known families. I get so much a page for them. I have traced the ancestry of Washington back to King Odin, the founder of Scandinavia, B. C. 70. I found that Hamlet's father was never King of Denmark but of Jutland, an independent monarchy. I have traced Queen Victoria's family back through 135 generations."

"But what of New-York families?"

"I have succeeded in tracing Charles O'Conor's family back to the time of Adam. I have published a book for him, also for the Pierreponts and others."

"What is the Doomsday Book?"

"That is to keep the records of families. There it is." And a large book lying on the floor covered with bundles of papers, was pointed out.

"The institution is incorporated under the Manufacturer's Act, I believe?" said the reporter.

"Yes," replied Mr. Welles, hesitatingly. "It is incorporated as a genealogical registry, to print and publish books relative to the subject."

"And you have a board of trustees who elect the regents and life members?"

"Yes."

"Have they met recently?"

"Well, no."

"Will you give me the names?"

"Erastus Corning, of Albany, was one."

"But he is dead," said the reporter. "Cannot you tell me of some of those that are alive?"

Mr. Welles did not care to give any names, but he finally remarked that the Hon. Levi P. Morton, and George Bliss, of Morton, Bliss & Co., were stockholders.

He did not care apparently to give any further information on this subject, but remarked, "Each member is presented with a large illuminated framed certificate with the sizable autographs of life members and his coat of arms."

"I hope if you are going to publish anything in THE TRIBUNE about the college," Mr. Welles added as the reporter took up his hat to go, "that you will let me see it first. There are some newspaper men among the college members, but none from THE TRIBUNE office. I tried to get Mr. Greeley to join but he never took any interest in such things."

USING NAMES WITHOUT AUTHORITY.

The reporter next called at the banking house of Morton, Bliss & Co. "You are a stockholder of the American College for Genealogical Registry and Heraldry, I am told," said the reporter to Mr. Bliss.

"If I am a stockholder I didn't know it," was the reply.

"Mr. Welles says that you and Mr. Morton are stockholders."

"Mr. Morton is absent. As for myself I have not a favorable opinion of Mr. Welles, and he has no right to refer to me in any way."

The reporter next called on a well-known lawyer, whose name appears among Mr. Welles's list of regents and life members. In answer to inquiries on the subject he said: "Yes, I am a life member. I am sorry to say, I never spent $65 in a more ridiculous manner."

"The advertised price is only $50," remarked the reporter.

"It cost me $65. I will tell you all about it, but don't publish my name, because I don't want to be made an of. I made an investigation with the intention of exposing the fraud. Mr. Welles's system is a complete one. His circulars are very attractive and very deceptive in appearance. The College of Heraldry, so called, is incorporated as a manufacturing concern under a different title. With attractive letter-heads, and signing himself as president, and also giving the secretary's name, Mr. Welles has written to prominent men, stating that the Board of Trustees had elected them honorary members. Without knowing anything about the concern these gentlemen have written letters in reply thanking the college for the compliment. These letters have been published either in part or in whole as commendatory of the institution. Then another set of men were informed in a similar manner that they had been elected to the Council of Regents to fill vacancies, as a general thing caused by the deaths of certain prominent persons whose names are given. They are told that the position involves only voluntary attention and no personal responsibility. Section the names of such prominent persons as President Hayes, General Garfield, Ex-Governor Dix, Secretary Evarts, Senator Conkling, Ex-Governor Tilden, Hamilton Fish, and other honorary members connected with the institution, she feeling flattered at being elected in place of the prominent person who has just died, they accept. They are induced in a similar manner to become life members, and contribute their $50, as a general thing, without knowing really anything of the institution. Once fairly started, and with the names of so many honorable citizens prominently advertised in connection with the alleged college, it has been an easy matter for Mr. Welles to keep adding new members, and thus make a very comfortable living out of it."

"Has he any real trustees?"

"Well, I am a regent and a life member, and I have never been able to find any such thing as a trustee or stockholder."

"How did you come to pay $65?"

"Mr. Welles has had men canvassing for him. In that way he has got a good many members. I was informed that I had been elected in place of William B. Ogden. John K. Stone, who represented Mr. Welles, induced me to accept the alleged honor. Soon after Mr. Stone called on me again and said he was in need of funds, and asked me to pay him $15, when he was his commission. I did so, but afterward Mr. Welles came to my house at night and called on my wife to collect the $50, and said that Stone was not authorized to collect for him. As I had signed the acceptance I was legally bound to pay Welles $50, which I did. After some weeks I wrote to him asking why he did not send the certificate with the coat of arms of my family upon it. I happened to know that in a past generation the family did have a coat of arms. He wrote back that his correspondent was then in Norway hunting up some family records, but as soon as he returned he would follow the matter up. Later he replied in answer to another note that after search he was reluctantly compelled to inform me that my family did not have and was not entitled to a coat of arms, although at that very time I had received from a relative in Europe the family coat of arms. You see the whole thing is carefully worked up to play on the vanity of men, and if they attempt to expose it they expose themselves which they prefer not to do. The thing is so ridiculous that I sometimes laugh at my own folly. Mr. Welles has a certificate of membership containing autographs of life-members. It is so full that he cannot put another name on it. But I am told by a former assistant that he will rub off the name of some person who is dead and then strike off a copy with this one vacant place. He will take that to some person, show him the vacancy, and with the usual letters he will get him to join and pay the fifty dollars. He will then strike off a copy, filling up the blank space with the autograph of the new-comer and forward it to him framed. And thus he can continue the work indefinitely."

