CHURCH MACHINE METHODS

PRESBYTERIAN PAPERS CONDEMN WIRE-PULLING IN ELECTION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMISSIONERS.

Minneapolis, Minn., May 16 (Special).—In order to secure certain action at the coming General Assembly in this city which they believe is essential to the welfare of the Presbyterian Church throughout the world, and to particular churches and presbyteries it is said that there has been an unusual amount of wire-pulling this spring in some quarters. There are not many offenders, it is believed, and few, if any, in the active pastorate, but it is an open secret that men are coming to Minneapolis whose election was secured by means of a ticket industriously circulated and worked for on the day preceding the election, which was held on Monday. It is also an open secret that men who are not commissioners were worked against "in the interest of peace and harmony."

So bold have the aggressors become that their actions have been severely criticised by many Presbyterian pastors and elders, who say that they are weary of this officiousness on the part of self-appointed meddlers in General Assembly matters. "The Presbyterian Journal," of Philadelphia, in which aggressive work has been done, thus denounces the "machine methods" in question:

"There was a time when the selection of a Moderator for the General Assembly and the shaping of the business to come before it was prudently left to the Assembly itself. Full confidence also was reposed in the ability of the Presbyteries to select proper commissioners, and in the latter being governed in their decision on important questions by their convictions of what was best for the Church in the light of full Assembly discussion and deliberation.

"But the day is past when this could be truthfully said. It is not consistent with the machine methods in vogue in other spheres of action. We have now ecclesiastical politicians in the Church, and religio-politico journalists, who assume to shape matters to their liking beforehand. The proper one, in their estimation, to moderate an Assembly is best decided in advance by a self-constituted faction or ring; and it is thought wiser that certain Presbyteries be instigated to overture the Assembly to a definite course in reference to certain matters to come before it. Influences are exerted to secure the election of commissioners favorable to their plans. Through them, the Moderator having been chosen, and by him the committees having been appointed, in due time the Presbyterial overtures are favorably reported upon, and the action decided upon in advance by the machine is successfully carried through.

"Something of this kind has been apparent with more than one General Assembly meeting since 1890, and we are credibly informed that it has been and is being earnestly worked for the coming one in Minneapolis. The fine Italian hand of the ecclesiastical cabal has been plainly manifested in New-York City. More than a month ago, in advance of the election of Commissioners, it was decided, even before he was elected a Commissioner, who would be the proper man west of Pittsburg to preside over the coming General Assembly. He was even invited, we are told, to a conference with those who had resolved upon his election. It was doubtless to get his consent to the measures in contemplation. There followed through those designated and familiar with machine methods an effort to influence the election of Commissioners and to mould the sentiment of those who should be chosen. Those not connected for years with the pastorate were not overmodest in taking a hand in the wirepulling schemes. At least one agent visited Philadelphia and talked with Presbyters as to the kind of men who should or should not be sent to the Assembly. Pamphlets containing excerpts from articles prepared for certain religious journals and communications purely anonymous have been addressed to Commissioners and others. Caucuses of the Commissioners have been held weeks in advance.

"And all this to influence the formation, organization and judgment of a court. Is such action any less disreputable or despicable in an ecclesiastical than in a civil tribunal? No matter how deep may be the feeling against certain doctrinal utterances, there can be no justification for the adoption of such measures to meet them and to punish those guilty of them. The pious covering given to such unecclesiastical and unwise schemes only makes them the more to be deplored and contended against. They are unworthy of our beloved Church and highly derogatory of its highest court. They deserve to be severely frowned upon and rebuked. Unless they are, Presbyterianism will most surely be wounded still more severely in the house of its friends. Our General Assembly will be in danger of becoming a byword and a reproach."

"The New-York Observer" recently contained the following criticism upon the action of a minister in that city:

"The usual Sunday-school class was held at the Fifth Avenue Hotel on Sunday, in the interest of legislation at Albany this week. Similar work was done on the same day, by going from one clergyman to another in the interest of a 'ticket' to be voted on at the meeting of the Presbytery on Monday. One pastor was interrupted while on his way to the pulpit, and begged not to nominate a brother minister for a General Assembly Commissioner. Another clergymen was asked not to allow his name to be presented, or, if it was, to withdraw it, as it would 'injure the ticket' to have this new name before the Presbytery. Failing to secure the desired promise, the visitor begged the brother not to mention the fact that he had been approached, but here again no pledge was given. Every one of the seven clerical names on the 'ticket' on Sunday was presented on the floor of the Presbytery on Monday. While it is perfectly proper for a company of men agree to support certain candidates who they think will best present their views in the General Assembly, we do not hesitate to say that the methods employed by a Senator of the United States to secure a certain kind of legislation by Sunday conferences at a hotel are no more commendable than are those to which we have referred in the Presbytery."

PRIZES FOR HISTORICAL PAPERS.

THE EMPIRE STATE SOCIETY, S. A. R., STIMULATES STUDY OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD.

The last regular meeting of the season of the Empire State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution will be held next Tuesday evening at the Berkeley Theatre, No. 21 West Forty-fourth-st. At the business meeting the delegates to the recent congress of the National society, at Detroit, will make their report.

