to harmonious order, and to produce the forms we see around us of landscapes, rivers, trees, flowers, instead of the everlasting chaos which preceded." It is not a little singular in illustration of this ancient idea to find the vibrations of musical sound at the present day being proved to produce the forms of flowers, trees, shells, and other natural objects, spontaneously and without any previous suggestion of the form by pencil or the hand of man: to see the same power, when exercised upon a chaos of grains of sand, at once throw the sand into patterns of symmetry, whose lines and curves might very easily, if we were disposed to carry out the analogy, be construed into miniature models of winding rivers, sweeping mountain chains, and other objects, which give order and outline to the vague monotony of a landscape. Pythagoras, who went further than others of the same school, proceeded to great detail in exemplifying the power of music in giving form to matter. He made the bold assertion—for which he has been called a madman—that the octave gave our globe its present form. We should not like to enumerate the treatises that have been written, or to allude to the endless derision which has been showered on this philosopher for his apparently wild and meaningless assertion. But we will remark—in strange agreement with such a hypothesis—the experiments of Chladni have revealed that whenever an octave is sounded on the glass plate the sand, whatever its previous position may have been, invariably ranges itself in the form of a circle.

Into this phase of the subject, however, we do not intend to go, beyond remarking that a vast literature of dreams and speculations existed in antiquity—to which, *en passant*, belongs the doctrine of the harmony of the spheres—connected with the subject of which we have been treating. In modern times, the little that has been done in the way of scientific investigation has been recorded above. But the field is an ample one, open for any experimentalist; and if the moderns would only investigate it as much as the ancients dreamed about it, discoveries not only interesting but surprising might be expected.

THE AMERICAN PARLIAMENT.

BY AN ANGLO-AMERICAN.

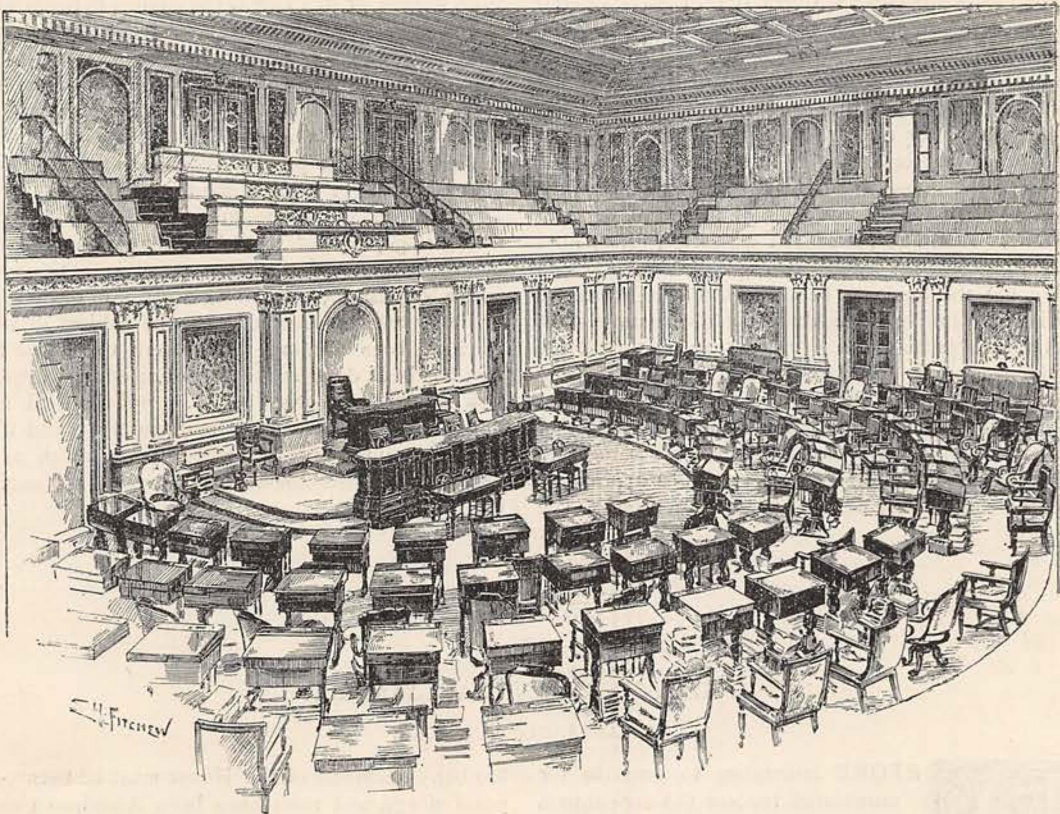
EFORE attempting to describe for uninitiated readers the appearance of Congress in session, it may be well to state a few facts regarding this important legislative body, ruling the destinies of over sixty millions of people, of which, no doubt, even many Americans are ignorant.