SPECIMEN LETTERS FROM PRESIDENT WELLES.

In illustration of the plan above described the following letters are instructive:

G. NEVILLE CROZIER, Secretary. ALBERT WELLES, President.
THE AMERICAN COLLEGE FOR GENEALOGICAL REGISTRY AND HERALDRY, No. 67 University-place, New-York, Dec. 18, 1880.
Cut of College Building.

To ——

DEAR SIR: Several of our friends—members of our "Council of Regents"—have been called away. General Dix succeeded Mayor Havemeyer, Thurlow Weed to Hon. James W. Beekman, Hon. Noah Davis to Hon. Moses H. Grinnell, General Winfield Scott Hancock to William Cullen Bryant. As you have been proposed to unite our "Council of Regents," we trust that this institution will be honored by your acceptance, and that you will take the place of the late Valentine G. Hall, inasmuch as the position involves only voluntary attention and no personal responsibility. Very truly yours
ALBERT WELLES, president.

Inclosed in the envelope with this letter were the circulars with commendatory letters, names of regents, life members, etc., and also another letter with the same date, etc., addressed to the same man, which read as follows.

DEAR SIR: If agreeable please append your autograph to the following acceptance in the manner you desire to have it lithographed for our "Memorial Certificates of Life Membership." Very truly yours.
ALBERT WELLES, President.

[Acceptance.]

SIR: In compliance with your invitation I hereby consent to unite with the "Council of Regents" and become a "Life Member" of above-named institution in place and stead of the late Valentine G. Hall.

*To* ALBERT WELLES, *President.*

Although Mr. Welles's letter nowhere informs the recipient that he would be called upon to pay $50 as a life member, yet that would have been the effect of his signing the acceptance, a fact he could not altogether plead ignorance of as the small type circular inclosed explained the fact. W. N. Wilmer, a lawyer of this city, received letters similar to the above, informing him that he had been elected a regent and life member in place of the late Chief-Judge Church. He was warned by the experience of an associate and did not accept. Another lawyer, who was also elected in place of Chief-Judge Church, did join, however. When a gentleman accepted the "honor" and did not notice that it involved a payment of $50 he was gently reminded of the fact.

INQUIRIES AMONG LIFE MEMBERS.

The following letter is one of many:

ALBERT WELLES, *esq., Pres't Am. College for Genealogical Registry, etc.:*

SIR: In compliance with your invitation, I hereby consent to unite with the "Council of Regents" and become a life member of the above-named institution. Herewith find photograph asked for, also my signature in full. The crest of my family as used by them in Ireland I will procure and send to you.

I will do myself the pleasure of calling personally at an early date. Very truly yours, WILLIAM R. GRACE.
*New-York*, Oct. 16, 1879.

A TRIBUNE reporter called on Mayor Grace to ascertain if he knew anything of the college.

"I know nothing about it," replied the Mayor. "I gave $50 for membership on the recommendation of my friend James D. Fish, but I have not a high opinion of the institution."

Mr. Fish, who is president of the Marine Bank, and who is advertised as a regent and life member, was asked if he could throw some light on the subject.

"I would give you the information," he replied, "but I don't know anything about the concern further than that I paid $50 to join it."

"But Mayor Grace says you recommended it?"

"Oh, now that's a mistake. They may have used my name to induce him to join, but I knew nothing of it. I saw his name there and wondered how they got him into it."

"Then you are not an officer of the institution?"

"I was told that I had been elected a regent, anchem or something of that kind. That is all I know about it. But you had better go and see Mr. Welles. He is a good talker and will tell you all you want to know and probably a good deal more."

Surrogate Calvin, whose name is among the regents and life-members, was approached on the subject.

"I was told," he said, "that I had been elected a regent, or something of that kind, in place of Mr. Aspinwall, the shipping merchant, who died some time ago, and, not having time to investigate the matter, I sent my $50. I am persuaded that I made a permanent investment."

"What do you get in return?"

"Ah, that's the question! I am inclined to think there is some old fossil up there that is making a pretty good thing of it. I was asked to send a short sketch of my family history, but I don't care to trace it back. I might come out like the man whose boasted line ended in a loop of stronger twine that plagued some worthy relation. But you needn't tell the public I am a member."

"Mr. Welles has done that for you."

"Then I want the public to know that if I had had time to investigate I should not have joined. I guess other members are in the same fix."

William Alexander Smith, the banker, of No. 40 Wall-st., was asked how he happened to join.

