

SCIENCE

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FRIDAY, MAY 8, 1896.

THE DEDICATION OF THE NEW SITE OF
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.

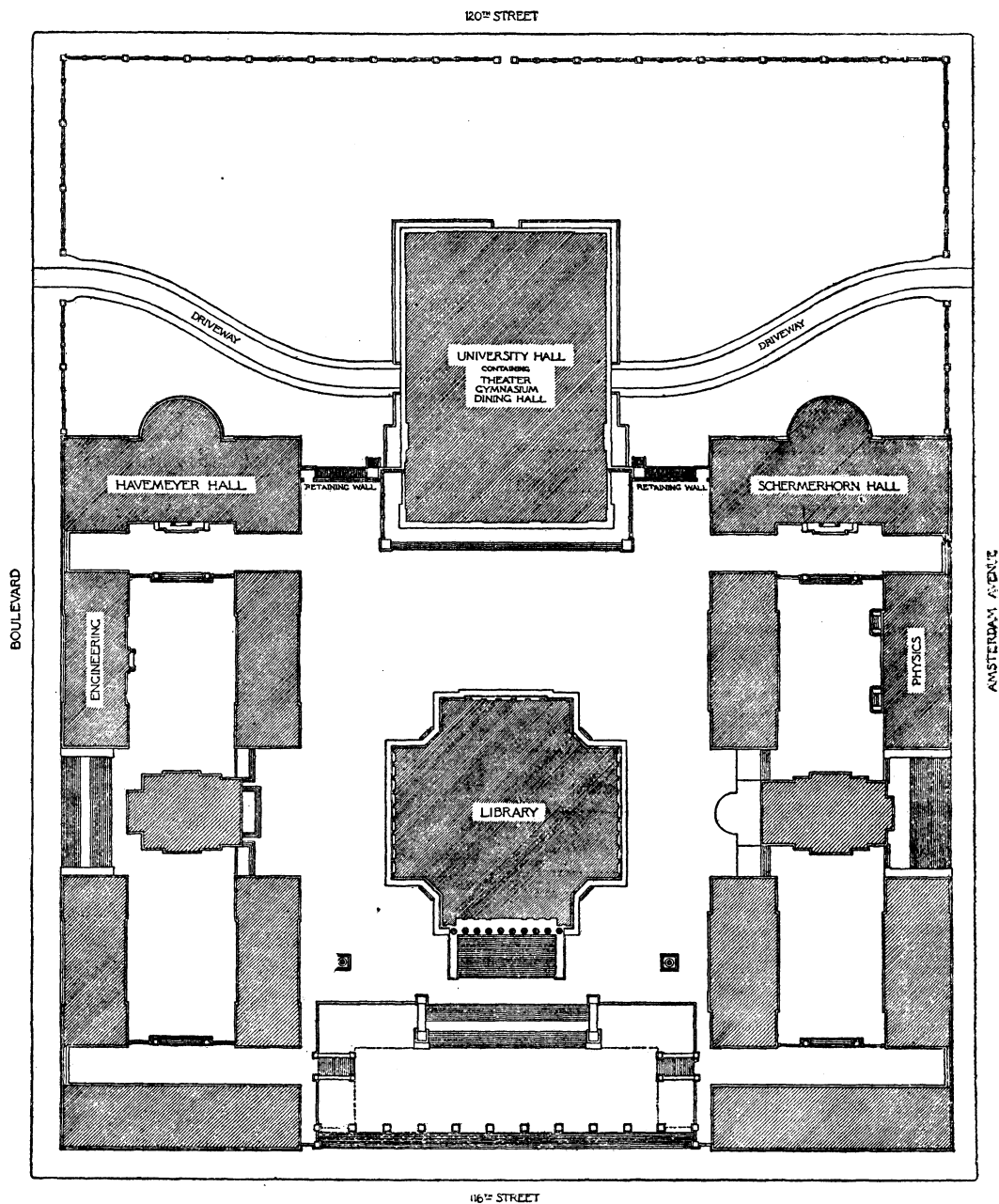
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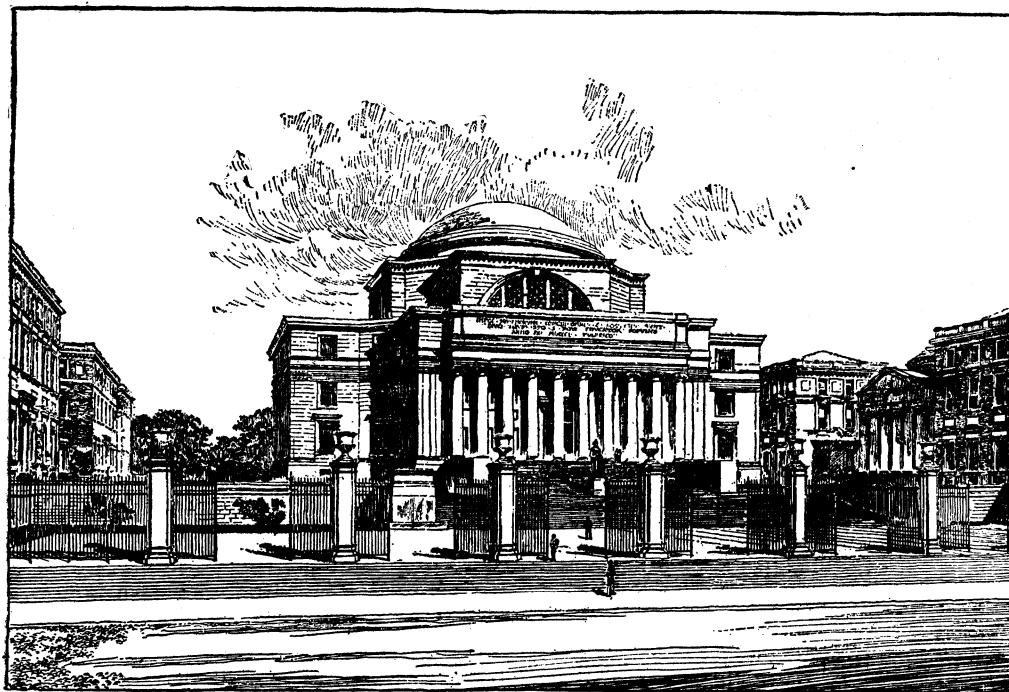
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY has under President Low become a university in name, in externals and in fact, and henceforth takes rank with the great universities of the world.

