

LIGHT ON THE DOCK BOARD.

AN EXTRAORDINARY STATE OF AFFAIRS.

THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON CITIES STILL PURSUING ITS INVESTIGATION.

The State senate committee on cities yesterday continued its investigation of the dock board. The committee's object is to get a fair statement of the extraordinary condition of affairs which has existed in New York, in these many years, in regard to the relations of the city to the river-front interests.

The great new plan of 1871 was to give the city for its improvement the entire river frontage of Manhattan Island. Mr. Dimock stated that he was a healthy man of forty-eight years of age, but that he had not the least expectation of living to see that plan carried out. Then Mr. Boardman and he had a little talk about the middle and the dockboard which hamper the dock department and Mr. Boardman asked him to present a solution of the difficulty.

"A great many people," he added, with a smile, "would think that a very conservative statement. When the people come to consider what it is to make one of the departments of our municipal government, the most gigantic landhold in the history of the world, and give it the management of the most important property in the city, I have never believed that the plan would commend itself to them. We have conceded only a step here and there in the process toward the completion of that plan, but when the question is clearly presented to the people, whenever the scheme shall become comprehensive enough to arrest the attention of the people by its magnitude, I believe it will be considered by them entirely not of the question. I do not believe that the people would be willing to make investments that would approach hundreds of millions of dollars, in the belief that such vast interests would be managed for the best interest of the city. I do not believe that they would care to entrust such vast power to any department of the city government. Therefore, I have always thought that the necessity of departing from the plan would be conceded. Of course, as a matter of government regulation, the municipal authorities must prescribe the kind of improvements to which they and everybody else must conform."

"Just the same," said Senator Fassett, who presided, "as the Building Department does now with new buildings."

"Yes," said Mr. Dimock, "but in a much stricter sense, because in erecting new buildings it is imperative to conform to some general plan. I have always supposed that in due time legislation would be attempted that would give, under proper restrictions, the power to private owners to build piers."

Mr. Dimock expressed himself to be in favor of the shedding of piers, and said that he had asked the passage of the law permitting that. Just as to diverting certain pier roofs for the purposes of public promenades, he was not enthusiastic. Although he said there seemed to be an opinion in some quarters that it might be a good thing to have the roofs of piers as combination parks and boat gardens, he did not think it would be a good thing, except possibly for a transient. Mr. Dimock made the suggestion that a space of fifty feet should be allowed on the exterior street, whose total width might be 250 feet, though he would not limit himself to that number, for the building room. "A sixty-foot," he remarked, "can't be used for anything on earth. I wouldn't leave the condition of things as it is now, such that no human being can say where a building begins and where it ends."

Senator Fassett took up the line of investigation, and elicited from Mr. Dimock his expression of opinion: "In my judgment, the municipal government is not the best instrument to manage two or three hundred million dollars' worth of property; nor do I believe it ought to be intrusted with as much power."

"Supposing," the witness was asked, "the cost was \$200,000,000, what would be the determination of the plan?"

George S. Greene, Jr., the engineer of the Dock Department, who was called by, supplied this information. He said it would be five or six per cent.

"That," said Senator Fassett, "of itself involves an annual expenditure of ten or twelve millions of dollars, taking \$200,000,000 as an estimate of cost."

"The whole thing," added the senator, interrogatively, "simply places the commerce of the world so far as New-York is concerned, in the control of the Dock Department?"

"Yes," said Mr. Dimock. "And if there was any abuse it would drive that commerce to other shores?"

"Yes."

"It becomes a first-class monopoly," was the senator's deductive suggestion, to which also Mr. Dimock gave assent.

Mr. Greene, the engineer, was recalled to the stand and he made much more of the cost of putting in the twenty new piers by excavation, in the stretch between West Eleventh and West Twenty-second streets. He said that it would be eight or ten millions of dollars, including everything. The cost of maintaining them would be comparatively small. The revenues would be about \$200,000. Thus the improvement, if carried out, would cost the city about \$200,000 a year and would bring to it about \$200,000 a year. Like Mr. Dimock, Mr. Greene did not expect to live to see the new plan carried out around the entire island, nor, he remarked, did anybody else. It would, independent of all considerations of legal difficulty, at least a hundred years before the whole waterfront of Manhattan would be needed for commerce.

