Uncle Sam's Bakery.

As we all know Uncle Sam is equal to any emergency, and once upon a time he found it necessary to set up a bakery in the Capitol. It was in the early sixties when he had thousands of soldiers to feed. In those days Washington was just a sleepy southern village, with muddy or dusty streets—according to the weather—for none of them were paved except Pennsylvania Avenue. As an old darkey expressed it: "You couldn't go or you couldn't see to go."

Of course the Capital was not prepared to feed a multitude, and when the first shot fired upon Fort Sumter echoed throughout the country and troops came pouring into Washington, it was found that the bakers could not supply the demand for bread. Then it was that Uncle Sam established a bakery in the basement of the Capitol, as there was no other building available that was large enough. It was only a temporary thing, however, for, as soon as the Government realized that the difficulty between the north and south could not be settled in a month or two, other arrangements were made. But for a time it was a very busy place, and hundreds of loaves of bread were baked every day in this novel bakery. The immense ovens which were placed in the room now used for the Architect's office, and in the three adjoining ones, were kept running day and night. Skilled cooks were employed, the best of floor used, and that bread was
so fine that its praises are still sung.
It was made in generous loaves "nearly
double the size of the loaf of to-day.
Sixteen were baked together - all in one
loaf, as it were."

And many of the soldiers who ate this
bread were camped in the Capitol; as Uncle
Sam was not prepared for war and the
question of shelter for his boys was about
as difficult a one as that of food. The
famous Sixth Massachusetts, which, as every-
one knows, was the first organized regi-
ment to respond to the President's call,
had quarters in the Senate wing. Troops
were scattered all about the great build-
ing, giving it a very war-like aspect.
Arms were stacked in the corridors, and
soldiers slept in the Senate Chamber and
House of Representatives, where so much
war-talk is now being manufactured. A
little later Statuary Hall was used as a
hospital for a short time. Thus the
Capitol served the threefold purpose of
hospital, camp and bakery during the War
of the Rebellion.