The new site of the University was dedicated on May the second with ceremonies worthy of its stately buildings in course of erection and of its commanding position above the City of New York. The site of the University, occupying somewhat more than seventeen acres and purchased by the trustees at a cost of \$2,000,000, is on the summit of Morningside Heights, between Morningside Park on the one hand and Riverside Park on the other. On the same Heights and adjacent to the University will be the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, St. Luke's Hospital, Grant's Mausoleum and, affiliated with the University, Barnard College and the Teachers' College.

As is shown in the accompanying figures, the Library Building, erected as a memorial of Abiel Abbot Low, by his son, President Low, occupies the central and most elevated position. The basement of Milford granite and the first story of Indiana limestone, already erected, indicate the plan and architectural character of the building. It is classic in style, in the form of a Greek cross, surmounted by a dome. Its width is 192 feet and the height of the dome will be 135 feet.



PLAN OF THE NEW BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS.



THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY.

The Library Building, as the other buildings and their arrangement, has been designed by Messrs. McKim, Meade & White, under the immediate supervision of President Low.

In the rear of the Library Building, the basement being on a lower level, will be the University Building, for which the foundations are being prepared. The southerly portion of the building, facing the library quadrangle, is designed as a Memorial Hall. Connecting with the Hall and on the same level will be the University Theater, with a seating capacity of 2,500. There will be a Gymnasium under the Theater, and the engine rooms will be under Memorial Hall. On public occasions the entire building can be used.

Plans have been prepared for Havemeyer Hall, erected as a memorial of Frederick C. Havemeyer for the department of chemistry,

and the Engineering Building, and these will soon be in course of erection.

The foundation stones of the Physics Building and of Schermerhorn Hall were laid on May 2. The Physics Building will ultimately be devoted entirely to the department of physics, but for the present will also be used for related sciences. Schermerhorn Hall, the gift of Mr. William C. Schermerhorn, the chairman of the trustees, will be devoted to the natural sciences and will contain the departments of mineralogy, geology, paleontology, botany, zoölogy and psychology. These buildings are to be built of the over-burned brick of a dull-red color, generally known as Harvard brick, and of Indiana limestone. In style they are in keeping with the Library, and represent to some extent a reversion to the best construction of the Colonial period.

To the east and west of the Library will be the Chapel and the Assembly Hall for the use of students, while the other buildings indicated on the plan will be built as required for special purposes.

At noon on May 2d the corner stones of the Physics Building and of Schermerhorn Hall were laid in the presence of the officers and alumni of the University. The corner stone of the Physics Building was laid by Professor Ogden N. Rood, and an address was made by Prof. Howard Van Amringe, who traced the growth of the College, with special reference to its scientific departments, from the time when the first corner stone of the first building of the College was laid, 140 years ago. At that time the teaching force of the institution consisted of the President and one tutor. The speaker called attention to the fact that the first buildings to be built for purposes of instruction and research are for the sciences.

The corner stone of Schermerhorn Hall was laid by Mr. W. C. Schermerhorn, the donor of the building, and an address was made by Prof. Henry F. Osborn, in the course of which he said that the problem of the last twenty years had been the establishment of universities. The problem of the next twenty years is the production of thinkers of the highest type. The building should be laid on the corner stones of breadth, height, energy and repose. Breadth, standing for thoroughness of preparation and wideness of horizon; height, for specialization; energy, for determination in the prosecution of research; and repose, for undisturbed observation, reflection and induction. It is the symmetrical and balanced development of all these factors which will make Schermerhorn Hall a birthplace of discoveries, a permanent monument to its generous founder, worthy of Columbia University, and a new force in American science.

