

Indiana Limestone

The prominence which Indiana stone has achieved is due to the possession of three ideal qualities in a building stone—light, beautiful color; great strength and endurance; and adaptability to ornamental forms at small expense. The ease with which it is quarried and the facility and certainty with which the hewers and carvers can work out designs upon it, reduce the cost of producing the stone and preparing it for the walls of a building to a very reasonable figure. Granite and marble begin to be costly while they are being taken out of the earth; when they come to the stone cutter to be dressed their hardness and brittleness still further increase their cost. Brownstone and sandstone are produced with comparative cheapness, as they lie in the quarry in strata and are easily broken out; but they are hard, brittle and difficult to carve, and the cost of cutting and dressing them, while not so great as granite and marble, is still very high. Oolitic limestone, on the contrary, is not an expensive material at any point from production to setting in the walls. It therefore enables the architect to carry out the most artistic designs as well in modest dwellings as in more pretentious buildings, such as churches, office buildings, public libraries and state capitols, the element of excessive cost being eliminated without sacrificing anything that is proper for useful and enduring construction. These qualities have rendered the stone universally popular, and the peculiar light and cheerful gray of Indiana stone has therefore become a marked feature of the churches, residences, office buildings and large structures of American cities.

RESEMBLANCE TO PORTLAND STONE.

Indiana stone has not had the benefit of many years trial to test its endurance, although some of it was used as early as 1850, and is still unimpaired. But oolitic limestone has been thoroughly tested elsewhere. The other great deposit of this stone was found in Portland, England, and was used entirely in the construction of Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral, the old city wall of London, and many churches and buildings erected in the time of Queen Anne. Indiana stone and the Portland stone are of the same geological age and quality, and the following comparison shows them to be almost identical in composition: