A MUNICIPAL PROBLEM.

THE ANNEXATION OF WESTCHESTER COUNTY.

PUBLIC REAL ESTATE AND POLITICAL ADVANTAGES OF THE SCHEME—A SYSTEMATIC PLAN FOR CONTINUING THE CITY AVENUES INTO WESTCHESTER NEEDED—REAL ESTATE LIKELY TO ADVANCE IN VALUE.

A joint committee of the citizens of Morrisania and West Farms was appointed a few weeks ago by those towns to meet and draw up a plan of annexation, which they propose to submit to the next Legislature. Their work, which will soon be perfected, will be submitted to the people for their approval; its general propositions will not be known until to-day, but in view of the fact that the whole of the eastern towns of Westchester County have for years been in favor of their formal as well as their practical absorption in this municipality, the character of the recommendations need not be doubted.

On the eastern side of the county the proposition of annexation is as favorably received. The citizens of the southern portion of the town of Yonkers who have found themselves burdened by the government of Yonkers city, as well as that of the town, thus having exercised over them a dual government in many particulars conflicting and antagonistic, have voted for separation, and incorporation into a separate municipality as a refuge, but have expressed themselves as anxious to become annexed to this city as a certain release from their afflictions. Numerous other measures are being taken in other localities for the same end, and a general feeling is manifested throughout the county on the subject. The thousands who pour into New-York every morning from Mott Haven, Melrose, Morrisania, and other Westchester towns prove that this city is the natural center toward which the inhabitants of the adjoining settlements naturally gravitate. The majority of persons living in these localities do business in New-York, and the population of this city cannot, therefore, be taken by the census-gatherer who merely goes from house to house obtaining the names of the occupants, but should be rather collected from the great number of persons whose paramount interests are centered in the city, but who live outside of this municipality. The relation of these places to the city and their ultimate connection with it are recognized by their inhabitants, and measures are being taken to form a single and homogeneous government of those communities who are divided only by narrow rivers or invisible boundary lines. The villages which comprise the towns of West Farms, Morrisania, Westchester, and that part of Yonkers lying south of the city of Yonkers proper, are thickly populated, and are united only by continuous rows of dwellings, and divided only by unseen lines drawn through the centers of settlements which are identical in interests. The new projects of the tunnel and suspension bridge across the Harlem River affect the interests of the property-owners in all these towns, and the necessity for some legislation which will unite them under one government is recognized so universally that action will probably be taken by the next Legislature to consolidate by enactment settlements which, as the progress of improvement has unmistakably indicated, should be united without delay. As the villages have increased in size, the want of water conducted from some common reservoir has become apparent, and that can be obtained in one of only two ways; either by annexation to this city or incorporation into a separate city, the authorities of which shall take measures to provide for the wants of the community.

THE WATER SUPPLY SUFFICIENT.

Gen. Geo. S. Greene was some time ago consulted for the purpose of ascertaining whether, after providing an adequate supply of water for this city, a sufficient quantity could be obtained from the Croton River water-shed for the supply of the lower part of Westchester County, or whether other sources of supply must be sought. The reply of Gen. Greene shows that the Croton River and its water-shed in connection with nearer sources of supply may be so utilized as to afford an ample supply of pure and wholesome water for more than 4,000,000 of persons. This makes no account of the excessive waste, which is increasing every year, nor considers the diminished supply which would result from a prolonged drouth. It is therefore considered by some extremely doubtful whether the supply of water that can be drawn through the Croton Aqueduct will be more than this city with its present limits will ultimately require under rigid rules to prevent waste. It is urged that the hight of much of the land in the southern portion of Westchester County is too great to admit of deriving supplies from the Croton Aqueduct; but a judicious arrangement of the means and revenues now unused in that county, combined with the use of such portions of the surplus of the Croton as the season might afford, would be productive of immediate benefit to property on both sides of the river, and would rapidly hasten its occupancy. It is stated that only the Bronx and Saw Mill Rivers are available for the supply of water to these villages, and that these resources should be secured at as early a period as possible, and before the banks of these streams are occupied with establishments that will pollute the waters and render the streams unfit for use, except at the great cost of buying off this class of occupants. The question of supplying this city with pure water was first agitated in 1791, and various projects were subsequently entertained and discussed; but it was half a century later—1841—when the Croton water was finally introduced. At the same rate of progress in supplying the villages of southern Westchester County, which have a larger population than New-York had in 1790, they will be without pure water until 1920, and it is urged that if the work should be begun at once, and the burden borne by the villages singly or collectively, the cost of carrying out the project, to say nothing of the difficulty of obtaining the necessary amount of funds by the sale of bonds, would overwhelm the property-owners with a load of debt from which they could not recover, and that annexation to this city, which will relieve them of all taxation except their proportionate share of the burden, is the only remedy.

VARIOUS PLANS FOR ANNEXATION.

To accomplish the desired objects of having these separate villages united under one government, various plans have been proposed concerning the practicability whereof great diversity of opinion exists. One plan is to annex all these Westchester villages to this city, regarding them as upper wards of the metropolis. Another is to incorporate them into a separate city like Brooklyn, Jersey City or Newark. Another is to form them into separate townships, while the last plan is to unite them all, including the City of Brooklyn, into the Metropolitan District of New-York.

The township of Morrisania includes the villages of Morrisania, Mott Haven, Port Morris, Wilton, North New-York, East and West Morrisania, Melrose, Woodstock, Elton, Claremont, and Highbridgeville. The borders of all these places are thickly studded with houses, so that they have become virtually a single settlement covering a large area. This township is governed partly by trustees who correspond to the Board of Aldermen in this city, and the form of government partakes of the nature of both village and city. The township of West Farms comprises the villages of Tremont, Belmont, West Farms, Central Morrisania, Mount Hope, Mount Eden, Williamsbridge, Fairmount, and Fordham. The settlements are laid out with scarcely any reference to one another or to their surroundings. The same is true of that part of the town of Yonkers adjoining this city, and of those parts of the towns of Eastchester and Westchester within the same radial distance of the City Hall as Kingsbridge.

THE YONKERS DIFFICULTY.

The last Legislature gave a city charter to the Village of Yonkers, but the people living in the southern section of that town, in that portion not included in the city limits, finding themselves taxed for gas, water, and other things which specially benefit the citizens and are of no special value to themselves, are desirous of dividing the town and creating the southern portion into a new township under the name of Kingsbridge. As matters are at present, the City of Yonkers is a part of the Town of Yonkers, governed by laws framed by special act of the last Legislature, and is also affected by the laws of the township. The burdens of the city administration therefore fall in undue measure upon portions of the town not benefited by the incorporation. The proposition for a division of the township has been favorably received by the Board of Supervisors, and the question will probably be submitted to a vote of the legal voters of the entire town at large, when the regular town elections shall be held, unless it shall be deemed wiser to become annexed to this city.

Most of those who favor annexation reside in the large settlements, such as Morrisania and West Farms, while in the numerous small villages there is a strong sentiment in favor of having a separate city government. Those who regard with favor the union of these towns with this city base their views on substantially the following grounds: The tunnel which is about to be constructed under the Harlem River at the head of Seventh-ave. will probably involve an expense to Westchester County of about $750,000, while the proposed suspension bridge will cost as much more, and it is argued that if the towns were annexed to the city the county would then simply be assessed the same pro rata amount as equally populous portions of this city will be called upon to pay.

PUBLIC ADVANTAGES OF ANNEXATION.

The proposed tunnel will terminate on the Westchester side at a point whence a broad road runs through the centers of Melrose and Morrisania, and it is claimed that the natural tide of traffic which will set in when the tunnel shall have afforded passage to these villages will soon cause this line of travel to be as thickly settled as Fordham-ave., which is the extension of Third-ave. on the Westchester side. A road is also being laid out to connect with the suspension bridge across the Harlem River and run through Riverdale and Mount St. Vincent to Yonkers City. From the Harlem bridge, also, a new boulevard is building, extending in a generally easterly direction through Port Morris until it reaches the town of West Farms. The other roads leading from the bridge and passing through the villages of Mott Haven, Melrose, Morrisania, Tremont, and Fordham, are Fordham-ave., the direct thoroughfare; Washington-ave., Madison-ave., and the old Boston Road. These are being graded and worked, and in many places are paved. There are continuous rows of dwellings along Washington, Fordham, and Madison-aves., from the Harlem Bridge to Fordham, a distance of seven miles, and the travel from the city that uses these roads increases daily. A large tract of land opposite the upper end of Second-ave. is being built upon by immense buildings, which will be used as freight depots for the Harlem, Hudson River, and Central Railroads. Fast steamers will convey the freight to the lower part of the city. This freight will be owned almost entirely by the merchants of this city. It is claimed that these depots should be under the control of the same commonality as the warehouses of the merchants, and it is believed that the Harlem River will ultimately contain along its banks the great warehouses of the city, and be used principally to float the freight of the city to the merchants' doors.

The widening of the Kingsbridge road will finish a broad avenue from the Battery to the Harlem River. A wide avenue unites with it on the Westchester side, conducting travelers to Yonkers on the north, or the villages of Fordham, Morrisania, and West Farms on the east. Thus all these villages are binding themselves in every direction more firmly to the city.

ANNEXATION OF BROOKLYN.

Brooklyn will soon be united to this city by a bridge, and residents of Staten Island are exerting themselves to save time by ferries and railways. Everything in the vicinity of the city is drawn with centripetal force from the suburbs to the center, and it is urged that this is especially true of the Westchester villages, which in population rise to the dignity of a city, but are unable to enjoy its advantages because they are deprived of the assistance which only annexation to New-York can afford them. They are striving by all the methods that can be devised to become united, and it is said that the small jealousies and petty interests that keep them apart will soon be neutralized in the progress of the enterprises that are drawing them nearer and nearer together.