At three o'clock in the afternoon the site

was dedicated with impressive ceremonies, held in a large pavilion, in which 3,000 people were seated. In addition to the officers, alumni and students of the University, there were present the Governor of the State, the Mayor of the City, Presidents and representatives of the leading American universities and colleges, and many other distinguished guests.

President Low made the opening address, calling attention to the fact that historic ground would be dedicated to a new use. Already it is twice consecrated. In the Revolutionary War the soil drank the blood of patriots, willingly shed for the independence of the land. Since then, for three generations, it has witnessed the union of science and of brotherly kindness, devoted to the care of those suffering from the most mysterious of all the ills that flesh is heir to. To-day we dedicate it, in the same spirit of loyalty to country and of devotion to the services of mankind, to the inspiring uses of a venerable and historic university. It is no small part of the suitableness of this site for the uses of the University that it here will find itself in the inspiring presence of so many other forces that make for the uplifting of the city. If New York is taunted in the years to come with being a city wholly given up to the love of money, she may well point to this eminence, with its cathedral, its hospital, its educational institutions, its monument to Gen. Grant, and say: "These are my jewels: religion, philanthropy, education, patriotism; these are the things my children care for more than they care for money; therefore I wear these things in my civic crown."

A national flag was then presented to the University by Rear Admiral Meade on behalf of Lafayette Post, Grand Army of the Republic, and a dedication ode in Latin, written by Prof. Peck, was sung.

Hon. Abram S. Hewitt, an alumnus of

the University, made an address reviewing the work of the University in relation to the social and political growth of the city. The last speaker was President Eliot, who, in the name of the universities of America, congratulated Columbia University on its setting commensurate with the worth of its intellectual and spiritual influence.

PSYCHOLOGICAL NOTES UPON SLEIGHT-OF-HAND EXPERTS.

THE determination of the influence of special kinds of occupation and training upon the delicacy, range and quickness of sensory, motor and mental powers is an important and interesting problem. Observations of this kind must first be directed to the determination of the average capabilities of average individuals and then be extended by a study of the influences of age, sex, heredity, training and a multitude of other factors upon the growth and perfection of special powers. Last of all will come the study of small, special groups of persons and of the individual himself. At all times, however, an individual with exceptional powers in any direction is quite certain to attract attention and arouse interest; psychological tests made upon such virtuosi are desirable, even if in individual cases they suggest no very decided conclusions.

Having recently enjoyed visits at my Psychological Laboratory from Messrs. Hermann and Kellar, the widely-known prestidigitators, I put together the results of the series of tests to which they kindly submitted. As the time at my disposal for these tests was limited, I selected such as might be supposed to be related to the processes upon which their dexterity depends, and such as seemed most likely to yield definite results.

Beginning with tests of tactile sensibility, I determined the distance at which two points of an aesthesiometer placed upon the

forefinger of the right hand could be recognized as two. This distance was for Mr. Hermann 3.5 mm. and for Kellar 2.5 mm. A comparable average result, obtained from a considerable number of miscellaneous individuals, was about 2 mm., indicating a somewhat coarse sensibility for the two special subjects. The attempt to arrange in their correct order a series of 5 weights increasing by $\frac{1}{15}$ of their weight was unsuccessful in the case of Mr. Hermann, but was successfully carried out by Mr. Kellar. The attempt to arrange weights differing by $\frac{1}{30}$ was entirely unsuccessful for both of them. In a general series of tests, 92% of those tested arranged the former series correctly, and 66% the latter. The weights were estimated by lifting them between thumb and forefinger. A test of sensitiveness to textures was also made. The fingers were passed across a surface composed of wires wound closely side by side. Mr. Kellar was tested with a series in which each surface was $\frac{1}{4}$ coarser than its neighbor, and with one in which the differences were only $\frac{1}{8}$. He arranged the first correctly, but was entirely mistaken in the arrangement of the second. Mr. Hermann tried only the finger differences which he also failed to arrange properly. I next tested the same sensibility by having the subject feel between the thumb and forefinger, as in feeling the thickness of paper, a set of single wires of various calibres, mounted upright on wooden blocks. In one series the differences were $\frac{2}{7}$, in another $\frac{1}{7}$. Both Mr. Hermann and Mr. Kellar succeeded in arranging both series correctly, but this was also done by 9 out of 10 persons who were tested in the same way. Still another form of tactile and motor capacity was tested by requiring the subject to arrange in order a series of bars of varying length by passing the forefinger across them. Both Mr. Hermann and Mr. Kellar passed this test successfully in the series varying by $\frac{2}{15}$ of their average length;