"I was told that I had been elected a regent in place of some friend who had died. I saw that a number of my friends were members, and I thought it was all right; so I paid my $50. I think, however, it is more a benefit to Mr. Welles than anybody else. He seems to have a kind of monomania for heraldry."

One of the best known corporation lawyers in the city was asked if he knew anything of the institution of which he is a regent and life member.

"Oh, now, don't mention my name in connection with the subject," he said. "I know nothing whatever of the institution."

"But your name appears among the Regents?"

"Well, it occurred in this way. One day a gentlemanly appearing man came in here and told me that the friends of Mr. Chauncey, who had recently died, wanted me to accept the vacancy in the Board of Regents caused by his death. Mr. Chauncey was a friend of mine, and the persons who were said to want me to take the place were also friends whom I felt glad to oblige. I entrusted without investigation, as I saw the names of Royal Phelps and others connected with the institution, and I paid my $50. I confess it was a little foolish."

"That includes me," "John Hoey," remarked a gentleman present. "He was asked if he had a coat-of-arms, and on replying no, the gentleman urged him to get one, stating that no person could expect to take a place in society now without one. Mr. Hoey listened and then replied, 'My father was a kangaroo.' 'Indeed, I am glad to hear it,' said the gentleman, and his face brightened up; 'I did not know that. Where was he knighted?' 'Down in the mill,' said Mr. Hoey. 'He was a night-watchman.' Mr. Hoey was not urged further to subscribe for a coat-of-arms."

"I am seeking information about a college of which you are a regent," remarked the reporter to Aaron J. Vanderpoel, the well-known lawyer; "the College of Heraldry."

"Oh, don't mention it," he said. "I am no regent."

"But you are so advertised, and also as a life member."

"Well, I believe I did pay a man who came bothering me about the thing $10 or $15. But that was all. I think, though I know I got a certificate of life membership. I remember chatting of my brother, Dr. Vanderpoel, who was Health Officer, because he paid $50 to join. I don't know anything about the concern."

John K. Stone, who was formerly assistant secretary of the college, and now a lawyer, was asked what his duties were.

"Principally canvassing for life members," he replied. "I was to have $15 commission on each person I got to join. I got a great many prominent persons to join."

"Did you ever know of a meeting of the trustees?"

"I never knew anything more than what Mr. Welles said. I don't think there are any one himself."

The name of "C. Neville Crozier," the name of the present secretary, could not be found in the Directory. In answer to inquiries, the reporter was told that there was no such person living in the city.

## *THE NEW-JERSEY LEGISLATURE.*

A REVIEW OF SOME OF THE MEASURES THAT AWAIT ACTION—THE POWER AND PRIVILEGES OF RAILROAD COMPANIES—BRIGADE OF VETERANS PROPOSED.

[FROM THE REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]

TRENTON, N. J., Feb. 6.—It will be the duty of the Legislature this week to act upon two corporation measures of considerable interest, both of them introduced by United States Senator-elect Sewell. One provides that railroad companies may erect along their own lines, along their leased lines and along such others as may agree, such telegraph poles and wires as they may need for the transaction of general telegraphic business. They are to have the privilege of connecting with business centres in cities, and are not to charge more than 25 cents for each message of ten words, or more than 1 cent for each additional word, if the destination is within the circuit controlled by the company. The object of this bill is variously construed, but its main point is to give New-Jersey people the opportunity to combat monopoly within a prescribed area, at least, and to enable the railroads to conduct their own telegraph business. It is rumored, on apparently good authority, that should the measure pass the Legislature the Pennsylvania Railroad Company will probably take the initiative in the proposed combination of railroad and telegraph. Should equal authority be granted in other States, an independent telegraphic line of indefinitely great extent and capital could be maintained.

The other measure proposed by General Sewell gives railroad companies powers which seem to be exceptionally great in the matter of condemning lands for depot and warehouse purposes in cities, enabling commissioners to condemn lands and sell them with no property restriction, and with no regard to the will of the owner. When the measure came on second reading in the Senate, Mr. Sewell offered an amendment, which was adopted, that all property so taken should pay full local tax, any agreement, charter or previous act to the contrary notwithstanding. In presenting this amendment Mr. Sewell said that he thought it was about time that corporations should pay local taxes, as well as the ordinary owner of real estate. The literature may be deemed significant in view of the attempts that are being made to secure to Jersey City the tax on the Pennsylvania Railroad Company's property there, which is now exempt from local taxation. This property pays a special state tax, and it is the hope of the Jersey City people to have it taxed locally also. The consent of the company would be necessary to a change from the present system, and it is not improbable that that consent may ultimately be obtained.

President Hobart, of the Senate, will probably ask the Senate to consider the resolution providing for biennial sessions of the Legislature within a few days. Its discussion is certain to be among the most interesting of the session, especially as the opinions of members seem somewhat unformed as yet. The example of Texas in the Senate is urged in its favor, and probably the strongest special point made against it is that its adoption would compel the Legislature to abstain from further constitutional amendment for five years, and many believe that several immediate changes are necessary.