Congress consists of two Houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives. Senators are elected by the Legislatures of the States they represent, two for each State—making just now eighty-four in all—for a term of six years. The terms of senators from the same State are not coterminous, however, each one being elected at a different session of the Legislature. A senator must be thirty years of age, and must have been an American citizen at least nine years. He must also be a resident of the State which elects him.

The House of Representatives consists of 329 members, representing constituencies based on population—a readjustment taking place after each decennial census. In the first Congress, each member of the House represented a constituency of 30,000, while in the present Congress—the fiftieth—each member of the House represents a population of 151,912 souls. In spite of this increase in the population of the Congressional districts, as they are called, the number of Congressmen increases so fast in this rapidly growing country that people are now discussing the question very seriously as to how to prevent the House getting unwieldy without making the constituencies too big. Members of the House must be twenty-five years of age, and must have been American citizens seven years. They must also be residents of the State in which they are elected. Although not exacted by law, the practice of requiring a man to be a resident of the Congressional district which he represents seems to be universal, and to have all the force of law. The disabilities attaching by the third section of Amendment XIV. of the Constitution to those who, having sworn to defend the Constitution of the United States, "shall have been engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof," may be removed by a two-thirds vote in Congress; and as a matter of fact, the only person disqualified under this Amendment during recent years was the late President of the Southern Confederacy, Mr. Jefferson Davis. It will be remembered, however, that the ex-Vice-President of the Confederacy, Mr. Alex. Stephens, of Georgia, was for several years before his death a member of Congress.

In the matter of emoluments, these will no doubt appear extremely liberal to unpaid English M.P.'s. Both senators and representatives receive an annual salary of $5,000, or about £1,000 English money; they are allowed besides mileage at the rate of 20 c. a mile from their residence to Washington for each session of Congress, and they receive an allowance of $125 a year for newspapers and stationery.

Besides the 329 members elected by regularly constituted Congressional districts, there are five delegates from the territories which are not yet erected



SENATE CHAMBER.

into States.* These delegates enjoy all the emoluments and privileges of regular members, save one —they cannot vote. Each one represents a territory without reference to its population; and thus Dakota, with 600,000 people, is represented in Congress by one non-voting delegate, while Rhode Island, with half as many people, has two senators and two members, and Delaware, with only a third as many, has two senators and one member. By the way, speaking of delegates, there is one—he from Arizona —who hails from a place rejoicing in the cheerful name of Tombstone, while his colleague from New Mexico is always in hot water when at home, his place of residence being Ojo Caliente.

Members of the House of Representatives are elected for only two years, on the first Tuesday in November of every even-numbered year, and take their seats, singularly enough, not at the next session of Congress, which commences on the December 1st following election, but at the session which begins December 1st of the year following. The defeated candidates thus return to Congress until the 4th of March succeeding the election, when that Congress expires. Subsequent to that date, however, if the President of the United States were to call a special session, the newly elected members would convene, otherwise they do not assemble until the December following, or thirteen months after election — an arrangement which cannot but strike one as singularly absurd, and which in practice has many drawbacks. Of the actual members of Congress, all but 196 were defeated in 1888, so that in March last there were sitting in Congress no less than 129 members whose constituents had some months previously expressed dissatisfaction with them by refusing to return them.

The second session of each Congress which thus comes arbitrarily to an end on the 4th of March of every second (odd) year is known as the short session. The first session of each Congress continues in session until adjourned by its own act. There is no power by which Congress can be dissolved, or any appeal be taken to the country.

