COOKE FOUND AND LOST

AT WORK AS DECORATOR.

In Humble San Francisco Flat with Floretta Whaley and Baby.

San Francisco, Dec. 30.—In a pelting rain and before daybreak the Rev. Jere Knode Cooke, formerly pastor of St. George's Church, at Hempstead, Long Island, and Floretta Whaley, the seventeen-year-old heiress with whom he eloped eight months ago, deserting a wife to whom he had been married for nine years, stole away to-day from the little flat which they had occupied at No. 1199 Green street, in this city, where they were discovered yesterday living under the name of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Balcom taking with them their baby boy, born two months ago. They left behind all they had managed through rigid economy to save during the eight months that search for them had been made throughout the country. Where they went has not yet been ascertained.

The police declare that no request has been made to them to apprehend the couple, and that no effort is being made to find or detain them.

The discovery of Cooke and the girl was made through the fact that Captain Cleary of the Morse Patrol Agency, who had met them as "Mr. and Mrs. Balcom" when they arrived here last June from Los Angeles, recognized the girl's picture when it was published last week in connection with a dispatch from Louisiana stating that Cooke had deserted Floretta Whaley and had given her "away to a family there who were educating her."

Yesterday afternoon a representative from a local newspaper called at the home where Cooke and his companion lived under their assumed names. Cooke, a Yale graduate, worked at painting and decorating, and when necessary did any manual work that he could get.

The only notice ever taken of the couple by neighbors and those who lived in the same building was to comment upon the apparent happiness and the devotion of Balcom to the girlish mother and the child.

When the newspaperman called yesterday Balcom, or Cooke, admitted his identity, but sent the young mother and the baby into another room, asking the reporter to lower his tone that she might not learn of the discovery of their identity.

"My God! What an awakening from our happiness!" exclaimed Cooke. "All I want is a chance to get away. I don't mind Sing Sing or hell, but it is she. The child was born two months ago, and discovery and apprehension would kill the mother."

Pacing back and forth, Cooke told the reporter the story of his life and of his elopement with Miss Whaley.

"The inexorable law must be maintained," he said. "I have preached it so often I ought to know. There is nothing that will paint a black sheep white. But I have my reasons. For ten years I have kept silent. For the last eight months I have borne without a murmur all the abuse, the vilest lies that newspapers could concoct."

Cooke's father died when Cooke was five years old. He was adopted by an uncle and learned the trade of paperhanging and decorating. He worked his way through Yale, and finally entered the ministry. Cooke told of his marriage and of his unhappy married life. He declared that his wife admitted to him that she had married him for no other reason than that it would prove a convenient stepping stone for her social ambitions. He added that it would be "caddish to dilate on my marriage troubles."

"Then I awoke to love, and everything else was worthless," he continued. "You know the end. On the one hand was a loveless life, with honor and position and wealth, and on the other love and poverty. I chose this."

He pointed to the scantily furnished room. "I don't praise myself for the step I took. It was weakness, it was unmanly; but I am only human, and as I am to be judged by human beings it is but right that they should know that I gave up all that I had fought for and won. Now all I ask is to be let alone.

"I am doing a man's work. I have sinned, but I have suffered. Now I beg the world to let me alone with my wife and child. I can live the life of a good citizen. They say I am a good decorator. I was kept at work long after the other men were let go during the financial stringency. I ask the world to let me be a painter, nothing more; to do a man's work and enjoy the average society and happiness of the average man."

Cooke said he was afflicted with heart disease and several times he was on the verge of collapse during the interview. On the promise that "Mrs. Balcom" would not be apprised of the fact that their identity had been discovered, Cooke accompanied the reporter to a newspaper office to be sketched.

On the way downtown Cooke fainted in the streetcar.

Cooke's neighbors spoke in the highest terms of the pair. Mrs. S. M. Miles, who lives in an adjoining apartment, said that she saw Cooke and his companion, or Mr. and Mrs. Balcom, as she knew them, leave their flat early this morning and go out in the storm. The man had a few pieces of baggage and the girl carried the baby closely wrapped. All efforts to find the pair to-day were in vain.

