

A MONUMENT FOR CHICAGO

M. BARTHOLOI'S WASHINGTON RECEIVING LAFAYETTE.

The Bronze Reduction at Tiffany's Better Than the Original at Chicago—Effort to Secure the Group for that City—Merits and Defects—Washington Sacrificed to Lafayette—Unsuited to America Unless Remodeled—Chicago in Need of Expert Advice—Harrison's Manifesto.

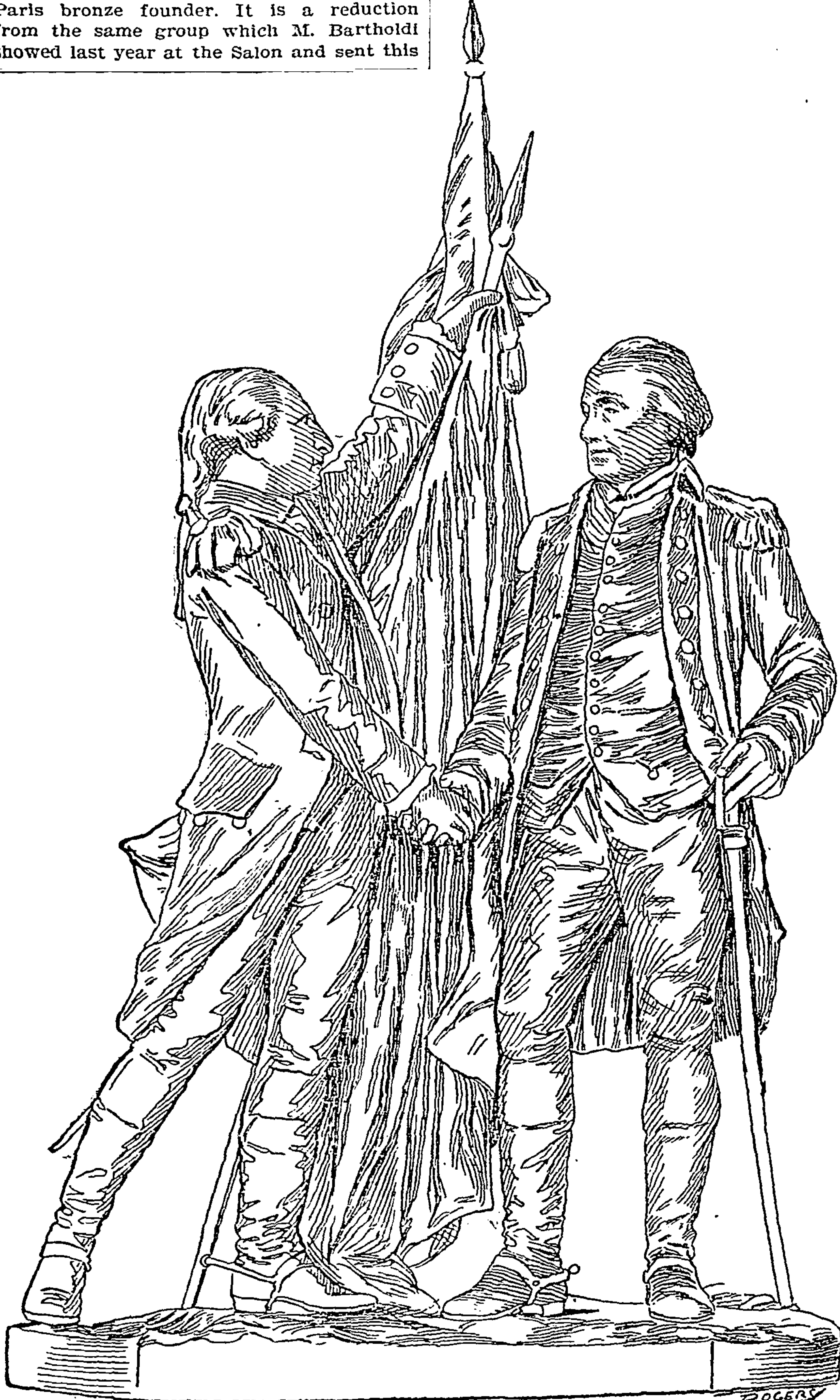
With the headlong smartness which is one of the traits of Mayor Carter Harrison of Chicago, that worthy has sent out subscription lists for the purchase of a big plaster group by M. Bartholdi in the French art section at the World's Fair. He jumps to the conclusion, because New-York has a Lafayette by Bartholdi, that Chicago ought to have one, too; but does not stop to ask whether the new Lafayette by the noted sculptor is worth erecting or not. Here in New-York we have means of coming to a conclusion on this point.