Of the political bills which must be considered this session neither the reapportionment nor the redistricting bill has yet been introduced. The single political measure that is now before the Legislature worthy of the dignity of the name is the bill providing that the polls shall open at 7 a. m. on election day, and close at sunset instead of at 7 p. m. as at present. The Republicans are strongly in favor of the bill, both to prevent fraud and or greater convenience. The Democrats have assumed an attitude of opposition, basing it on the false assumption that it will disfranchise the voters of some working-men. As election day is a legal holiday, on which no one can be forced to work, the claim is not good.

A bill is before the Assembly proposing to establish a "reserve brigade of veterans of the war for the Union," and provides that 2 field officers of the Grand Army of the Republic may form companies, and are to be granted certain privileges, while amenable to the rules of the National Guard as a whole. There is to be a brigade commander, and the uniform will differ from that of the ordinary militia. The measure is supported by prominent military men.

## *EXTENSIVE FLOODS.*

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 4.—Later advices report that Marysville has not been flooded. Several times to-day the Sacramento and American Rivers were on a level with the levees around the city, but by bulkheading and and the use of sand bags the overflow was stayed, and all danger is believed to be over at Sacramento. That city and Marysville are the only towns of any consequence in a district of 100 miles long and forty miles wide that have not been overflowed. This evening telegrams report rain only in the southern portion of the State. If fair weather continues there will be no further damage, as the rivers are falling so fast that the rise coming from the mountains cannot do any further injury.

A dispatch from Courtland says: "At 3:30 p. m. today the Sacramento River broke over the levee and flooded this town and the adjacent country. The destruction of property was very great. Dispatches say that the towns of Oroville and Riggs, in Butte County, are overflowed."

PUEBLO, Col., Feb. 5.—The Purgatory River is flooded worse than ever known. At Las Animas about four miles of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe track are covered by about three feet of water. No Eastern mails have been received for two days, and there is no telling when they will get through.

## *ARMY INTELLIGENCE.*

WASHINGTON, Feb. 6.—By direction of the Secretary of War, Second-Lieutenant Edward S. Farrow, 21st Infantry, has been ordered to proceed from Laurel, Del., to West Point, N. Y., and report in person to the Commanding General, Department of West Point, for assignment to duty at the United States Military Academy, to relieve Second-Lieutenant William H. Collins, 5th Artillery, who has served at the Academy the full term of four years. Upon being relieved, Lieutenant Collins will proceed to join his battery at St. Augustine, Florida.

Leave of absence for one year, to take effect when his services can be spared, has been granted First-Lieutenant C. E. Hargous, 5th Infantry.

The general court-martial appointed to meet at Fort Wingate, Va., by special orders of the 19th ult., has been dissolved.

Major-General J. M. Schofield, in a general order issued at the Headquarters Military Division of the Gulf, announces the following as officers of his staff: Major Thomas M. Vincent, Adjutant-General; Captain William H. Wherry, 6th Infantry, Aide-de-Camp; First-Lieutenant Edward E. Wood, 8th Cavalry, Aide-de-Camp, and First-Lieutenant Charles B. Schofield, 2d Cavalry, Aide-de-Camp. The other staff officers will be announced hereafter.

## *AN ALABAMA CLERGYMAN SHOT.*

CINCINNATI, Feb. 6.—At Mountain Home, Ala., near Muscle Shoals, last Thursday, Robert Letson shot William Davidson and the Rev. J. M. Pickens, killing the latter instantly. Letson first assaulted Davidson on the public road, when Mr. Pickens interfered to prevent bloodshed. Letson after shooting Davidson turned and deliberately shot Mr. Pickens. Davidson may not recover. Mr. Pickens was a minister of the Campbellite Church, well educated and highly respected. He was the Greenback candidate for Governor at the November election.

## *THREE FREIGHT CARS WRECKED.*

NEW-BRUNSWICK, N. J., Feb. 6.—A freight train ran into another one at 4 o'clock this morning in East New-Brunswick. Three cars were wrecked. The cause of the collision was the neglect of the flagman to warn the approaching train.

## POLITICAL AFFAIRS.

### MR. OLIVER READY TO WEAR IT OUT.

A BRIEF CHAT WITH THE CAMERON CANDIDATE FOR SENATOR.

Henry W. Oliver, the candidate of the Cameron Republicans for United States Senator from Pennsylvania, was seen yesterday at the Fifth Avenue Hotel by a TRIBUNE reporter. When asked if the determined contest at Harrisburg had extended outside of political circles he laughingly replied:

"Oh, no indeed. We are all on quite friendly terms, and while the contest has been perhaps the most stubborn one in the annals of Pennsylvania politics, I think there has been very good feeling on the whole."

"Is the situation materially changed?"

"No; I do not think so. At least, that is the point which you must excuse me from discussing. As for myself, I feel perfectly confident and I believe my friends think as I do. Certainly, the way in which they have presented a bold front shows pretty plainly about how they stand."

