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The New Rhode Island State House, as it appeared Nov. 1, 1898.

small way to the present standing of Providence is its immense banking interests, in which respect it far surpasses many other cities with a much larger population. The city boasts of twenty-four National Banks, two State Banks, three Trust Companies, and five Savings Banks.

The insurance interests of the city are of much importance, there being three home fire insurance companies, which transact business over the greater part of the United States, and there are also several mutual companies, which write policies on mill property. With the new Union steam railroad station, new State House, resting, grand and imposing, upon Capitol Hill, and the new State Normal School nearby, Providence now possesses more points of interest to the stranger than heretofore.

As can be readily perceived, Providence is already an important and virtually a metropolitan city, but with increased steamship connections with the far South, soon to materialize, and also with other points, the city is destined to become a much more important one in the near future, and even the most ardent believers in its great future are unable to foretell what is in store for it. It is evident that much in this respect depends upon her citizens. If they so purpose, it can easily be the great depot for supplies, distributing and shopping centre and shipping port for all of Southern and Central New England, and even vie with Boston for the trade supremacy of Northern New England and Canada. May all spirit of self and narrowness of business methods be banished in Providence, and with a unity of action may the common interests of the city be advanced and a proud position be maintained. In no other way can the best results be accomplished.

In the following pages some of the leading industrial and commercial establishments of Providence are illustrated and described:—

NORCROSS BROTHERS' STONE YARD AND MILL.

One of the Largest Mills in the United States.—Where all of the Stone for the State House has been Cut and Shaped to Fit Every Part of this Grand Structure.

Probably few of our citizens are aware of the fact that the marble used in the construction of the new State House, now nearing completion on Smith's Hill, or which will be known in the future as Capitol Hill, is cut, planed and shaped into various forms to meet the requirements of the plans, in one of the

largest stone yards and mills in this country, and that this mill is located in this city, on the corner of Sims and Kinsley avenues. The mill was erected some two and a half years ago, and equipped with all of the modern stone-cutting appliances, the yard and mill covering an area of several acres. During the months that have passed some additions have been made which increased the capacity of the plant materially, until now upwards of 150 workmen are employed. Ever since the works were started a large part of the mill has been running night and day, and this pace will probably be kept up until the



Main Entrance, New Rhode Island State House, Nov. 1, 1892.

Capitol is finished, or at least until the stone work is completed. It is this large and complete plant that has enabled the contractors to push the work along, not only rapidly enough to satisfy the State House Commission, but fast enough to please the fastidious tastes of the general public of Rhode Island as well.

It is customary and usual, on such large works, to cut the stones at the quarry, or at least away from the place where they are used. Had this been the case here the present progress would not have been realized. It is therefore a matter of congratulation that the commissioners and contractors were enabled to arrange matters so that the stone for the State House

was all cut in the city of Providence. Since the selection of the Southern marble for the Rhode Island State House, it has been selected for the erection of the Minnesota State House and other extensive buildings.

The yard is located near the main line of the N. Y., N. H. & H. Railroad, where an immense electric power crane enables the workmen to unload the cars that bring the marble from the South, with ease and rapidity.

In the stock yard there is an endless-rope crane of twenty tons capacity, which is so arranged as to enable the operator to convey the heavy and bulky stone to any part of the yard, and to place it on to cars that are drawn the entire length of the mill by a steam capstan, this same power affording the power for placing the marble blocks under the gang saws, and removing them after they have been sawed into the desired shape. There are four ordinary gang saws

At the northern end of the mill there are three stone lathes, the largest of which will turn a shaft twenty-two feet in length. Near these is a large heading machine, which in reality is a stone planer, but this planer moves along the surface of the stationary stone, while the other planers are stationary, and the stone moves along as fast as it is planed. This heading machine planes and cuts molding on heads of stone shafts, and also planes straight surfaces. At the southern end of the mill are three large rubbing beds, where the smooth surfaces are made on all facing stone, and next to them is a dental saw, which is used for making ornamental work on stone.

A 12-ton electric crane extends along the entire length of the west side of the mill, which handles all of the heavy columns and blocks of marble very rapidly, and in all parts of the mill are small hand-traveling cranes, which enable the workmen to convey any piece of marble to any part of the mill,—the railway



Norcross Brothers' Stone Yard, Kinsley Avenue, Providence, R. I.

and two extra large ones, besides four rip-saws, all arranged in a row at the east side of the mill. The fact that as many as forty-five tons of marble have been worked under one of these saws at one time, gives some idea of their capacity. While the saws are at work a steady stream of water, mingled with sand and chilled iron, is kept flowing upon the marble, which aids very materially in the work.