A bronze of this group has been received by Tiffany & Co. from Barbedienne, the Paris bronze founder. It is a reduction from the same group which M. Bartholdi showed last year at the Salon and sent this

ished by age, while Lafayette may or may not have gained his full height. M. Bartholdi has modeled Washington, if anything, shorter than Lafayette, and given him the look of a man of sixty, who possesses none of the superb muscular power and appearance of unimpaired vigor of constitution which Washington preserved long after all the hardships and worries of the war of liberation. The facts speak for themselves and condemn this part of M. Bartholdi's design. The group as we see it at present is fitter for a statuette than a monument, and the bronze at Tiffany's might well be purchased on its own merits. But the large group at Chicago is not properly designed for a public monument. It can be seen to advantage only from one side, and if erected must have still another background besides the standards, which now bring the figures together and give them a screen on which their profiles are outlined. As a statuette group for the interior of a building or a niche outside this is not a disadvantage, for such an object naturally takes its place against a wall. But it is a distinct disadvantage when considered as a big public monument round which the public circulates.

It may be noted in this connection that at the Salon when first shown it obtained no medal. It is also certain that the jury for awarding medals for sculpture at Chicago would not have given M. Bartholdi a medal on this group had France decided to submit her art works to competition. Several sculptors on that jury have expressed themselves to this effect, and it is hardly possible that the French and other foreign jurors on such committee would have given any other verdict.

M. Bartholdi is too clever and experi-



Washington Receiving Lafayette.
From the Bronze at Tiffany's.

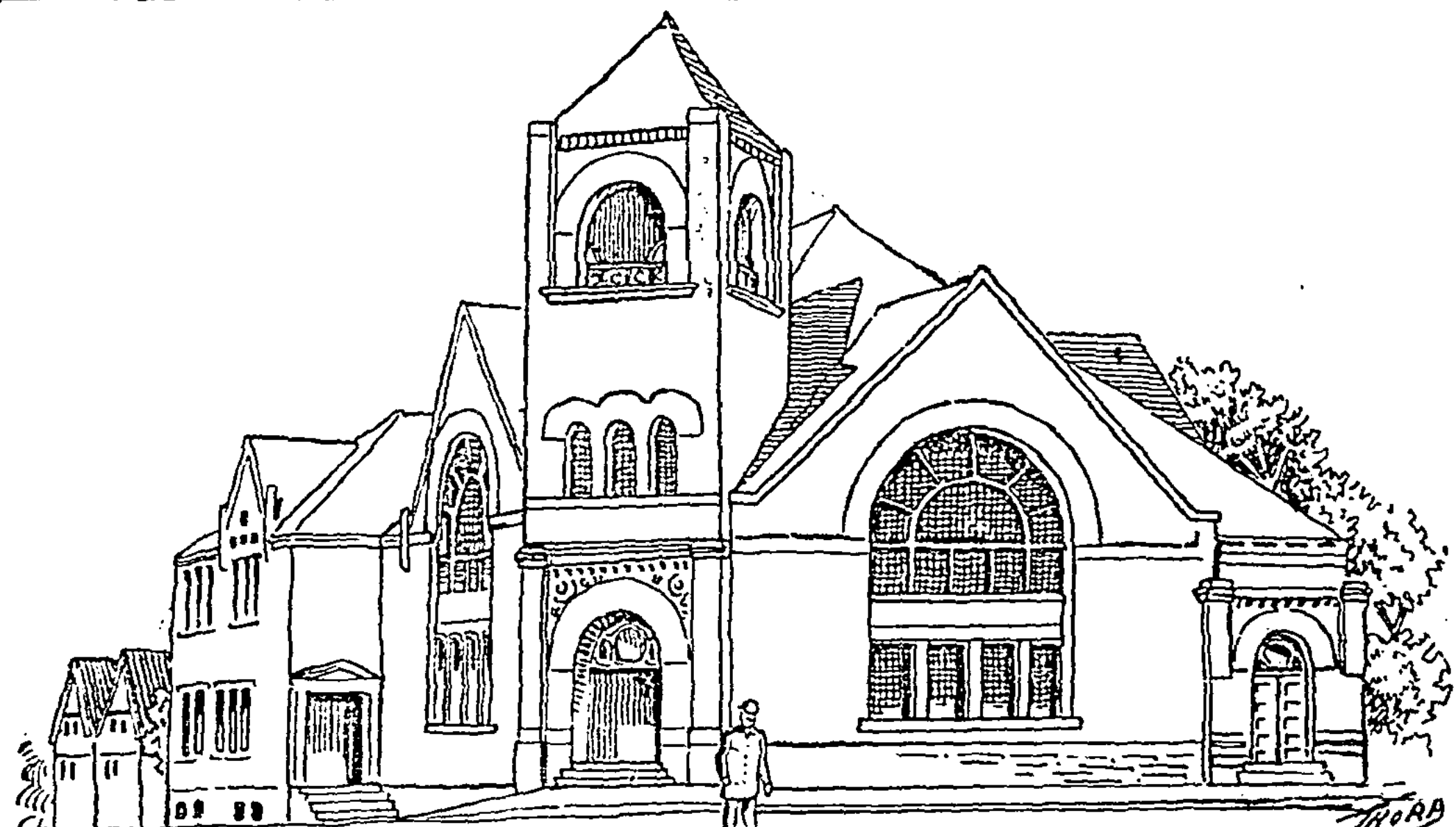
year to the Chicago Fair as a graceful tribute to the centuried friendship between the United States and France.