The committee will meet again on Friday, when Mr. Boardman will have ex-Mr. Heintz and ex-Corporation Counsel Beckman up to testify about the dock board.

CHARGED WITH SWINDLING WORKMEN.

William McDevitt, who represented himself as manager of the Bay State House, Worcester, Mass., was arrested yesterday charged with collecting money from people on the employment of the Bay State House for them. Jacob Patschberger, a machinist, was not by McDevitt in an employment bureau. The latter offered him a situation at the Bay State House on condition that he give him \$2. Patschberger gave the money but did not get the place. In the Jefferson Market Police Court yesterday the "manager" was held for examination.

CONVENTION OF THE GUILD OF THE IRON CROSS.

The Guild of the Iron Cross, organized in Philadelphia in 1888, now numbers among its members many eminent men in the Episcopal Church, including bishops, priests and laymen. The guild has for its object to promote the spirit of temperance, reverence and charity among Christian men. The convention will meet this year at St. John's Chapel, Varick-st., to-morrow. The services will be as follows: 9 a. m., celebration of the Holy Communion; 10:30 a. m., business meeting; 2:30 p. m., general discussion upon methods of work; 8 p. m., service and sermon by Bishop Talbot, of Wyoming and Idaho.

HE SEEMS TO HAVE A LIKING FOR JEWELRY.

Charles Besser, of No. 221 East Fifty-first-st., was a agent for Louis Krug, a diamond merchant, No. 94 Nassau-st., until a year ago. On January 27, 1890, he took jewelry worth \$1,800 as samples to sell from on the road. Several days later Besser telegraphed that he was taken suddenly ill. A month later Krug received a dispatch from the police of Canada stating that Besser had been arrested there for originating stolen property into the country. Krug went to Canada, prosecuted Besser, and recovered the larger part of his property. Besser was sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

THE WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON CLUB MEETS.

The Wednesday Afternoon Club, which aims to keep in touch with the highest thought currents of the day, held one of the most brilliant meetings of the season on Wednesday at the home of the president, Mrs. A. H. Stone, No. 150 West Fifty-ninth-st. "Brook Farm," the subject, was treated exhaustively by the essayist, Mrs. E. A. Royce, who had had special opportunities of comparing views of living members of the colony. The presidential address, by the president, though but lightly touched upon in the essay, was fully brought out in the discussion by Mrs. Julius C. Catlin, Mrs. Almon Goodwin, Mrs. Alfred Bishop Mason, Miss Mary Willard and Miss Kate Millard.

The charming and energetic corrections and explanations by Mrs. McDaniels, sister of Charles A. Dana and one of the original dwellers at Brook Farm, added unusual liveliness to the meeting and aroused much healthy discussion throughout its response. The general topic seemed to be that as a practical and first attempt

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Justice Lawrence Speaks Out.

HE BATS LAWS SHOULD NOT BE ALWAYS AGAINST THE STATE AND IN FAVOR OF CRIMINALS.

James J. Whalen was sentenced, in December, 1888, to serve two years in the State Prison. He had previously served a seven years' sentence, of which two years and three months were commuted for good behavior. Upon the expiration of the two years for which he was sentenced the last time, he demanded his release. The warden refused to allow him to go, however, declaring that, according to the law of 1886, and because of his second conviction, he must be held for the time which had been taken from his first sentence. Whalen then secured a writ of habeas corpus, which was returnable before Justice Lawrence, in the Supreme Court, Chambers, yesterday.

Whalen's counsel declared that the law was unconstitutional. Justice Lawrence said that he would hold the case, but he expressed his mind freely as to what he thought about it. He was not one of the judges, he said, who believed that every law should be construed against the State; and in favor of criminals. He thought it was about time that Congress stepped in and passed laws to stop the practice of getting writs of habeas corpus for every murderer convicted in the State courts. The writs were invariably dismissed, he admitted, and they were evidently secured in many cases for the sake of setting the State courts at defiance. He thought it should be stopped.