PROBABLY NO ARREST.

Move to Bring Cooke Back to Hempstead Not Likely.

Hempstead, Long Island, Dec. 30 (Special).—Seldom has this town been aroused as it was this morning when the news was received that the Rev. J. K. Cooke, former rector of St. George's Church, here, and Floretta Whaley had been found in San Francisco.

It has been reported at different times that Cooke and the girl had been seen in various parts of the country. On investigation, however, it had been found that there was no foundation whatever for the reports. The news this morning, therefore, that he had been discovered created great surprise. The majority of the residents, however, take no stock in the story, and still believe that Cooke and Miss Whaley are in Canada.

Mrs. Kaziah Whaley, when seen this morning, stated that she had not heard anything whatever from Cooke and Floretta, her granddaughter, and stated that if the story, as published, was true she did not want them to come to Hempstead, especially as Floretta had an infant child.

A warrant was sworn out last summer for Cooke, when it was rumored that he was at Peekskill, and that warrant can still be served. Mrs. Whaley stated that she would not have the warrant served and would object to its service.

Justice Charles F. Gittens said that he had had no application to have the warrant served, and would not do so if the expenses of the officers were not paid first. It is certain that Mrs. Whaley will not advance the expenses, and the town of Hempstead and Nassau County will not pay them which will probably insure Cooke from arrest. It was known here that he had been a painter before he entered the ministry, hence his falling back on that as a means to support the girl and his child.

Mrs. Whaley this afternoon admitted that she had received a letter from Cooke just after they eloped in which he said he was sorry for the sin he had committed, but that he and Floretta would be happy, and he hoped she would forgive him.

REPLY FROM THE LACKAWANNA.

George A. Cullen Defends the New Station at Millburn, N. J.

George A. Cullen, general passenger agent of the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad, denied yesterday the charges of J. W. Dow, of Wyoming, N. J., who said in a printed circular that the "Lackawanna is the worst managed railroad running out of New York City." Mr. Dow charges that the new station at Millburn, N. J., which was opened on November 10 and takes the place of the old stations at Wyoming and Millburn, is poorly placed and so arranged that the lives of passengers are jeopardized. The railroad people deny this.

The old stations at Wyoming and Millburn, according to Mr. Cullen, were only 1,109 yards, or 63-100 of a mile, apart. It was impossible to stop all local trains at both stations without delaying through traffic unduly. The railroad received many requests for a new station or stations and finally decided to build one new station as nearly as possible midway between the old stations. By abolishing the Wyoming station it was possible to stop all trains at the new Millburn station, said Mr. Cullen. The new Millburn station is of brick and one of the handsomest on the road.

GRIP HOLDING ITS OWN.

Changes in Weather Help Increase the Number of Deaths.

Influenza is holding its own, due to the changeable weather. There was no increase last week over the week before, but the number of deaths traceable to the grip showed a record of 116 above the corresponding week last year. The Health Department report of deaths from grip for the week ended December 28, 1907 and 1906, respectively, was as follows:

	1907.	1906.
Influenza	64	8
Lobar pneumonia	184	175
Bronchial pneumonia	150	129
Heart disease	171	141

It was said at the Health Department yesterday that this seemed to be a distinctively grip season, and while the changeable weather had much to do with the increase in all bronchial complaints the prevalence of the germ could not be laid altogether to it. The germ has been found in whooping cough and in the several serious pulmonary affections. Persons with weak hearts have been sufferers to a severe extent. It was explained that the reason heart disease fatalities were considered in the grip records was because the great depression occasioned by an attack of the latter quickened the fatal effects of heart weakness.

Doctors throughout the city have reported a phenomenal increase in influenza cases, and it is only because of a more comprehensive understanding of the disease, how it should be treated at the beginning, that the deaths have been held within the present limits. The interchange of health reports among the cities has shown that New York's affliction is shared as far west as the Mississippi River. Everywhere, however, increased understanding of the disease has kept the fatalities down.