Lafayette and Washington! Here is the young Lafayette of Union Square (M. Bartholdi's Lafayette) received by the Washington of Union Square, (H. K. Brown's Washington,) who has descended from his bronze steed and advanced to meet the French enthusiast for popular liberties. Lafayette has sheathed the sword which on Union Square he presses against his breast in a fine gesture of admiration and devotion, and supports with his left hand a couple of flags—those of France and the United States—while his right hand clasps the right of Washington in a strong grasp.

The sentiment of the group is irreproachable. The movement of Lafayette, repeating as it does the excellent work presented to the City of New-York by French residents, is full of life, energy, and natural grace. Not so with the Washington. Whether it is that M. Bartholdi wishes to bring the young Frenchman into greater prominence, or that he has striven too hard to obtain the dramatic contrast of the younger man's passion of devotion to the cause with the elder's calm constancy, and the further contrast of the lively temperament of a Frenchman with the somewhat stolid poise of the Anglo-American, it may be noted on the first glance at the cut that Washington plays the role of background. His attitude is dull and uninteresting, while the position of the sword to the left of the

enced a sculptor to fall to see the force of this criticism and will doubtless acknowledge that his large group requires radical remodeling before it can be called worthy of his best work—worthy, for example, of comparison with his Lafayette in Union Square, his Belfort Lion, and certain other excellent pieces of which he is the author. France has such an undisputed lead of the world in sculpture that she cannot afford to have one of her gifted statuary remembered in a foreign land by a work that does not represent the higher level of her genius in the arts.

It is also obviously unfair to Chicago to take advantage of the lack of knowledge of fine art on the part of her Mayor and foist on her another poor piece of sculpture. All the cities of the Union should help each other in the task of keeping poor sculpture down. The Lafayette in this group is a repetition of the New-York figure, and the Washington is not only incorrect, but very poorly modeled. Connoisseurs and experts in Chicago were consulted before the group as it now stands is accepted.



Methodist Episcopal Church, Fourth Avenue and Forty-seventh Street, Brooklyn.

leg, the point of the scabbard on the ground, the pommel of the sword in the fingers of the left hand, is nothing if not conventional.

A more serious objection to the group is the mistake M. Bartholdi has made in the relative size of the two heroes of the Revolution. Washington was a man of exceptional height; that majesty of deportment which every one who saw him noted as a chief characteristic was not merely the result of his large and commanding mind, but was reinforced by the bigness of his physical make-up.

Americans are good-humored, but they will not care to allow even so notable a sculptor as M. Bartholdi an artist's license in this respect, because it violates too obviously the actual facts.

Lafayette was not a small man, but he must have looked small beside Washington. At the time referred to by this group Washington was forty-five and Lafayette twenty years old. Washington was therefore in his full stature of six feet two, not yet dimin-