From 9 until 10 o'clock Ensign William Lowell Hill, U. S. N., chief boatswain of the Brooklyn, will entertain the society with a description of the destruction of Cervera's fleet, under the title of "From 9:30 a. m. to 1:15 p. m., July 3, 1898, Before Santiago," accompanied by about fifty illustrations. At 10 o'clock a supper will be served.

With a view to stimulating historical study during the summer months, the Board of Management of the Empire State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution has just announced the offer of three prizes, valued at $25, $20 and $15, to the members preparing the best three historical papers on Revolutionary scenes, personally visited by them the coming season. The papers are to consist of not more than two thousand and not less than fifteen hundred words, and the reading of the prize papers will take place at the regular meeting of the society, to be held on the fourth Tuesday of October. The papers submitted in this competition are to be signed with a nom de plume, and the real name of the writer is to be sent in a sealed envelope, not to be opened until the judges have rendered their decision. The president will appoint a committee of three judges to examine the papers submitted for competition and determine their relative merits. The papers should be sent to the headquarters of the society, Room No. 804, No. 1,123 Broadway.

VOTING AWAY THE AUTOMOBILE.

While there is something everywhere of interest in the Electrical Show at Madison Square Garden, especial attention is being given to the voting for the beautiful automobile trap which the favorite American actress will ride in when she wins it by the votes of her friends. The record of the first count of ballots shows Miss Maude Adams ahead with 243, Miss Viola Allen a good second with 210, Miss Julia Marlowe a close third with 205, and beating Mrs. Leslie Carter, who registers 204. Miss Annie Russell polls 101, Miss Rose Coghlan 16, and Miss Violet Cameron 14. There will be lively voting between now and the close of the show, and each day's record will be interesting.

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WESTCHESTER PEOPLE SUFFER INCONVENIENCE AND DELAY.

INADEQUATE POWER ONE GREAT CAUSE OF ANNOYANCE—CITIZENS BEGINNING TO REALIZE THE MISTAKE THAT HAS BEEN MADE.

During the balmy spring weather, when most every one is enjoying a trip to the suburbs or some watering place, the people of The Bronx and Westchester County are to be pitied. If they want to travel comfortably they must go by boat, as there is no pleasure to be had in riding on the lines of the Union Railroad.

On the contrary, as one resident expresses it, such a ride is not only torture, but it is in reality a cause of acute mental and physical suffering. The service is the most wretched in all of the history of the road's shortcomings. Instead of being able to handle and furnish cars for the influx of people brought by the extensions of the lines and the cheapening of fares, it has failed miserably.

On Sunday last every car from Harlem Bridge to Mount Vernon, New-Rochelle and Yonkers was crowded with people, and the road's patrons were transported in a worse fashion than the law permits cattle to be used. Women and children were forced to stand for the entire distance of their journeys.

The service was made even more exasperating by the breaking down of the power plants, which left cars standing for hours all over the system above the Harlem River, while people were anxious to get to their homes.

The electric plants are wholly inadequate to handle the hundreds of cars required to transport the people who desire to travel on Sunday, and the conditions will be worse when Glen Island and the other Sound summer resorts are opened.

One man, who went from the Harlem River to New-Rochelle on Sunday evening, told a reporter for The Tribune that it had taken him more than four hours to make the trip, and that the power had given out and the car had stopped and waited seven times. At times when they were not waiting for power they were compelled to wait at sidetracks for cars running in the opposite direction.

A prominent resident, who is compelled to ride on the Union cars, said yesterday: "There is no other place in Christendom where such outrageous treatment would be tolerated. If we are to endure this state of affairs much longer the officials of the Union Railroad should be indicted for wilfully destroying human life and happiness. Five and eight cent fares have been talked about as tremendous boons, but instead, we are finding them to be the most cruel and heartless hoax. Language fails entirely in expressing the misery and anguish of mind we are now compelled to endure."

Other residents express the belief that the attention of the public authorities and State Railroad Commission should be called to the manner in which the road is being operated.

President Edward Maher, of the Union Railroad Company, recently set forth his views at an indignation meeting of the residents of Van Ness and West Chester. He said that the company had been handicapped by a fire in its power-house, which had destroyed the cars. He thought, also, that if a double track could be laid from West Farms to Mount Vernon, and Mount Vernon to Yonkers and New-Rochelle, a much better service could be given. If this is complied with twenty-five miles of the leading highways will be practically useless to the public. The people are beginning to realize now what should have been done when the road was built, that it should have been compelled to purchase its right of way. Then double or even triple tracks could have been constructed long ago, and the company could be giving an express service to New-York. As it is now, unless the people surrender to the double-track idea, the service will never be any better.

GARDINER APPARENTLY PLEASED.

THOUGHT TO HAVE INDUCED THE GRAND JURY NOT TO TAKE UP THE CORNISH CHARGE AGAINST MOLINEUX.