Each Congressman's pay and emoluments begin on the 4th of March subsequent to his election, and thus in the case of a Congressman elected next November, and who should die before December 1st of next year, salary would run for nearly nine months, although, should no extra session be convened (and

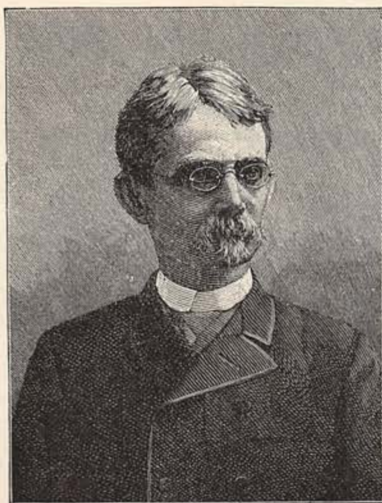
* By the bill passed since the above was written, three territories have been admitted to Statehood, making four new States: Dakota two, and Montana and Washington each one. This added eight senators and five representatives to the 51st (present) Congress, South Dakota being allowed two representatives, and each of the others one.

an extra session is very rare), he would never have served a single day in Congress.

In the Senate, the presiding officer is always the Vice-President of the United States, when that office is not vacant, as at present. When there is no Vice-President, the Senate elects its own presiding officer. The gentleman now occupying that position *pro tempore* is Senator John J. Ingalls, and though no longer, as formerly, in the line of the Presidential succession, he nevertheless enjoys all the privileges, including the pay of the Vice-President of the United States. The Speaker of the House is elected by the members, and that honour was until lately held by Mr. John G. Carlisle, of Kentucky. His pay is the same as that of the President of the Senate—8,000 dollars a year—but his power and influence in shaping legislation are infinitely greater. In the first place, being always elected by the members, he represents the majority in the House. He also selects the members of the fifty-four Standing Committees, and appoints the Chairmen, though in this he generally observes some unwritten laws as to seniority of service on the Committee. These Committees practically control all legislation, new bills being always referred to some of them except where a Select Committee has been specially appointed; and unless the Committee is willing, it is next to impossible to secure action on any bill so referred by the House. "Killed in Committee" is a very frequent epitaph recording the unhappy fate of a new member's bill; and in a general way this is no doubt a fortunate thing for the country.

To an Englishman or Frenchman, accustomed to be ruled by a Government which depends for its existence on its ability to command a majority in the House, it would seem odd to find the Opposition controlling the House during the greater part of an entire Administration, or even during the whole of it, as was the case during the 44th, 45th, and 46th Congresses. Mr. Cleveland had the advantage of having a majority in the House of Representatives on his side, and Mr. Harrison, his successor in office, will be equally fortunate, though in both cases the majority is a small one. The Senate, however, during the whole of Mr. Cleveland's Administration, was Republican.

MR. J. G. CARLISLE.



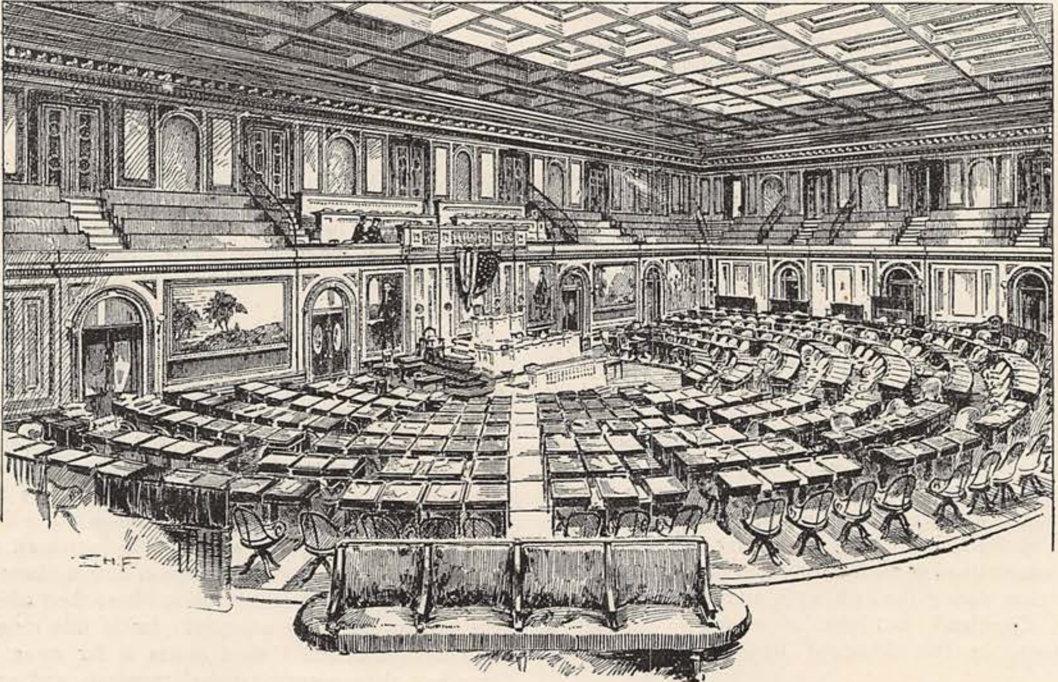
SENATOR J. J. INGALLS.