The bridge, which will connect Brooklyn with New-York more closely than the numerous ferries now unite them, will extend from a populous part of the city at Chatham-square to a center of large population in Brooklyn. Horse cars will run incessantly across the connecting bridge, and the inhabitants of both cities will commingle with greater freedom. The improvement of the water-way of the East and Harlem Rivers will undoubtedly produce great results to New-York, Brooklyn, and the towns of Westchester; but it is urged that these improvements cannot be successfully achieved by the separate powers of each county and that this work cannot be done by piecemeal, but should be done as a whole, and, to be well done, performed under one authority. It is stated that different jurisdictions and forms of municipal government throughout the territory immediately affected and to be directly benefited will very much embarrass the accomplishment. The problem to be solved for all time is that of the accommodation by the most approved methods of traffic across the rivers and of traffic on the rivers, so that each shall not interfere with the others. It is believed that the extent of bridge and tunnel communications ultimately required between this city and Westchester and this city and Brooklyn will be hardly equaled by the passages across the Thames or Seine. London has seven bridges across the Thames devoted to ordinary traffic and three bridges used exclusively for railways within a distance of three miles. These bridges vary in length from 708 to 1,380 feet, and are of different widths. The great majority have been built in less than a century. In the city of Paris, within a distance of 7½ miles, the river Seine is spanned by 26 bridges. Seven of these bridges are suspension, three are of iron upon stone piers, one is of wood, and the rest are of stone. They vary from 170 feet to 460 feet in length, and from 15 to 83 feet in breadth. Many of them are elaborate and elegant structures, erected at great cost, and several of them are built by private enterprise. The population of New-York, Brooklyn, and Westchester is fast assuming on the shores of the East and Harlem Rivers the density which London has on the Thames and Paris on the Seine. The constantly increasing traffic that ebbs and flows daily between these places will soon become too numerous to be accommodated by the solitary bridge which is to lap the lower portion of the two cities, but will demand the speedy erection of another bridge leading from the upper part of the city, resting on Blackwell's Island, and extending to the opposite shore, and speedily numerous other bridges will follow.

REAL ESTATE ADVANTAGES OF ANNEXATION.

The project for the reëstablishment of the old Metropolitan District meets with very general favor among the real estate dealers and owners of Westchester County, who regard it as the next best system after annexation which they now wish to have. Nearly all believe that annexation would add materially to the comfort of the people of both counties, and increase their present and prospective wealth. It would give the people of Westchester improved roads, drainage, and good Croton water, and relieve it of the onerous burdens which are now imposed upon it by the local rings which govern it. It would benefit New-York by enlarging the taxable area of property now cheap, but which would soon become very valuable, as the projectors of several schemes of rapid transit were determined to put them into effect. Rapid transit would soon populate Westchester by drawing back the people who would rather live in New-York, but are forced to take up their residence in New-Jersey, Staten Island, and Brooklyn, simply because of cheaper rents and better means of communication. Annexation would in this respect increase the value of Westchester property, and in addition, it is claimed that several large railroad companies were contemplating making Harlem River their termini, and had already purchased tracts of land with the object of erecting suitable depot accommodations; and as the freight which they would bring to this point is almost entirely owned by the merchants of New-York, the importance of having these points under the control of the same local government could not be overestimated. All these matters would stimulate values, bring property into market, increase the demand for mechanical and unskilled labor, and permit New-York to continue its rapid and healthy growth.

VIEWS OF DEALERS.

John Berrian of No. 162 Broadway, a resident of Westchester, a dealer in real estate, and one of the Commissioners to lay out and extend Central-ave., which runs from McComb's Dam Bridge, heartily approved the scheme. He was particularly desirous of annexation, however, as it would advance the interests of real estate owners and residents generally, and be the means of building up Westchester County. He believed in the extension of the boulevards and avenues, and was an advocate for systematic efforts to improve the county, which would materially and immediately be felt in a better state of affairs, and would increase the population by the addition of a class of people who would be very welcome. As an illustration of the effects which the extension of the boulevards would have upon real estate, he cited his experience in the matter of the Central-ave. improvement. When it was first projected and assessments were actually levied for the purpose of carrying it out, there was much dissatisfaction expressed by small owners, who declared that it would ruin them. He advised them to hold their property, but many sold their property for their assessments. The property in many instances had more than quadrupled in value, and the beneficial effects of the improvement were now apparent to all.

A SYSTEMATIC PLAN NEEDED.

Lewis B. Brown, of the firm of Frank G. & Davidson Brown of No. 90 Broadway, real estate dealers and owners in this city and Westchester County, was very earnest in his recommendations for the reëstablishment of the Metropolitan District. Like all the other gentlemen who had been approached on the subject, he was also a thorough annexationist, and very much desired to see Westchester and New-York Counties united, believing that it would be conducive to the best interests of both. He believed that this should take place immediately, as the expense of improving Westchester would be comparatively small if the matter was taken into consideration now. Land was comparatively cheap there at present, and the population was not extraordinarily large. People were now beginning to lay out their property, dividing it up into suitable building plots, which they expected to sell at handsome figures with the introduction of rapid transit and improved roads, water, and drainage. Under a commission similar to that which constructed Central Park land could be obtained cheaply, and the improvements made at a comparatively trifling cost. This would be as beneficial as the creation of the Central Park, which so materially increased the taxable resources of the city. Rapid transit would soon populate Westchester County, drawing off the population which now tended to New-Jersey because of its convenience. People preferred to live in the State of New-York if all other things were equal. With the influx of population lands would increase in value, and would become so costly that improvements could not be made except at a serious sacrifice. A systematic plan of improvement was very desirable now, as Westchester could be laid out with regularity and to advantage now, and would prevent much tearing up and relaying out of property on which improvements had been planned by the owners with only their own views or speculations to guide them. Westchester through annexation would have a better form of government and be freed from the intolerable local "ring" which deprived it of its wealth without giving any return. By annexation it would acquire a better system of police, Croton water, and drainage. Rapid transit was rapidly drawing nigh; the Gilbert Elevated Railway was taking shape, and Commodore Vanderbilt intended to push his underground railway. Annexation would bring real estate into the market from 10 to 20 years sooner than it could otherwise be placed, and would benefit the rich and poor land-owner in proportion to the amount of property which they held.

