

STATE HOUSE.

This distinguished building was begun in the year 1732, and finished in the year 1734. The amplitude of such an edifice is so early a day, and the expensive interior decorations, are creditable evidences of the liberality and public spirit of the times. On the Sixth Street side rested upon the wall along shed, which afforded and was used as the common shelter for the parties of Indians occasionally visiting the city on business. This venerable pile, the State House, is a place consecrated by important events in our colonial and revolutionary history. Its contemplation fills the mind with numerous associations and local impressions. Within its walls were once witnessed all the memorable doings of our spirited forefathers; above all, it was made renowned in 1776, as possessing beneath its dome "the Hall of Independence" in which the representatives of a nation resolved to be free and independent. The facts concerning the bell first set up in the steeple, (if we regard its after-history) are peculiar. It was of itself not a little singular that the bell, when first set up, should in its colonial character, have been inscribed with the motto, "Proclaim Liberty throughout the land, and to all the inhabitants thereof;" but it is still stranger, and deserves to be often remembered, that it was the first in Philadelphia, and from the situation of the Congress legislating beneath its peals, it was also the first in the United States to proclaim, by ringing the news, "the Declaration of Independence."



Independence Hall. C. O. S. Smith. Taken between 1874 and 1875.



Statue of Washington in front of Independence Hall. C. O. S. Smith. Taken between 1874 and 1875.