SPECIAL MUSIC FOR EPIPHANY.

Epiphany services will be held in some of the Episcopal churches of this city to-day. The following programme will be given at St. George's Church at 4 p. m.: Procession, hymn No. 42, "A. With candles and candles of gold"; psalm, Psalm CXXI; "Magnificat"; "A. Hail, Mary"; anthem, hymn No. 48, "Hark, Hark, My soul"; shelle; anthem, "Say, Watchman, What of the Night"; Sullivan; hymn No. 37, "Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning"; Mendelssohn; offertory, "The Sorrowful of Death" (Hymn of Praise), Mendelssohn; recessional, hymn No. 43, "Watchman, Tell Us of the Night"; Elvey. The programme will be rendered by a large choir under the direction of William S. Carter.

This programme will be presented at St. Bartholomew's Church at 4 p. m.: Procession, hymn No. 500; Psalm CXXV, plain song; "Magnificat" and "Nunc Dimittis"; King, in F; anthems: "The Heavens are Telling"; "Creation"; Hays; "Lift Thine Eyes"; and "He Watching over Israel"; "Elijah"; Mendelssohn; "Right Are the Statutes, More to be Desired are Thy, Thy"; and "The Heavens Declare"; "With Verdure Glad"; Saint-Saens; offertory, hymn No. 190; recessional, No. 511. The music will be sung by a chorus of sixty voices and eight soloists, under the direction of Richard Henry Warren.

At the Church of the Heavenly Rest these numbers will be heard at 7:30 p. m.: "Rest for the Weary," solo by Master Frank Osborn; "With Verdure Glad," solo by Master Eddie Laker; "Magnificat" and "Nunc Dimittis," Oakeley. There will be a full chorus under the leadership of Henry Carter.

FOR BUYING MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATES.

The Board of Managers of the Produce Exchange yesterday requested the members of the Exchange to vote on February 3 as to whether they would consider the plan offered by the special committee on Membership Certificates, providing for the purchase and cancellation of certificates of membership. This revises the old question of the depreciation of the value of membership certificates and the contriver-

ies about the gratuity fund. There was a strong difference of opinion yesterday on the outcome of the action of the members.

The well-informed member said that the plan would not be considered, because such propositions had been voted down for several years past. There would be strong opposition from those who had paid out large assessments to the gratuity fund. All members of the Produce Exchange except those who became members of the gratuity fund. The retiring of the membership certificates would, according to the plan proposed, deprive of money the heirs of those members who had already paid out large sums in assessments. Another member said that the retiring of certificates at \$1,000 was an artificial plan for advancing the price of the certificates, and that it would help certain men who speculated in certificates.

REAL ESTATE CONTINUES DULL.

BUYERS AND SELLERS HOLDING ALOOF FROM EACH OTHER—TRANSACTIONS OF THE WEEK.

Buyers of real estate were in an indifferent attitude last week, and in consequence there was a rather dull market. While this condition lasts there can be no great improvement, so long as owners refuse to make concessions it is not likely that there will be any change. Both sides are simply holding off, waiting for the other to make the first approach. The business of the week was mainly in downtown property and vacant lots, and it is highly probable that this kind of property will continue in greatest demand for some time. Along the Boulevard there is a waiting list and important sales may be announced in that region very soon. Suburban transactions on a large scale are also in the wind. This class of property is largely in the hands of young men who are operating on small capital, and who must of necessity depend for their profits on quick returns.

The auction market was practically dead, nothing outside of a few pieces of property sold by decree of the court. Having changed hands, numerous sales are announced for this week. "The Record and Guide" announces the sale of the southeast corner of Fourth and Greene sts., a plot containing about 8,000 square feet, for \$125,000, to Sachs Brothers. Among the other sales of the week are these:

Four lots on the northwest corner of Central Park West and Seventy-first-st., two on the avenue and two on the street. The purchaser is Jacob Rothschild, and the price about \$100,000. Mr. Rothschild has also purchased the lot on Central Park West, fifty feet north of Seventy-first-st., from the Godwin estate, for about \$26,000. By these purchases Mr. Rothschild acquires 152 feet front on 209 feet, or a corner, a four-story hotel. On the plot he will erect, it is said, a four-story hotel.