"On what ground is the fight continued?"

Mr. Oliver hesitated, as if treading on delicate ground, but said finally: "Well, it has got to that point where it is a question of principle and precedent whether the majority shall rule or not. Personally, I may say that I did not seek the nomination, but my friends supported me and I received the indorsement of my county. If I had had a desire for political honor, it is certainly reasonable to suppose that I should have sought the office before. We cannot afford to be beaten, because it would put a much too dangerous precedent on record."

"Are not the members getting restless?"

"No, I do not think so. The smallness of the vote yesterday was due to the fact that all the city members go home for Sunday."

"Will not the Democrats do something to force the issue?"

"I do not think that is at all likely. We shall just have to stay until we wear it out. As to when there is likely to be something accomplished I cannot tell, because, as yet, I think we are just about where we were some time ago."

### PUBLIC BUSINESS INTERFERED WITH.

EFFECT OF THE FAILURE OF THE ALDERMEN TO ORGANIZE.

The failure of the Board of Aldermen in this city to effect an organization has had no serious effects as yet, but if it is continued much longer will much embarrass one or more of the departments. About this time the Commissioner of Public Works and his assistants are engaged annually in preparing a list of the streets and avenues which need to be paved or repaved, and authority for doing this must be granted by the Common Council and approved by the Mayor. The specifications and contracts are long and require time to prepare, and the proposals must be advertised for ten days before the bids can be opened. Contractors can always make more favorable terms for material early in the season than later, and this, of course, is to the advantage of the city, for the bids for the performance of the work are then lower.

Commissioner Thompson said Saturday to a TRIBUNE reporter:

"I am anxious to get ready for proposals for street paving and repairing. No harm has been done as yet. Of course it would be useless to think of paving or repairing the streets in their present condition. But there is a great deal of preliminary work to be done. I have made up in good part the list of streets which I think should be paved. This will be sent to the Committee on Public Works of the Board of Aldermen. The members and others will suggest changes, and this will take time. Even after the Mayor and Aldermen have given the necessary authority there will be more time consumed in advertising, opening bids, and awarding the contracts. Should the Board not organize during the present month it would cause no very serious inconvenience."

The President of the Aldermen, by virtue of his office, is a member of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment. There are certain measures which come before the Board that require a concurrent vote for their passage. The most important of these are the estimates, but these do not come up until late in the year. Corporation Counsel Whitney recently gave an opinion that a majority vote only was needed in the Board of Apportionment for the transaction of certain business, but members are doubtful of their powers and prefer to do nothing in a case may involve the city in litigation. This is the reason why only one meeting has been held by the Board. Meanwhile the failure of the Aldermen to elect a president is causing annoyance in the Finance Department. The Board of Apportionment has not authorized the issuance of revenue bonds, and the result is that several contractors are unpaid. Should the Board fail to authorize the issue of any revenue bonds during the present month, very serious inconvenience would follow in the Finance and other departments.

### DEMOCRATIC REORGANIZATION.

PROBABLE OUTCOME OF THE PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS—THE STATE COMMITTEE NOT TO INTERFERE.

The recent circular letter of the sub-committee of twenty-one of the Committee of One Hundred was addressed to all the Democratic factions in the city. This letter asked each body receiving it to appoint a committee to confer with the sub-committee of twenty-one as to the best method of organizing the Democratic party in the city so as to secure a union. The letter inquired whether, if the Committee of One Hundred should adopt a satisfactory plan for holding primary and other meetings, the faction receiving the circular would be willing to abandon its Assembly District committees. Tammany Hall has replied, scornfully rejecting the offer, and in effect declaring that it alone can be considered the legitimate Democratic organization of this city. This reply was not unexpected by the committee to which it was addressed. Indeed, it was quite doubtful whether the committee would have been pleased at the reception of any other answer.

The Cooper-Thompson-Power faction has at present no central body. It is organized by Assembly Districts only, and each district association is in theory independent of the others. A copy of the circular letter was therefore sent to each. A committee of one from each Assembly District organization will meet to-day at the Westminster Hotel to-day at 4:30 p. m., to consider the draft of a letter in reply to that sent by the sub-committee of twenty-one. It will be presented by Mr. Thompson, but is understood to be the joint production of the leaders of that faction. It will favor the propositions of the Committee of One Hundred. This movement will probably end in the consolidation of all the Democratic factions opposed to John Kelly and Tammany Hall. The skirmishing thus far has been more for the sake of leadership than with any idea that the factions opposed to Tammany would not come together. It is evident to all intelligent Democrats that Tammany Hall, in spite of its reverses, is still a strong and compact body, and something besides talk and resolutions is needed to keep it in the background.

The primaries held by the Cooper-Thompson-Power faction in December showed that it had a large following. Since then the Assembly District organizations have been carefully looked after. Considerable patronage has been distributed among the faithful, and promises of good things to come have not been wanting. When the proposed organization is effected it will be found that this faction will be dormant, although room will doubtless be made in the Assembly District and other committees for all who have been active in the work of reorganization.