Another curious feature of the American system is the fact that the Government is unrepresented on the floor of either the House or Senate. If the President should select a member of Congress for a place in his Cabinet, the latter could not accept it without resigning his seat. Senators have frequently shown marked reluctance to give up their six-year terms in the Senate for a four-year term in the Cabinet, at a little extra pay, it is true, but with greatly increased expenses, greatly diminished influence, and a share of responsibility in an Administration where their advice may perhaps never be accepted; for in this respect the President of the United States is far more independent than a constitutional monarch, and need only accept the advice of his advisers when it suits him to do so.

So much for the principal characteristics which distinguish the organisation of the American Congress. Now for its personality.

We will proceed to the Capitol, up Pennsylvania Avenue, and as we go, we notice the United States flag flying over the south wing of the building. That denotes that the House is in session, and we will proceed at once to the "Hall of Representatives." On our way up to the top of the great stairs leading to the portico, and through the picture gallery under the great dome, through Statuary Hall, &c., to the entrance of the Hall, we notice a general absence of formality quite strange, and in some cases, due to the irreverence and bad manners of the lower class of American youth, somewhat unfortunate. Arriving at the door of the Hall, we send in our cards to an M.C. to whom we have introductions, and that gentleman promptly makes his appearance. If there are no ladies of our party, he assumes his busiest manner,

his brow knits with the cares of State (he was probably listening to a good story behind the screen when our cards were presented to him), and persuaded that one of us is seeking his influence for an office, or that we want his aid in securing the passage of some private bill, he puts the usual question, "Well, gentlemen, what can I do for you?" When informed that, being strangers in Washington, we desire to see the House in session, his face clears up at once. He hands us a card of admission to the gallery reserved for the families and friends of members, promising perhaps to join us after a few moments. In the meantime we take our seats and look about us: a large hall lighted from above, and containing, arranged in semi-circular form, some 340 desks, each desk furnished with writing material and a comfortable revolving chair. At the "hub" of the semi-circle, and opposite the main entrance or north door, is the Speaker's chair, on a raised platform, with a handsome white marble front; below him the Clerk of the House and his assistants, and below them again the official reporters. To the Speaker's right is a green marble pedestal, upon which stands the mace; and close by, on a lower platform, sit at small desks two persons who, we are informed, are the Sergeant-at-Arms and his assistant. On the steps leading to the Speaker's chair, on either side, are seated a knot of boys, apparently schoolboys just in from the playground. These are pages. Not an official in the House wears a robe of office, not an attendant wears a uniform, and to European eyes there is doubtless a sad lack of something to add dignity as well as tone and colour to the scene. Surrounding the semicircle of desks and chairs are green baize screens, outside of which is a sort of *foyer*, in which it is evident that a member is presumed not to be in the House, for here one gentleman is lying upon a lounge, as we can see from our vantage-ground in the gallery; one or two are smoking; and there is our friend whose card admitted us to our present seats, who has resumed the story-telling our call interrupted—and the story must be a good one, judging by the very evident, though subdued, merriment of the little group. Inquiry reveals the fact that the members of the Democratic party occupy the seats to the Speaker's right as they have from time immemorial, the Republican members being seated at the left. There are no cross benches.