FREEDOM FROM "LOCAL RINGS."

Richard M. Hoe, of printing-press fame, a resident of West Farms, Westchester County, was very much in favor of annexation, on the ground of consequent general improvement in the condition of the people in Westchester, and the appreciation in value of real estate. It would also free the citizens of that county from the pernicious rule of local rings, which far exceeded that of New-York in their baleful effect. He recommended the extension of the boulevards, so as to take in the larger towns. He advocated the taking of sufficient property to make the boulevards 100 feet wide. Sixty feet could be utilized immediately, and the other 20 feet on either side of the 60 could be allowed to remain as court-yards before the residences along its line until such time as the space was required. This would obviate the necessity of keeping the additional 40 feet under repair until it was actually necessary.

In the United States Circuit Court, yesterday, in the case of The United States Circuit Court agt. W. R. Vermilye & Co. and the Adams Express Company, Judge Blatchford decided that the notes in question, amounting to $5,300, belong to the latter of the defendants, it having acquired possession of them as a common carrier.

SECURITY AGAINST FIRES.

HOW TO ESCAPE BOSTON'S FATE.

BETTER MEANS OF UTILIZING OUR PRESENT WATER SUPPLY.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: About a year ago, after the Chicago fire, you published a letter from me, originally addressed to the Mayor of Chicago, advising the construction of special water-works in cities for use in extinguishing fires, cleansing streets, &c., but so arranged that these works might distribute water throughout the more densely settled portions of the cities under sufficient pressure to permit its being used as a power to drive printing-presses, elevators, and light machinery generally. I stated that the greater safety of life and property consequent upon the abandonment of the numberless small steam boilers in our warehouses, stores, and other buildings, would alone make this plan worthy of consideration. That I was well-advised in the statement is proved by the fact that the great Boston fire originated from the furnace of one of such boilers. The old adage that "prevention is better than cure" should be kept in mind in all our arrangements to take care of fires, and, while I decidedly favor the Holly system of water-works advocated recently in your columns, it must be clear that if that or a similar system can be carried out so that, while affording protection against the spreading of fires, it will diminish the chances of their origin, and at the same time be more or less self-supporting, it will be of great advantage to the city. I don't, of course, pretend that such a mode of supplying power will be absolutely economical in all cases, but it will be so where only small power and for intermittent use shall be required. And as, in case the city shall adopt any system like the Holly, it will have to keep a constant pressure in the water pipes and maintain the pumps in readiness for supplying a large volume of water at that pressure, it will, I think, find it economical to supply water for driving small water engines on terms which will make them cheaper, all things considered, than the steam engines now in use.

THE QUESTION OF THE HOUR.

The pressing question, however, is not how to get a larger supply of water—for the solution of this problem will involve long time and great expense, and should, therefore, receive very careful consideration—but it is how we may prepare as speedily as possible, and with the least expense, to utilize advantageously the water we have at command. Every experienced fireman and every observant person who has watched the quenching of fires by the apparatus now in use, is aware that in large conflagrations fully three-fourths of the water delivered by our engines fails to be of service in consequence of the impossibility of bringing the streams properly to bear upon the fire; and that whenever the streams of water are well applied to fires immediately after their discovery, no large conflagrations occur.

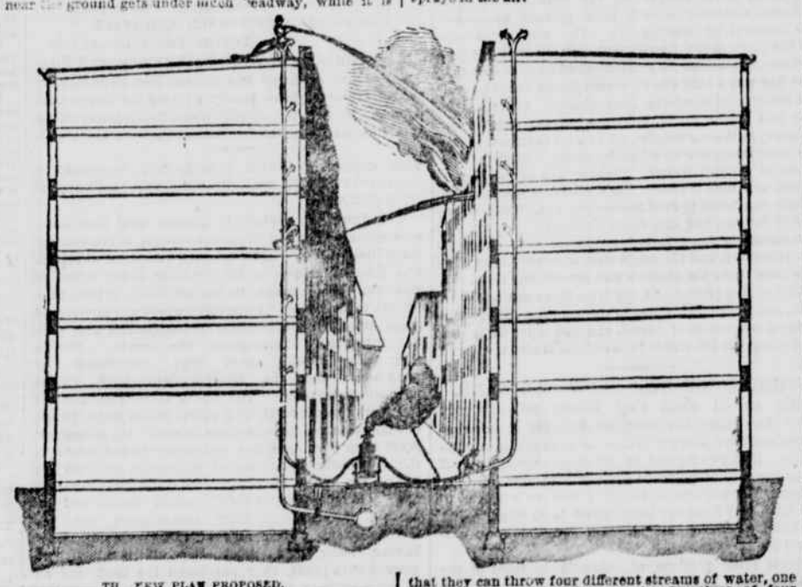
WHY FIRES DEFY CONTROL AND EXTEND.