The Committee of One Hundred will meet Wednesday evening at its headquarters, No. 21 West Twenty-fourth-st. Answers will then have been received from all the Democratic factions, and the work of reorganization will be begun in earnest. The Democratic State Committee will decline to interfere in this work. Several of the members are of the opinion that it would only cause harm to the party at large to interfere with what is called a local quarrel. Both Tammany and its opponents are represented in the State Committee, and have strong friends among the country members, and any interference might prove disastrous.

"The result of the whole thing," said a prominent Democrat yesterday, "will be two organizations—Tammany and Anti-Tammany. Several of those who were prominent in Irving Hall during the last few years, including Benjamin Wood, John Fox and Sheriff Howe, will be found in Tammany Hall, while Richard J. Gerrisson, Wm. A. Boyd, and possibly E. D. Gale, will be found in the ranks of the other. As soon as a man gets out of one organization he is thrusting darts into the other. And as long as the Democratic vote is as large as it now is in this city, there will be two strong Democratic organizations. There are not offices enough to go around. Even Tweed found this to be the case. As soon as a 'worker' thinks that he has been ill-treated or neglected in one organization he naturally gravitates to the other. The indications at point to a lively year politically, even should no charter ears the Legislature, of which I am by no means certain."

### PREFERRING TO BE INDEPENDENT.

A meeting of the German-American Independent Citizens' Association was held Friday evening at No. 520 East Fifteenth-st. to prepare an answer to the communication recently received from Abram S. Hewitt, chairman of the Committee of One Hundred, inviting the association to join in Democratic reorganization. After a long debate it was decided not to accept the invitation.

### WARRING BROOKLYN REPUBLICANS.

The February meeting of the Kings County Republican General Committee, postponed last Tuesday by reason of inability to get in the hall hired by the committee, will be held this evening in Fraternity Hall, at Fulton-st. and Gallatin-place, Brooklyn. The unsettled contest over the control of the committee, which has taken the shape of a parliamentary fight between the two factions, will make the meeting one of unusual interest, and a full attendance of the members is expected. Both sides claim that the votes of seventy members, which constitute a majority, can be controlled by them.

### STATEN ISLAND TOWN NOMINATIONS.

The following candidates will be voted for at the town elections to be held in the townships of Richmond County to-morrow:

*Castleton*—Supervisor, W. E. Alexander (Rep.), Robert Moore (Dem.); Collector, Mark Hartley (Rep.), Thomas Kenny (Dem.); Justice of the Peace, Lester W. Clark (Rep.), John Seaton (Dem.)

*Northfield*—Supervisor, C. B. White (Rep.), Abram Cocheron (Dem.); Collector, Henry L. Simonson (Rep.), Robert Brown (Dem.); Justice of the Peace, Alfred Z. Ross (Rep.), Clarence M. Johnson (Dem.)

*Middletown*—Supervisor, George Beechtel (Dem.), also supported by the Republicans; Collector, Henry C. Jones (Rep.), Michael Brennan (Dem.); Justice of the Peace, Charles C. Stebbins (Rep.), Thomas Garrett (Dem.)

*Southfield*—Supervisor, Samuel Marsh (Dem.), no opponent; Collector, James Westervelt (Dem.), no opponent; Justice of the Peace, David H. Cortelyou (Dem.), no opponent.

*Westfield*—Supervisor, Michael Conklin (Rep.), Gilbert C. Dean (Dem.); Collector, Abram Shaw (Rep.), James Graham (Dem.); Justice of the Peace, Stephen J. Laforge (Rep.), Abram Winant (Dem.)

## *THE FIRE RECORD.*

### LARGE FIRE IN ROME, N. Y.

THE MUDGE BLOCK NEARLY DESTROYED—UNABLE TO OBTAIN WATER.

UTICA, N. Y., Feb. 6.—A fire broke out yesterday morning in the Mudge Block, at James and Dominick-sts., in Rome, which caused a loss estimated at $50,000. The block, a four-story brick structure, valued at $20,000, was occupied by H. M. Lawton, grocer; Aldrich Brothers, tobacco and cigars; the First National Bank; George Batencior, barber; William Rockie, Joseph Porter, Noes & Briggs and George W. Davis, law offices; L. E. Elmer, insurance office, and the American Express Company; also by Express Agent Beattie and Andrew Elmer and wife, who lived in the building. Beattie was rescued with difficulty. The engines did not reach the scene for three-quarters of an hour, and the water in the hydrants was found to be frozen. A telegram to Utica for aid was delayed until it was too late to be of service, and no railroad transportation was available in time. The losses were as follows: Dr. Kingsley's, on the Mudge block, $2,000, insurance, $8,000; Mr. Lawton, on his stock, $14,000, insurance $7,000; First National Bank, $6,000, insurance $4,000. The Aldrich Brothers had an insurance of $4,000 on their stock. The other losses were total and valuable legal papers were destroyed. Rome is in a state of much excitement over the inefficient condition of its Fire Department. The firemen did as well as they could after arriving with their defective apparatus.