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Galleries surround the entire House, affording accommodation for 2,500 people. Most of these are open to the public, although some are reserved exclusively for ladies whenever the House is in session; one is partitioned off for the *diplomats* or foreign Ministers resident in Washington; another is reserved for the President; and the one in which we are seated is reserved for persons holding tickets from members; another, advantageously placed immediately behind and above the Speaker's chair, is reserved for the gentlemen of the Press. This gallery communicates directly with a large apartment furnished with tables

and writing material for the accommodation of newspaper correspondents, and telegraph wires lead to it, communicating with the main lines of telegraph throughout the country. The Press is a power indeed in the United States, and nowhere more so than at Washington, where Senators and Congressmen vie with each other in extending favours to the numerous correspondents representing the leading papers in the United States.

Both the Senate and the House of Representatives include among their respective officers a Chaplain, and both Houses are regularly opened with prayer; this daily prayer while Congress is in session being apparently the sole duty required from the reverend gentlemen who act as Chaplains. The Chaplain of the House, the Rev. Mr. Milburn, is blind, and is accompanied on all occasions by a daughter, among whose duties is that of reading to her father every morning the proceedings of the day previous in Congress, and on these proceedings the Chaplain is accustomed to base his daily petitions.

The privilege of admission to the floor of the House is limited to ex-members, secretaries of committees, each Standing Committee being entitled to such an officer, and to the pages and other officers and attendants. Ex-members are frequently employed by parties interested in the passage of special legislation, owing to their enjoyment of this privilege, which gives them access to the House, and consequently to the members, at all times.

Another and a still less reputable class of lobbyists frequently to be met with in the vicinity of both Houses are the women who make a business of lobbying, and who, it is to be feared, presume not a little upon the privileges of their sex to harass members of Congress with a persistence which would, in a man, be promptly and decisively rebuked.

The Senate Chamber does not differ materially in its arrangements from the House, except that, as befits its dignity, and the smaller number of members, the accommodations are more luxurious, the revolving cane chairs of members of the House being replaced in the Senate by large and comfortable arm-chairs. The Senate galleries accommodate only about half as many people as those in the House. Another perceptible difference is that the Senate may and does hold secret sessions, from which all but Senators and the officers of the Senate, not even excepting the highly favoured members of the Press, are rigidly excluded.

All bills for raising revenue must originate in the House of Representatives; and on the other hand, upon the Senate devolves the duty of ratifying appointments made by the President of the United States, and all treaties made by him require its approval.

Of the Senators, the most distinctive characteristic is probably their immense wealth. Very few of them are poor men, and these are mostly from the Southern States. Most of them are very rich men, many of them millionaires.

Another feature which strikes an Englishman as curious, is that night sessions of the House or Senate are extremely rare. Both Houses usually convene at noon and sit four or five hours—though, of course, at times the sessions are prolonged into the night, and sometimes the House has sat several days and nights without intermission.

A description of the Capitol, which that gifted and versatile Frenchman, "Max O'Rell," declares to be one of the most imposing and grandest buildings to be found in the world, would require a paper to itself.

*** All the illustrations to this paper, including the portraits, are engraved by special permission from photographs by Mr. C. M. Bell, Washington.

A MAY GARDEN.

LAST month we were discussing the beauties of our hardy and half-hardy annuals in the flower garden, but in this treacherous month of May, and before passing on to other or kindred subjects, something, perhaps, should be said, by way of supplement, relative to our annuals, occupying as they do such an important place in our garden.

Now, our tender annuals succeed very well with only one re-potting: that is to say, where you have room for it they can be transferred straight away from the seed-pan or pot in which they were originally sown to that in which you intend them to bloom, and this change—or "shift," as we call it—should be made early in May, and by the end of the season you will find that the roots have filled the pot.

And we must bear in mind that the distinction between a *permanent* green-house plant and an *annual* is this: that the annual, as implied by its name, as soon as it has attained its full size and growth, and in fact perfected itself, has fulfilled its mission, and it dies; whereas, for example, a camellia or a heath when its roots have filled a pot is merely pot-bound, and another shift into a larger-sized pot at once gives it a fresh start, and its lease of life is renewed. A single shifting, then, for our annuals ought to be sufficient.

This, again, being the month in which—however much we may differ in opinion as to the best method of summer arrangement of our garden—all our greenhouse stock and young cuttings are displayed to the best advantage in our open flower-beds for the season,