It is very rare that a fire which is discovered burning near the ground gets under much headway, while it is equally rare that a fire at all well underway on the upper floors of our lofty buildings is brought under control till the upper portion of the building, if not the whole, is burned out. Besides the examples of the Chicago and Boston fires, numerous instances of this last experience will occur to all who have paid attention to the records of fires in this city and elsewhere, the cases of the burning of Jayne's eight-story granite building in Philadelphia, and the fire in Rand & Avery's printing-office in Boston about a week ago, being pointed examples. Such fires, when they do not spread to adjacent buildings, burn down to within reach of our fire apparatus, and only then are they quenched.

No doubt Mansard roofs, which have of late, I think, been unduly abused, are very liable to catch fire if made of wood in consequence of the amount of exposed and projecting details in their construction; but in such conflagrations as those of Chicago and Boston, the character of the roofs has not been of so much importance as their height from the ground. Since, no matter what may be the quantity of water or number of engines at command, a brisk fire in the sixth story of a modern store or warehouse is nearly uncontrollable by our present modes of working.

There are several reasons for this fact to which I will call attention before explaining my plan of overcoming the difficulty. The reaction of a stream of water delivered with force enough to enable it to do service at the tops of our highest buildings makes it impossible for firemen to work it handily; and hose of sufficient strength and size to carry the water and stand the pressure required for projecting such a stream weighs so much when filled that it is difficult to move it about. Again, in our narrower streets, in which many of our highest buildings are, it is impossible to throw a stream from the ground at such an angle as to enable it to penetrate a fifth or sixth-story window so as to reach effectively the middle, not to say the back part of one of our deep warehouses; and if the attempt is made to carry hose up through neighboring buildings, and so reach the fire, the bends and turns in it produce so much friction on the stream of water as seriously to impair its value, while the time lost in making such changes of hose gives a fire too much advantage. Carrying hose to the upper windows of buildings upon ladders, although one of their commonest experiences, is both a dangerous and very awkward operation for firemen, and it is difficult for them under such circumstances to give stream the changes of direction needed to enable the water thrown to do its work advantageously. At large fires, when firemen are chiefly employed in protecting adjacent property, the difficulty of getting water to the tops of lofty buildings is overwhelming. It cannot be thrown from the street with efficiency, and the quantity of hose used in leading water to the tops of buildings to be played from thence, soon exhausts the supply of the firemen and leaves them powerless. Hose carriages carry only a few hundred feet of hose each, and it will be apparent that the circle described by a large fire will soon exhaust all that our firemen are provided with especially, when, as not unfrequently occurs, they have to abandon long lines of it in consequence of the rapid progress of the flames preventing its removal.

The difficulty in forcing streams to a considerable hight from the ground does not arise from the lack of power in our engines, as was proven a day or two ago at the trial of one of them at the Equitable building. For, after the hose had been led to the top of that building, a stream was thrown, as stated in the reports of the experiments, 160 feet into the air; thus forcing water a total hight of 266 feet from the ground, or to a much greater hight than it could be thrown directly from the ground. The trouble in so forcing streams seems to be that, owing to the lack of cohesion of the particles of water, a stream thrown from a pipe soon loses its cylindrical solid form, and spreads into sprays, when its momentum is lost by the increased friction of these sprays in the air.



THE NEW PLAN PROPOSED.

Now the plan I propose for obviating these difficulties and securing increased efficiency for the water used by our firemen is as follows, and will be clearly understood from the accompanying wood-cut: Let there be leading pipes of metal acting as sections of metallic hose, fixed inside or upon the outside walls of every one of our lofty buildings, the lower ends of the pipes debouching from the buildings at or near the ground, and being provided with plugs to which the leading hose of our steam fire engines may be connected, and the upper ends projecting through the roofs of the buildings, and being also provided with connections for either hose of the same size as is ordinarily used on the engines, or of a smaller size, which may be readily carried about on men's shoulders. Plugs should also be affixed to these pipes in the several upper stories of the buildings, in which, or on the outside of which, the pipes are placed, and be so arranged that they may be readily reached from windows in these stories. These pipes may or may not be connected below to the water mains of the streets, and in most cases it would probably be preferred not to have them so connected, as these would then be no danger of their being burst by frost in Winter and flooding the building with water. With an arrangement like this, and with our engines placed, as they frequently are for use in small towns, so that they can throw four different streams of water, one engine could attach leading hose to the pipes of four separate buildings and enable streams of water, of sufficient size completely to protect these buildings, to be properly and economically distributed through and over them. It will also be clear that by means of such pipes firemen can effectively direct their streams from one building into and upon others, and the changes of position of their streams can be made by changing connections below and above with these pipes in one-fourth the time they can be made as now it is done. With 50 feet of light hose to each pair, firemen can work from roof to roof of adjacent buildings, and, signaling their fellows below at the engines to cooperate, can make connections with these pipes in the different buildings, as the case may require, and distribute water almost at will. It has been suggested to me by the intelligent foreman and engineer of the Vesey-st. Engine, to whom I described my plan, that the leaders in buildings for taking off rain water can be made strong enough and be fitted for my purposes; and this may naturally occur to others. But as such pipes are occasionally clogged by accumulations of ice in Winter, they cannot be easily employed. I submit this plan for the consideration of those interested in guarding against such conflagrations as have afflicted our sister cities, and shall be glad to give any further information required thereupon.