Thomas and George Edgar have purchased from Hirsch Bros. eight lots on the north side of Seventy-fifth-st., beginning 300 feet west of Columbus-ave., 200x102-ft., for about \$130,000, for improvement. They own four lots on the south side of Seventy-fourth-st., 300 feet west of Columbus-ave., have been sold to Samuel Colcord for \$52,000, and it is reported that Mr. Colcord has resold the lots for \$55,000. This plot was purchased for \$50,000 early in December by Charles Colcord, who is now in charge of the site. Neighboring property-owners, fearing the effect of these sales, induced Mr. Colcord to part with his lots, paying him \$50,000 therefor. They have now sold them to Mr. Colcord at a loss of \$8,000, and the report is that he has sold them at an advance of \$4,000.

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THE RIGHTS OF THE INSANE.

A LECTURE BY MRS. EMILY KEMPIN BEFORE THE WOMAN'S LEGAL EDUCATION SOCIETY.

Mrs. Emily Kempin delivered a lecture on "The Rights of the Insane," yesterday afternoon, before 200 members and guests of the Woman's Legal Education Society, at the home of Miss Taylor Johnston, No. 5 Fifth-ave. Mrs. Kempin said in part:

The fact regarding the insane is most unvarnished and liberal, not only in the United States, but all over the so-called civilized world. It seems as if civilization had stepped in its revolutions regarding this most unfortunate class of people. The principle of our constitution and of our laws is that every man is born free, that no man shall be deprived of his liberty without due process of law has always been sacred, but the insane alone are committed upon the certificate of two professional men. The judge has to give his sanction, but that is a mere formality. The physician, therefore, is the one who commits the person who he deems insane. The unfortunate person is then regarded insane by the public, and loses his personal and social liberty, and his moral existence. He loses more than the criminal. The physician's theories are not always correct, and if a remedy would know what the patient and could not get it, the proper remedy for his troubles, all the signs of his insanity might vanish.

If a patient has been taken to an asylum the chances in his habits, surroundings and company will be such as to excite and those symptoms of insanity which he was sane at the time of his incarceration, and this increase in the patient's symptoms is looked upon as a certain sign that he is really insane. If the patient is cured, probably by many adverse circumstances, or an account of people who had been taken to an asylum, he is also considered a sane sign of his insanity. It is an easy thing to excite the suspicion of a physician. If any one wishes an indignation into the mental soundness or unsoundness of a rich person in order to provide him with a guardian and take away his property, a regular trial by jury before a commission. But those who have no property have no such opportunity to defend themselves against an accusation of so grave a nature, and none against the certificate of two professional men and the formal approval of the judge. The interests and protection of society must be guarded, and so must also the rights of the insane be protected. The due process of law must be given to the insane in every instance, whether he wishes it or not. The right of publicity of criminal trials is one of the last bulwarks against injustice. The house does not possess this right. Their fate is settled between the four walls of a physician's office, and when they are once inside the asylum they are utterly lured behind its walls.

The lecturer closed her remarks with a recital of the struggles and injustice to which the inmates of an insane asylum are obliged to submit. Among those who listened to the lecture were Mrs. George H. McClellan, Jr., Mrs. T. H. Sutro, Vice-Chancellor H. M. Macracken, ex-Judge Noah Davis, Cyrus W. Field, David Dudley Field, Professor Isaac Russell, the Rev. Dr. Deems, Mrs. Leonard Weber, Dr. Lucy Hall, Mrs. Sewell, Mrs. Ogden Wood, Charles Butler, president of the council of the University of the City of New York; Miss Emily O. Butler, Mrs. H. M. Macracken, Mrs. Susan Vanamant, Mrs. Russell Sage, Miss Sarah Godwin, Miss Margaret Johnston, Mrs. Robert W. De Forest, Mrs. Alden Pope and Mrs. Edward Lauterbach.

At the Church of the Heavenly Rest, Miss Taylor Johnston, the hostess. Ex-Judge Noah Davis will deliver the next lecture before the society some time in the last of February.

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