

## LIBERTY AND ITS SYMBOLS ON COINS AND MEDALS.

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A COMMITTEE at Paris, which claims to represent the French people, is proposing to erect on Bedlow's Island, in the harbour of New York, a gigantic statue of Liberty, in commemoration of the part taken by France in 1783 in helping to bring about the independence of the United States. The figure, which is to be more than a hundred feet high, is to stand on a pedestal likewise a hundred feet high. The head is to bear a circle of spiked rays like those seen in antique representations of the sun-god Apollo; and from these rays light is to issue at night. In the elevated right hand there is to be a torch, which is also at night to be a blaze of light. In the other hand there is to be a tablet bearing the simple inscription, JUL. 4, 1776. The sculptor, Auguste Bartoldi, is the designer. He is to bring with him to Philadelphia during the Centennial Exhibition one of the arms of this Liberty. From that, on the *ex pede Herculem* principle, the public are to judge of the whole. One hundred and forty thousand francs have been already subscribed to the project in France. It is expected that the people of the United States will erect the pedestal; and it is hoped that the foundation of the structure will be laid on the fourth of next July. This colossus, should it be really set up, will be one more wonder of the world, out-vieing the Memnons and Amunophs which still sit so calmly gazing out every year over the swollen waters of the Nile, or the gilded monster that overlooked of old the plain of Dura. It will salute the sailor's eye out on the ocean at a farther distance than did the glittering spear-point of Minerva Promachos on the Acropolis at Athens, which was seen from Cape Sunium, thirty miles off. So Pausanias reports. Minerva Promachos, seen there, symbolized, I suppose, the supreme wit and art of the Hellenic race. The huge Liberty lifting up on high its torch of light, will be regarded by the voyagers of the great Atlantic as representing the tute-

lary genius of "America," as people will continue to speak, meaning by America the United States of North America, the sole home, as it is alleged, of human freedom in this last age of the world. It will, of course, also recall the giant image at Rhodes, which, irrespective of pedestal, was likewise one hundred feet high and more, and answered the purpose of a lighthouse; appropriately, too, for it was an image of the sun-god spanning with distended legs the entrance to the inner harbour of the island. That figure was, as Bartoldi's Liberty is expected to be, also of bronze. What the weight of the French structure may prove to be cannot yet be known; but that of the colossus of Rhodes has been calculated to have been 720,000 pounds; that is to say if 800 pounds be taken as the load borne by each one of the Jew's camels who purchased as old metal, from the Municipality of Rhodes, the broken fragments of the colossus when thrown down by an earthquake, fifty-six years after its erection. Nor, again, can the cost of the French structure be as yet stated with precision; but that of the sun-god set up by Chares at Rhodes is said to have been about 317,000 dollars (300 talents). The colossal figure which crowns the dome of the capitol at Washington is usually spoken of as Liberty. In reality it is COLUMBIA, an impersonation of the United States. She rests her right hand on a sheathed sword; her left holds a wreath. The head is helmed; encircling it is a ring of large stars. From the apex of this figure to the ground is three hundred feet.

The proposal on the part of the committee in Paris to project upon the imagination of the Western World a gigantic conception of Liberty is my excuse for undertaking to trace the symbols and representations of Liberty on coins and medals; a practice with which we in Canada are familiar from our proximity to the United States; and many fresh exemplifications of which, I