Z. S. DENNIS.

No. 58 Broadway, Nov. 23, 1872.

OBITUARY.

COL. WILLIAM MONTGOMERY STEWART.

Col. William Montgomery Stewart died of asthma on the 9th of November, at his late residence, No. 44 South B-st., Capitol Hill, Washington, D. C., at the advanced age of 74 years. He was the oldest and only surviving son of Mr. William Stewart of Georgetown, D. C., and grandson of Dr. John Stewart of Scotland, who was graduated at Edinburgh with the celebrated Dr. Bush of Philadelphia, and with him practiced medicine for a short time. The former, after his marriage with Miss Rose of Scotland, removed to Maryland where he died.

Col. Stewart was educated at Harvard University, and on returning to Washington, studied law with the late Walter Jones, an eminent lawyer, and estimable citizen. Governed rather by his father's wishes than his own inclinations at the time, Mr. Stewart continued in the legal profession, and in accordance also with his father's desire removed to Rockville, Md., where he remained several years, and along with practice of law, conducted with ability and success *The Rockville Journal*. He was elected once or twice a member of the Maryland Legislature, and served with credit. About the year 1839 he was appointed one of the commissioners to investigate the frauds in the New-York Custom-house, and was subsequently made Secretary to the United States Squadron under the command of the gallant officer Commodore Ap. Catesby Jones, but while the ships were anchored in Hampton Roads Commodore Jones was superseded in command by Wilkes, and Mr. Stewart was recalled. Again, however, in 1847 he joined Commodore Jones, and sailing to the Pacific Coast became one of the first pioneers in the settlement of California. Soon after his arrival there he resigned his position as Secretary and settled in San Francisco where he practiced law, realizing enormous fees, and was one of the framers and signers of the Constitution of California. He was appointed Judge, and nominated for Governor of the State. He acted as Russian Consul for Zitka, having accepted that unremunerative but honorable position at the instance of his kind and highly esteemed friend and relative (by marriage) the late Mr. A. Bodisco, Russian Embassador at Washington, who was universally respected and beloved.

Mr. Stewart afterward retired from the legal profession, and entered into active and prosperous business in connection with H. D. Cook, the present worthy and honored Governor of the Territory of Columbia. He returned to Washington, and was there on social terms with many of the eminent men of the day, such as Webster, Clay, Cass, and others. He was nominated about this time Controller of the Treasury in Washington, D. C. During the late rebellion he raised and commanded a noble and splendid cavalry troop, and was appointed by Gen. Scott to accompany President Buchanan, who was leaving the Capital, to the railroad depot, and escort back President Lincoln in safety to the Presidential Mansion. Afterward, upon being informed by Gen. Scott that his services would be required in defense, should Maryland invade the District of Columbia (as was seriously apprehended), he promptly declined, though ready, as he respectfully affirmed, to protect at the risk of his life the hearths and homes of Georgetown and Washington, but he would never fight Maryland. He was earnestly urged by Gen. Scott to change his mind, but he respectfully refused and, resigned his position and thus disbanded a noble cavalry company, which, being composed of volunteers, declined to serve under any other commander.

The last position held by Col. Stewart was (in June, 1865) as agent for Mr. H. D. Cook to establish National Banks in the South during the late war, having the sanction and the signature of President Lincoln permitting him to go freely through the South, and Union army, without requiring any pledge or oath, from which active and responsible duty he was recalled at the earnest solicitation of his only sister, left desolate at home by his absence, and who feared he might become a victim to the Southern climate at that dangerous season of the year. He therefore returned hastily home, and shortly after married. While in the South, Col. Stewart necessarily witnessed much of the extreme suffering of the people during the disastrous war, particularly among women of culture and refinement, which called forth all the tender sympathies of his nature. He gave, as far as was in his power, relief, and retired from such heartrending scenes with the thanks and blessings of the grateful recipients. Upon one occasion especially, being earnestly solicited by a young man for funds to enable him to return home to Washington, he immediately granted the request, his name having attracted his notice, being the son of the Rev. Mr. Howe, who immediately called upon the deceased upon his return to the District to acknowledge gratefully the loan made to his son and return the amount advanced.