District-Attorney Gardiner went before the Grand Jury yesterday and spent a good part of the forenoon in the room with the jury. He was joined there by Assistant District-Attorney Blumenthal, who was active in presenting the Molineux case recently when the attempt was made to have Molineux indicted on the charge of murder. Assistant District-Attorney Osborne went to see Mr. Gardiner after he had got back to his own office, and carried a large package of documents, which were supposed to have reference to the Molineux case. The complacent manner of the District-Attorney when he left his office later conveyed the impression that the Grand Jury had been pursuaded not to take up the charge brought against Molineux by Harry Cornish, upon which Molineux is still held a prisoner in the Tombs.

The Grand Jury adjourned in the afternoon after reporting to Judge McMahon, and there was no reference in the papers to the Molineux case.

Arthur S. Colyar, Jr., whose connection with the Molineux case caused a sensation for a time, pleaded guilty yesterday before Judge McMahon in General Sessions to an attempt at kidnap, and he was sent to the penitentiary for sixty days. He went out laughing and waving his hands. Colyar is a Nashville, Tenn., lawyer. He tried to kidnap Nicholas A. Heckman, the man in the Molineux case who testified at the Coroner's inquest that he kept private letter boxes in his place in Forty-second-st. and that Molineux came there and got letters.

THE ACTUARIAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA.

The Actuarial Society of America will hold its decennial meeting to-morrow and Friday in the directors' room of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. The meeting will open with an address by the president, Bloomfield J. Miller. The election of officers and two members of the council and the transaction of other business will follow. Papers will then be read by members of the society. Among them will be papers on the following subjects: "Interest Rates," by H. W. St. John, of the Ætna Life Insurance Company, Hartford, Conn.; "Proper Loading on Life Insurance Premiums," by J. G. Van Cise, of the Equitable Life Assurance Society; "The Annuity Experiences of the Massachusetts Hospital Life Insurance Company," by Walter C. Wright, of the New-England Mutual Life Insurance Company; "The Actuary's Place in Science," by Walter S. Nichols, of "The Insurance Monitor"; "Rate of Interest for Premiums and Reserves," by William McCabe, of the North American Life Insurance Company, Toronto; "Actuarial Testimony in the Courts," by Sydney N. Ogden, of the Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company, Newark, N. J.

The reading of the papers will be followed by discussion of the papers read at the meeting of October last at Springfield, Mass.

To-morrow evening the officers of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company will give a reception for the members in the directors' room and executive offices of that company. On Friday evening the formal decennial banquet of the society will take place at Delmonico's. The presidents of the life-insurance companies are invited as the guests of honor. The president, Bloomfield J. Miller, will preside as toastmaster.

The Actuarial Society of America consists of the actuaries of the principal life-insurance companies of the United States and Canada. Prominent actuaries of other countries are also members, including some from England, France, Belgium, Holland, Australia, New-Zealand and one from Japan.

GRAIN MERCHANT DIES SUDDENLY.

John T. Miller, a member of the Produce Exchange, died suddenly yesterday in front of No. 192 Bowery. Death is believed to have been caused by apoplexy. Mr. Miller had grain offices at Nos. 2 and 4 Stone-st. He was walking southward in the Bowery, when he suddenly collapsed and fell on the sidewalk. A St. Vincent's Hospital ambulance was summoned, but Dr. De Noulily said that the man was dead.

Mr. Miller had in his possession his certificate of membership in the Exchange, showing that he joined it on January 21, 1883. He also had a lot of papers, including a bill for commissions for about $3,000. Besides there was a card of the E. A. Kimball Grand Army of the Republic Post, of No. 8 Union Square, and another of the Headquarters of Encampment No. 38, U. V. L., of No. 8 Union Square.

INCREASED TRADE IN CEYLON TEA.

Alexander Thomson, senior partner of Wittall & Co., of Colombo, now in this city, is here for the purpose of establishing a branch of that well-known Colombo concern. This step is taken in view of the steady increase in the trade of Ceylon tea in this country, and in the belief that a branch in New-York City, which will put dealers in close touch with the primary markets and obviate the necessity of dealing through the London market, will be advantageous to all concerned. The advantage of such a move is greater now that there has recently been established a line of steamers trading direct between Colombo and United States ports. The firm of Wittall & Co. is one of the largest of the kind in the world, and in the year 1898 handled one-tenth of the enormous tea crop of Ceylon.

The American branch will be under the management of Richard Bechynden, who for a number of years was the representative in this country of the tea planters of India, and to whose intelligent efforts is due much of the credit for the increase in the consumption of Ceylon tea here. Mr. Bechynden enters the new field with the best wishes of a host of friends.

A VALUABLE BOOK FOR TRAVELLERS.

A valuable book of the widely known "Four Track Series"—the New-York Central's books of travel—is No. 16, which has just appeared. Its title is "The Illustrated Catalogue of the Four Track Series," and it contains a complete list and brief description of the twenty-five books and folders illustrative and descriptive of the hundreds of resorts reached by the through cars of the New-York Central and its immediate connections, together with a number of beautiful and appropriate illustrations picked at random from these books. A copy of "The Illustrated Catalogue" will be sent free, postpaid, on receipt of a one-cent stamp, by George H. Daniels, general passenger agent, Grand Central Station.

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