taken from the Cross," which covers the entire end of the gallery.

The Art Treasures.

Mr. Hill is a connoisseur in art; in fact, buying pictures is his pet hobby, and there is not a finer art critic in this country than Mr. Hill. His collection of French pictures is one of the largest in this country. He owns, for instance, two Duprez, four Millets, four Daubignys, six pictures by Diaz; three Dalacroixs, including the small "Convulsionnaires de Tangiers," which is well known in this country. He owns Corot's "Ferryman," formerly in the Defoer collection, and a fine nude female figure, which Corot sometimes painted, but rarely exhibited, and several other Corots. He has Rousseau's beautiful "Mont Jean de Paris," once in the Morgan collection, and other Rousseaus, besides three by Decamps, three Troyon and three of the great Fromentins, three by Bonvin, Ribot, Cazin, two by Puvis de Chavannes, Harye, Henner, Laurens and Jules Breton.

Mr. Hill's Diaz' are very fine. Diaz Narcisse Verglie de la Pena, the child of the Spanish refugees to France, born in 1807, painted some rare pictures, and none were greater in coloring than his canvas "The Gypsies in the Forest of Fontambleu." Mr. Hill is very fortunate in possessing this picture. The canvas shows Diaz' wonderful power in producing gaudy Oriental coloring, in quaint, somber effects. While gazing at the picture you feel that it is too dusky to see the gaudy, barbaric robes of the women, yet you know they are there. It is one of a series, the others of which are owned by public galleries in Europe.

Diaz's Storm.

But the greatest of Mr. Hill's groupe of Diaz is "The Storm," which came from the celebrated Strausberg collection, and is one of Diaz's best works. Too much praise cannot be given this picture. Under a threatening sky, through an opening in the woods, a hunter and his dog are seen hurrying over the rough ground homeward. The yellowish light lingering upon the tree in the extreme background, and the rich, dark coloring in the foliage, make the picture a rare value. Then, too, there is "The Seraglio," rich in Spanish skies and foilage, and "The Temple of Love," all showing Diaz's wonderful coloring.

One of the finest of Dupre's pictures which Mr. Hill owns is "The Marshes," and certainly merits what a great critic said: "The picture ranks with Rousseau as incontestably the greatest colorist of the century." It is a magnificent canvas. The cows stand in the marshy foreground over which the dusk has fallen almost to night, while the glorious golden sunset still lingers in the sky of rich tropical crimson.

Another fine picture in Mr. Hill's gallery is Ardna's "Rehearsal," which is rich in coloring and wonderful in creation. One in looking at the picture can easily imagine he is within the splendid vaulted nall, rich with frescoes and carving, and listening to the energetic bandmaster, who is so industriously conducting the rehearsal before the cardinal, who sits with his full red robe falling in stately folds around him, among his courtiers, with a smile of pleasure on his face; and they can see the fine texture of the director's changeable silk coat, as he stands upon a low stool brandishing both arms with such vigor, or the bassoon player's great cheeks from overdrinking of beer; look on the face of the "first violin," as he leans forward to make sure of his score, so real is the picture to life.

Mr. Hill possesses two very fine D'Aubigneys. One is a sketch from which he painted one of his most celebrated pictures, the one described in the "Hundred Masterpieces of French Art." It is an exquisite scene. It is almost dark, a few light clouds are just touched with pearly pink. One in looking at it can almost feel that he is standing by the pond beside the boy as he waters his horse, and so real is the soft, still air, he seems to breathe it. It is a wonderful creation, and too much can not be said in its praise. D'Aubigney's pictures hang in the Louvre, the Luxembourg and the Tuilleries.

The Masterpiece.

But among all Mr. Hill's great pictures, there is none so great as his "Biblis," Corot's great masterpiece. It is the jewel and queen of his collection. It is difficult to speak fittingly of the real value of this great picture, "Biblis," the queen of the Corots. Mr. Hill is not in the habit of telling the cost of the pictures he buys, but as this canvas is pronounced one of the very finest that ever came from the master's easel, and as it is ranked equal to the "Orpheus" which hangs in Cottier's New York gallery, and which was rated as worth $50,000 ten years ago, it is safe to say that Mr. Hill paid $75,000 for "Biblis," as is reported in art circles.

Many Corots have been seen in America, and who is there that has seen a Corot that has not placed him at once as the greatest of landscape painters? But out of the forty-three real Corots there is none so great as the "Biblis," and when looking at it one feels that none but a Corot could produce such a marvel of truthful interpretation of nature, of pictorial beauty and poetic feeling.

"Byblis" or "Biblis," as Corot gives it, was the daughter of Miletus, who wept herself into a fountain through the love of her brother Caunus, and Corot tells us about the nymph in the only way that a true poet in painting could. He shows us a prostrate figure at a distance, and he puts a trickling rivulet in the foreground, which, if we choose, we can imagine connected with the figure.