A willing disposition to promote the happiness of others, fondness for children, great tenderness of disposition even toward the dumb creation, a loving and forgiving spirit, were prominent traits in Col. Stewart's character, for never was he known to have retaliated or revenged himself for injury or insult received, though he had been grievously wronged in the earliest part of his life. The fragrance of his genial spirit diffused itself throughout all his life, and from amid a large circle of friends and relatives (both in Maryland and the District), by whom he was ever cordially loved, he passed gently away, in the brightness and beauty of the Indian Summer, from the trials and sufferings of this earthly existence (varied by sunshine and shadow), to enter upon the glorious immortal inheritance in the "home of the soul," where the saints meet their Savior, to be sent forth, in accordance with his beautiful belief, on embassies of love to those who are still on earth, awaiting the summons to a better world.

Col. Stewart died as he lived, a faithful, consistent believer in Christ, and in love and charity with all, and in full membership with the Episcopal Church, his faith in an ever-watchful and overruling Providence and the angelic ministry of the Redeemer being ardent and unchanged. While he entered, as entitled by birth, education and talents, the aristocratic and refined circles of society, he ever exhibited the kind feelings and courtesy of a perfect gentleman, and was a highly cultured and agreeable companion, ever ready to promote and unite in all innocent recreations, especially with the young and those assembled to manifest their faith and love by adorning God's holy sanctuary to welcome the advent of their Lord and Savior, as the members of St. John's and Christ Churches in Georgetown and St. Albans can testify. He was buried in the beautiful cemetery of Rock Creek Parish, Washington County, D. C., by the side of his beloved parents, devoted eldest sister, and little brothers and sisters, united by one faith, one baptism, one Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and forming one holy communion in Heaven.

It is pleasing to learn that the only surviving sister of the deceased (so an afflicted invalid since November, '71,) has realized a happy home (as a welcome boarding inmate) with the loving Sisterhood of St. John's Church, Washington, D. C., who testified their love and sympathy for her in her bitter hour of trial and bereavement by uniting with the wife of the deceased so beautifully and touchingly in those last sad, loving duties to the memory of her only brother, which feeble health alone prevented her from personally fulfilling. Thus all the circumstances connected with the death of the deceased were so beautifully blended by a loving, compassionate God, as to form through her mist of tears a bright rainbow arch of love.

THE CANAL QUESTION.

BUFFALO, Dec. 27.—*The Commercial Advertiser* publishes an exposition of an independent canal policy for the Empire State from the pen of Israel T. Hatch, taking the ground that although the benefits of the Erie Canal are national, yet the State of New-York is able to take care of her canals without taxing her own inhabitants or those of the Union, and to furnish carrying capacity to move to our metropolitan city the whole export portion of Western crops, now and hereafter, cheaper than by any other existing or projected route. He further says the only enlargement now needed is of brains and honesty in the canal administration; that the first needed step in the canal reform has been accomplished in the election of Gov. Dix; and that if vessel, propeller, and railway owners in Chicago had regulated their freight charges this year by the comparatively cheap transportation of the Erie Canal, the Western farmers would not this Winter be burning their corn for fuel.

During the Broadway fire, yesterday morning, Wm. H. Campbell was found leaving the burning building with a parcel of silver-plated table-knives. He was arrested, and on his person were found a number of skeleton keys. He was taken before Justice Ledwith, at Jefferson Market, and was held for trial....James L. Martin of the Brandreth House was held in $300 bail for trial on a charge of assaulting John K. McDonald, also of the Brandreth House.

LOCAL MISCELLANY.

IMPORTANT IMPROVEMENTS.

HUDSON RIVER RAPID TRANSIT.

A line of swift ferry-boats will soon run along the Hudson River, and, stopping at various places along the line, connect the Battery with Manhattanville, just as the boats on the East River connect Harlem with Peck-slip. Most of the members of the West Side Association are interested in the scheme, and it is understood that the stock has nearly all been taken. Three steamboats will run, under an act of the Legislature passed in 1829, incorporating the New-York Steam Transit Company, establishing a route around the island, from New-York to Spuyten Duyvil, by way of the East and North Rivers, and requesting the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund, who had jurisdiction at that time, to furnish facilities for landing at the wharves along the route. The enterprise was revived several years afterward, but the establishment of two lines on the East River and the absence of docks north of Fifty-ninth-st. on the Hudson caused the enterprise to languish a second time. It is now proposed to run boats from the Battery to Manhattanville, and the Dock Commissioners have been importuned to repair several wharves. The Commissioners have responded to the request, and it is believed that early in the Spring the line will be in operation. It is proposed to make stoppages at Canal, Twenty-third, Thirty-fourth, Forty-second, Fifty-ninth, Seventy-second, and Ninety-sixth-sts.; and, when the rocks at Kingsbridge shall have been removed and a channel opened from the Hudson to the East Rivers, to extend the route, as originally intended, around the whole city. J. J. Astor, William B. Martin, J. Q. Jones, S. E. Church, and others are interested in the enterprise.

RIVERSIDE PARK AND BROADWAY WIDENING.