### THREE ALARMS SENT OUT.

DAMAGE ESTIMATED AT OVER $20,000 IN WEST FIFTY-SEVENTH-ST.

Three alarms were sounded at 1:30 a. m. yesterday for a fire in the five-story brown stone front building at No. 402 West Fifty-seventh-st. The flames broke out in the janitor's room in the basement of the building, and quickly ascended through an elevator shaft to the top floor. The building was a flat house and on each floor a family was sleeping when the fire broke out. The inmates were aroused by a policeman who discovered the flames, and succeeded in getting out of the building unhurt by the main staircase. Some of them in their haste neglected to put on their clothes. The flames spread into the adjoining building, No. 400 West Fifty-seventh-st., an unfinished structure, seven stories high, and before the firemen could check their progress they had reduced this building to a mass of ruins.

The building of No. 402 was damaged about $5,000 by fire. Austin Corbin, the owner of the building, lived on the first floor, and his furniture was damaged $1,000. The other occupants of the building, Messrs. Walker, Creeden, Ockey and Gardiner, lost about $ 00 each in furniture and clothing. Mr. Corbin's loss was covered by insurance. The building at No. 400 was uninjured, and was damaged $1,000. The loss will be borne by the builders, Smith & Mitchell.

### ST. LOUIS STORES BURNED.

ST. LOUIS, Feb. 6.—The wholesale house of the Grecly, Burnham Grocery Company, at Second-st. and Christy-ave., was destroyed by fire last night. The fire extended across Christy-ave. to the large candy factory of O. H. Peckham & Co., which was destroyed, and the paint and oil store of Leon Blanchet, adjoining. The latter store was badly damaged.

South of the Grecly, Burnham House were S. B. Sale & Co., grocers, and Long & Hall, general storage, both of which houses were ruined. The stock of the Grecly, Burnham & Co. was valued at $2,000,000, and insured for $1,000,000. The building cost $60,000, and was insured for $15,000. It was owned by Carlos S. Greely. Sale & Co. estimate their loss at $60,000, and are insured for $40,000. Long & Hall had collections, molasses, etc., in storage, valued at $15,000; insurance not known. Leon Blanchet's loss will be large. The fire was caused by the sinking in a platform erected about midway between the floor and the ceiling of the shipping room, in the rear of the building, upon which were piled about a thousand cases of molasses. These ignited when they fell, and in two minutes the whole building was in flames.

### IN TROY, N. Y.—LOSS $25,000.

TROY, N. Y., Feb. 6.—A fire burned Isadore D. Marystone's building, No. 202 River-st., last night. The losses and insurances are as follows: Isadore Marystone, loss $15,000, insurance $10,000; R. O'Brien, saddery and harness manufacturer, loss $3,000, insurance $3,000; R. G. Cass, carriages, books and fixtures, loss $2,000, insurance $1,500.

### STEAMBOAT AND CARGO BURNED.

GALVESTON, Tex., Feb. 6.—A telegram to *the News* from Orange, Tex., says that the steamboat Bertha was burned on Friday night on the Sabine River, just above the Narrows. The boat and cargo are a total loss. Nothing was saved. The cargo and advanced charges were insured principally in the New-Orleans Insurance Association. The value of the cargo is variously estimated at from $25,000 to $100,000.

### FOUR HORSES BURNED IN EAST NEW-YORK.

A fire broke out Saturday in a barn in East New-York-ave., near the Jamaica Plank Road, in the village of East New-York, L. I. The barn was totally destroyed and four horses in it were burned. One of them was a valuable trotter. The fire extended to a house near by, causing slight damage. By the efforts of the firemen it was prevented from extending to other houses near at hand. The loss was about $5,000.

### IN BROOKLYN.

A fire occurred at 11 a. m. yesterday in the three-story brick house, No. 107 Park-ave., Brooklyn. It was caused by children playing with matches. The building, owned by Henry Elliott, was injured to the extent of $1,000. Thomas Fleming, who kept a liquor shop in the first floor, suffered a loss of $1,000. It was in the rooms occupied by his family on the third floor that the fire broke out. The loss to James Donovan, living on the second floor, was $200.

The chapel of the Classon Avenue Presbyterian Church, in Brooklyn, caught fire from a defective flue Saturday evening. The loss was estimated at $200.

## *RAILROAD INTERESTS.*

### A NEW TIME-TABLE ON LONG ISLAND.

A new time-table went into effect yesterday on the old Long Island Railroad. By the new arrangement the Long Island Road between Jamaica and Hunter's Point is abandoned except for freight and the express train that runs through to Greenport daily in addition to the mail trains. The trains that ran directly from Brooklyn and Long Island City now run to Mineola. This compels Garden City passengers to take the Hempstead Branch Road. This change may result in the A. T. Stewart estate running a branch road from Hinsdale to Garden City. It is said that the Stewart estate forfeited $82,000 to secure the accommodation of having all Long Island trains pass through Garden City and that the departure from the agreement entered into with Colonel Sharp, the late receiver, will lead to a suit.