In the centre of the mill are six power double stone planers, which to the ordinary observer are the most interesting of all the equipment of machinery of this immense plant. These planers are capable of handling 12 tons at a time, and they will plane a straight surface, or, by putting on a circular attachment, the machine will plane a curve of almost any variation from the true circle. This circular attachment is the invention of Mr. J. N. Durkee, the superintendent of the mill and of construction at the State House. As heretofore it has been necessary to build special machines for planing circles, this new invention must prove of great value in all large stone yards throughout the world.

tracks which extend throughout the plant in various directions aiding very much in this line of work. There is very little of the old-fashioned chiseling by hand in this establishment. All of the men are provided with pneumatic tools, which do the work much more rapidly and better. In the blacksmith shop are emery wheels, a power hammer, forges, and all the equipments necessary for this department. All of the tools for planing the moldings, etc., are shaped here, in the blacksmith shop.

In the engine room are two 100-horse power engines, and a 25-horse power air compressor, which forces the air into a storage tank, from which extend the pipes to all parts of the plant, furnishing the power for the tools. In the boiler room are two 100-horse power Hicks boilers. The mill is well heated by steam, so that in extreme cold weather the workmen can labor as advantageously as in milder weather, which is not generally the case in ordinary stone yards.

While all of the cutting and planing is done here at the mill, a large part of the carving of capitals,

frieze, etc., is done at the State House grounds. We mentioned above that about 150 men are employed at the mill, but at the State House, in all the departments, there are over 300. These stone cutters are among the most skilled workmen that can be found in any part of the globe, and they represent various nationalities. Just at the west of the mill is the office and drafting room, the main office in this city being in the Industrial Trust Co.'s Building, and still another is located at the north of the Capitol.

Norcross Bros. have built many large edifices in this State, but the State House is of course their crowning effort, and it will stand, when completed, as a monument to their ability as builders as much so as any structure that they have ever erected. Mr. O. W. Norcross, of Worcester, Mass., has been the head of the firm through all of its many years of prosperity.

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PROGRESS OF WORK ON THE STATE HOUSE.

The daily papers have had so much to say about the general construction of the State House, it would

not be in the line of new information to repeat it all here, and therefore we will confine ourselves to a simple statement of the amount of work that was completed up to the first of November. There is one thing that everybody seems to agree in, and that is as the work progresses it becomes more and more evident that no mistakes were made in the selection of the site, or in the adoption of the design and material for the Rhode Island State House.

The marble work is seven-eighths done, and it is expected to complete the main dome up to the top of the bottom of the balustrade before cold weather sets in.

The furring of the building is well along, and the larger part of it is ready for plastering.

The window frames are in place, and screens have been put in the windows and temporary outside doors, and the building is closed for winter work.

The steam heating and ventilating apparatus of the

building is in place and ready to connect up the radiators, all the steam-heating work being done that can be finished until the building is plastered.

GREGORY'S BOOKSTORE.

The name of Gregory's Bookstore, an interior view of which is presented on this page, has for years been a "Household Word" to the literary people of Rhode Island. Situated close to the great department stores, and only about three minutes' walk from the new Union Railroad station, the large, well-lighted store, with its immense stock of old and new books, is noted as being the largest and best appointed book store in New England. New books are received daily as issued by the leading English and American publishing houses, and all are offered at popular prices.

The Circulating Library connected with this store

is the largest in the State, and now contains some 7,000 volumes, the New Popular Fiction being added daily as issued, each book in liberal quantities, so that a patron is not obliged to wait until the book is old before reading it. This special feature enables the proprietor to run such a library in competition with the large Public Libraries of the State.

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Interior of H. Gregory's Book Store, 116 Union Street.

gets" in rare and standard books from private libraries. Catalogues of Rare Americana, Books relating to the Fine Arts, Travel, History, Dramatic, and Standard books are issued at intervals, which are mailed free to book buyers in all parts of the country, and the result is, orders are shipped from Maine to California. Book lovers will always find a visit pleasant and profitable to Gregory's Bookstore, 116 Union street, between Westminster and Washington streets.

Gregory's Bookstore is to Providence what the "Old Corner Bookstore" was formerly to Boston. It is a gathering place and centre of influence for the local "literary fellers," and here you will frequently find assembled, in the front of the store especially, small *coteries* of those infected more or less with the love of literature. On these occasions, gossip about books old and new is the order of the day, the genial proprietor always being a valued participant in these gatherings.

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