The decision of the Court of Appeals to the effect that in matters involving questions of finance alone, the General Term of the Supreme Court is the appellate court, remits the Riverside Park matter to the jurisdiction of Commissioner Van Nort, who, as in the case of the Broadway widening, will take immediate steps to complete the enterprise. It is stated, however, on good authority, that efforts are making to induce the dissatisfied appellants to take the case into the United States Court, on the same ground that Gallagher brings his appeal in the Broadway widening case, namely, that it is unconstitutional to take property by commission or otherwise, save by a jury of 12 persons. If such an appeal is taken, however, it will not stop work on the park, as Commissioner Van Nort declares his intention of proceeding with the work in both cases. The Board of Apportionment authorized, yesterday, the issue of $2,500,000 Assessment Fund bonds, and $3,000,000 City Improvement stock, the proceeds to be appropriated for the payment of land taken for the Riverside Park. It seems to be the general desire of property-owners that no further delays shall prevent the completion of these enterprises, and the opinion is generally entertained that such an appeal as is threatened will only retard the project and make it more expensive without ultimately defeating it.

THE TWENTY-THIRD-ST. RAILWAY.

The Twenty-third-st. Cross-town Railway has been completed. For several years it has been apparent that a line was needed in this section of the city, and a bill was passed by the Legislature of 1869 granting a charter for the Twenty-third-st. road. This bill was favored by the Erie Railway Company, and the intention was to run large cars through Fifth-ave., and also to make the foot of Twenty-third-st the terminus of the Fall River line of Sound steamers. Before any action was taken, however, the projected line passed into other hands. In the last Legislature the original bill was slightly modified and amended. A company with a capital of $600,000 was formed, and Jacob Sharpe was elected President. In August last, the first rail of the new track was laid. A large force of workmen was employed, and the work was pushed forward with great vigor. The track is about two miles in length, being wholly in Twenty-third-st., and runs from the North to the East River, with no curves, and hardly a perceptible grade. The depot, stable, and offices of the Company will be at the foot of West Twenty-third-st. The building will be constructed of brick, three stories in hight, and will cover a lot about 225 feet in length by 100 feet in width. The ground floor is to be used as a depot and will contain the Company's offices. The stables of the Company will occupy the second floor, and are airy and convenient. Shafts for light and ventilation are numerous, and can also be used for lowering hay from the third to the second story. The upper floor of the building will be used entirely for storing the hay and grain required in the stables. The entire arrangement of the building seems complete in every particular. Excellent facilities are provided for draining.

The cars on this line are the smallest of any in use in the city, seating only 16 passengers. They are much lighter than the ordinary car, and can be easily drawn by a single horse. Only one man is required to manage the car, the services of a conductor being dispensed with. In order to guard against dishonesty, passengers are expected to deposit the exact fare in a box provided for that purpose. There are 26 cars, and the round trip consumes about 40 minutes. Each car can easily make 16 trips a day. A patent turn-table at either end of the route reverses the cars.

HOLIDAY ATTRACTIONS AT SCHUYLER, HARTLEY & GRAHAM'S.

BEAUTIFUL FANCY GOODS—CAMEOS AND BRONZES—CLOCKS AND WATCHES—WHAT MAY BE SEEN AT NOS. 20 AND 22 JOHN-ST.

A jovial but philosophic French writer once gave the following advice to a disconsolate masculine friend: "My good fellow, you must oppose the umbrella of indifference to the storms of this life, and maintain the trowsers of your melancholy present with the braces of a more genial future." This bit of imagery made so great an impression that it will perhaps apply in the present case, irrespective of sex, when one, defying atmospheric changes and tramping through snow, visits the mysterious precincts of John-st., where the bewildering multiplicity of goods displayed would have driven wild the pretty Dutch maidens who used to listen there to heavy lovers' sighs wafted all the way down to the Battery. Away we his from the surging crowd of Broadway, down side streets where the wreaths and garlands make one recline "Tiny Tim's" "It's always Christmas!" into John-st. to our present destination. Here are assortments of fancy articles quite as bewildering as any in more fashionable precincts. One of the most exquisite developments of foreign art consists in elegant enameling upon porcelain. Here are the most captivating studies from mythology; Bacchus reeling in absurd tipsyness, wreathed in vine leaves and enveloped in tangled vines by merry chubby boon companions; Pucks, dimpled Cupids and Ariels floating through delicately tinted clouds, or swinging in airy grape vines, crowned with flowers; Andromedas and Hebes; Venus in captivating beauty, and Minerva severe in purpose. All of these lovely paintings are set in rings, pendants, lockets, pins, bracelets and ear-rings. Here, too, are crosses of onyx, and of gold, elegantly set in diamonds, and finely chased and engraved. Nor must the cameos and intaglios be forgotten. These represent historical as well as mythological studies, including Cræsus, Atalanta, Achilles, and dead Patroclus; Hector, Priam, Hero, and Leander, with many more of equal interest. The cameo rings are made mostly for gentlemen, but for ladies they are equally beautiful in exquisite enamel painting and set with pearls and diamonds. Sleeve studs are here in an immense variety of styles, besides pearls in long necklaces, beautiful bracelets, pale Neapolitan coral elegantly carved, antique clasps and buckles and pins of oxydized silver, and every variety of fancy jewelry, inexpensive and guaranteed to last at least as long as the fashion. For holiday gifts, few things give so much pleasure as fans, and, in fact, a lady was never known to possess too many of these coquettish appliances of fascination. Here are fans of all descriptions; Russ