### OPPOSING A RAILROAD SALE.

RICHMOND, Va., Feb. 6.—General William Mahone has made an application in the United States Court for leave to redeem the property of the Atlantic, Mississippi and Ohio Railroad. Judges Bond and Hughes will meet in this city on Tuesday to hear the application. The counsel of all the parties in the case will be notified accordingly. The road is advertised for sale on Thursday next, the 10th inst. Representatives of the cities of Norfolk, Lynchburg and Petersburg are expected to meet early this week and place themselves in direct communication with persons desirous of purchasing the road.

## *NEWPORT NOTES.*

NEWPORT, R. I., Feb. 5.—Newport is experiencing a winter of great severity. The harbor and bay are completely locked in with ice.

The remains of Colonel Charles Potter, who was murdered by Mexicans, will be brought here for burial.

Mrs. Van Zandt, of Brooklyn, is in town, the guest of her son, ex-Governor Van Zandt.

Mr. and Mrs. Philip Caswell, jr., have gone to Florida for the winter.

Richard Peters, Mr. Miller and Leslie Pell Clarke, of New-York, are in town.

Mrs. Walter L. Kane, of New-York, has purchased a large building site on Globe-ave.

General Vogdes and Quartermaster Foster have vacated their quarters at Fort Adams.

James R. Keene, of New-York, has rented the cottage on Narragansett-ave, which is owned by George Tiffany, brother-in-law of August Belmont, of New-York. At present Mr. Keene's family is at Hartmann's.

The house of Charles H. Russell, of New-York, is being improved.

Mrs. S. A. Gibbs, E. E. Williams and Mr. DeHone, all of New-York, have rented cottages for the coming season.

After the close of the Whittaker court-martial, one of its members, Colonel Royal T. Frank, will take command at Fort Adams in this harbor.

## THE PROBLEM OF THE WIRES.

### UNDERGROUND TELEGRAPHY DISCUSSED.

A LETTER FROM EDISON'S ASSISTANT—CIRCUITS THAT MAY AND MAY NOT BE WORKED UNDERGROUND—HOW THE AERIAL LABYRINTH COULD BE SIMPLIFIED—A NEW AND SERIOUS FACTOR OF DANGER—THE INCANDESCENT SYSTEM OF ELECTRIC ILLUMINATION.

*To the Editor of The Tribune.*

SIR: In an editorial in THE SUNDAY TRIBUNE of yesterday, on the subject of Overhead versus Underground telegraph wires, there was given expression to a truth so palpable as scarcely to need other than the suggestion involved in the title, viz.: "One Lesson of the Storm." Every New-Yorker would promptly make the application. There is one point, however, which I have as yet failed to see any allusion to in the columns of the daily journals. It is this: Is it practicable to put the wires underground? I have observed that in the discussion of the subject no wise discrimination between the practicable and the impracticable is had. Before anything can be accomplished toward effecting so great an innovation as the general introduction of an underground system in this country would be account must be taken of the difference of conditions existing in Europe and America, and whether in the present state of the art it is at all feasible to operate all modern electrical apparatus upon buried wires.

In view of the importance of this question, it has occurred to me that THE TRIBUNE could at the moment confer no greater benefit upon the public than by inviting an expression of opinion from the scientific and practical men of the profession as to what extent underground may be substituted for overhead wires, without the aid of further invention and without detriment to their efficiency. In order to give form to such discussion, I venture herein to give my views as to where the discriminating line should be drawn and my reason therefor. If it shall appear that they are not gainsayed by competent authority, or refuted by superior argument, the public will then have a basis on which effectively to coerce the reluctant monopolies or the obstructive law-makers. Until this question has been exhausted, any agitation of the matter will simply be met by the general rejoinder that to place the wires underground would result in a serious reduction of their effective carrying capacity.

TWO CLASSES OF ELECTRIC CIRCUITS.

Among the electrical circuits which may without detriment be immediately placed underground are the following: Fire and police; private burglar-alarm; gold and stock quotations; commercial news; short railroad and private lines; district messenger service; time service; electric light; and any and all circuits the confines of which are within a radius of fifty miles of the City Hall, excepting only through or long circuits of the telegraph companies and telephone lines. These latter are the only circuits which would suffer by the change, being subject to the evil effects of static induction as between themselves and the earth, the practical effect of which is to limit their effective capacity to carry messages. In the case of the telegraphic circuits it appears in the shape of a retardation of the signals, and a consequent limiting of the capacity of duplex, quadruplex, automatic and other multiple or high speed apparatus. In the case of the telephone circuits it appears in the form of indistinctness, and a reproduction of the conversation had upon one wire, on the other wires in close proximity thereto; this being in no wise a matter of current escape the relative degree of insulation (by the interposition of non-conducting material) is not a factor in the case. This evil of static induction reaches its maximum when the wires are brought into close pro