The great masterpiece was painted the very last year of Corot's life, when he was nearly eighty years old. He painted it at the close of the Franco-German war, dividing his time between the administration to the wounded soldiers and his easel, and, if in the midst of such scenes Carnot could give to the world such a masterpiece as the "Biblis," he is indeed worthy of the greatest honor that can be paid him.

For some time the painting hung among the Secretan collection, where Mr. Otlett, of Brussels, bought it. Recently his whole collection was purchased by the Roussod firm, and, upon learning this fact, Mr. Hill, who had seen the "Biblis" in Paris, at once purchased it. While Mr. Hill possesses pictures of great value, no matter what they are, the "Biblis" will be the jewel and queen of the collection, for there is but one Corot, one "Biblis."

Although an enthusiastic admirer of art, Mr. Hill cares nothing for sculpture. In all this magnificent collection there is but one piece of statuary, and that is "Othello." It is surprisingly strange, too, when he is such an admirer of the beautiful, that he can not see anything worthy of his admiration in marble.

OPENED AN EMPIRE.

Richards Gordon Says That Is What the Railroads Did for St. Paul.

A retrospect of forty years spent in St. Paul, embracing the period of active progress, is somewhat kaleidescopic in effect, so great are the changes that have transformed the former Indian trading post into the prosperous city of today. There still remain many of those who then, with youth and high hopes, began together in St. Paul the battle of life, which has since been waged, as always, with varying degrees of success. To such the event which we celebrate today will have peculiar significance, mingling the varied memories of the past with the realizations of the present. Although St. Paul owes its pre-eminence primarily to its position at the head of navigation on the Mississippi river, yet the most potent factor in its growth and prosperity has been the magnificent railroad systems which have opened to her commerce an empire, the development of whose resources is scarcely more than begun, and which can only find partial realization within the allotted time of those who witnessed its inception. The promise of the future is great and grand enough to justify the highest anticipations, and it seems beyond peradventure that our beloved city, through the energy and intelligent effort of her sons, will surely and always maintain her present proud distinction as the commercial metropolis of the vast and fertile region stretching westward to the Pacific ocean.

In the event which we celebrate today, we are with one accord doing what we can to honor the most conspicuous example among us of success achieved by intelligent foresight and eminent ability—a success in the material benefits of which we all participate. The completion of the Great Northern railway to the Pacific is a fitting subject for rejoicing. The career of James J. Hill in connection therewith is public property, and in honoring him today as its creator, we congratulate ourselves, partakers in no small degree of the magnificent success which he has achieved.

Richards Gordon

AN OBJECT LESSON.

The President Desires the Full Gravity of the Situation to Be Presented to Congress.

Bonds Will Not Be Issued Until a Lower Rate of Interest Is Authorized.

WASHINGTON, June 7.—The Star has this: "President Cleveland's statement as to the time when he proposes to call congress together, and the reasons which will lead him to do so, is clearly interpretable as indicating a determination on his part to continue using the gold reserve to the extent necessary and not to issue bonds. As indicated yesterday, he desires that the full gravity of the situation should be apparent at the time of the meeting of congress, so that the legislative branch of the government shall have the duty pressing upon them to correct laws protecting the finances. It is claimed for the administration that there is no obligation to issue bonds at once to make up the deficiency in the gold reserve, and that that reserve may be used in the regular course of business. It is said that, should it run as low as twenty-five or thirty millions before any financial legislation is had, there will be no issue of bonds until expressly authorized by congress, at a lower interest than can be issued under the present law. The president desires congress to be confronted when it meets with the practical demonstration of the depleting effect of the silver purchases upon the gold in the treasury. Unless the situation should grow very much worse, resulting in a general panic, the president does not desire any radical steps to be taken until congress meets in September, but if developments should require prompter action, then congress would be called together for it. The long list of financial failures appearing in the morning dispatches, it is believed, has not affected the president's judgment as to the policy to be pursued.

Mr. Carlisle reached Washington last night, and was at the cabinet meeting today, which assembled at 11 o'clock. Mr. Bissell also returned, and was at the meeting. The only absentees were Messrs. Lamont and Morton. The financial situation and the outlook for legislation the coming session of congress were the subjects of discussion. It was not expected at the hour of meeting that the discussion would lead to any change from the line of action indicated above. Before the meeting of the cabinet, the president had a talk with four members of the ways and means committee of the last house, who will certainly be on that committee in the next congress. They were Wilson, Montgomery, Turner and McMillin.

Mobbed a Pest House.

ROCKFORD, Ill., June 7.—A mob of twenty-five masked men gathered at midnight about the West end pest house, where three new small-pox patients were taken yesterday. The leader warned Health Officer Boyd not to keep the patients in the building. The health officer addressed them, stating that there was no danger of a spread of the disease, as every precaution would be taken. The crowd refused to disperse, and threw rails at the chief of police. A force of men then fired into the air, and the crowd dispersed. They were armed with Winchesters. Trouble is feared. The trouble is caused by the fact that the pest house is in a thickly populated part of the city.

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