The death rate increased last week to 20.59, as against 19.37 for the same week last year, there being 1,691 deaths last week and 1,558 for the same week in 1906.

TWO BARGES AND SCHOONER LOST.

Lifesavers Rescue One Crew, While Others Wrecked Row to the Shore.

Providence, Dec. 30.—Two barges, the Ida and the Jennie, bound north with three other craft of the same description, in tow of the tug C. J. Sanford, were lost off Point Judith to-day, and Captain Davis, of the Ida, and his wife barely saved their lives. The Ida sank and the Jennie was driven upon the breakwater, where she soon began to go to pieces.

Just before the Ida went down Captain Davis and his wife took to a small boat and struggled hard to reach the Jennie. The heavy seas drove them back and they turned toward shore, where they landed safely after an exhausting experience. The lifesaving crew rescued Captain Deners and the crew of the Jenrie.

Boothbay Harbor, Me., Dec. 30.—The Gloucester fishing schooner Agnes V. Gleason was wrecked on Bantam Ledge early to-day, while making this harbor. She probably will be a total loss. Captain Gilman Gallant and his crew of fourteen rowed six miles to this place.

THE HARBURGER BRAIN AT WORK.

Coroner Proposes To Make Asphyxiation Illegal—A Boost for Plumbers.

Coroner Julius Harburger, president of the Board of Coroners, is overworked. He believes that one prolific source of toil would be shut off if the asphyxiation habit could be checked. Incidentally, he seems to have in mind a boost for the plumbing business.

The coroner's mode of procedure is nothing less than the presentation of a bill to the Legislature making the smothering of unwary guests by hotels and boarding houses an illegal act. He purposes to effect his reform by a simple but expensive change in gas plumbing.

"It is time this thing was stopped," said the coroner yesterday. "No less than four persons have been asphyxiated within six weeks in a Raines law hotel. These were not suicides, but cases of accidental death caused by the present system of gas fixtures, where the stopcocks are too close together—sometimes within an inch, or even less of each other.

"Two weeks ago a man in a Bowery hotel turned on two jets; one he had lighted, and from the other the gas escaped until it killed him. The very next week two persons died in the same hotel from the escaping gas from a stove, and a State Senator from Vermont was asphyxiated at a house on Tenth avenue and 30th street from a like cause. My bill provides that the stopcocks on all gas fixtures shall be at least twelve inches apart, so that a person cannot make the mistake of turning the the gas on by accident without lighting it."

If Coroner Harburger's bill goes into effect it will evidently increase the business of the plumbers and gasfitters, for nearly all the fixtures will have to be changed. He does not say how the new fixtures will guard against the man or woman who is determined to commit suicide. This might be done if all the stopcocks in the hotel could be controlled from the office, it is suggested.

It has also been proposed that no one be allowed to use gas without a doctor's prescription.

COLLECTION IN HONEYMOON FLAT.

Resembled Stuff Stolen from Brownsville Stores—Young Couple Held.

Eighteen-year-old Philip Tepfer and his young wife, who until a month or two ago was Miss Anna Weinberg, were locked up yesterday in the Adams street court, Brooklyn, with three Hebrew boys who were boarding with them, on a technical charge of vagrancy. The arrest followed a search of the Tepfer rooms, at No. 271 Schermerhorn street, made by four detectives from Captain Kuhne's staff, which disclosed many boxes of expensive cigarettes, costly parcels of Russian tea, many razors, two hair clippers, boxes of sweet chocolate, an electrical vibrator, a lot of small articles of jewelry and other things that looked out of place among the furnishings of the two rooms occupied by three boys and a married couple.

The articles found resembled a similar lot of stuff stolen from Brownsville shops recently.

CHRISTMAS RIDE AT DURLAND'S.

The merriment that should mark the speeding of the departing year and the hailing of that arriving was all there at the Durland Riding Academy, in West 66th street, last evening. The twentieth annual Christmas ride, under the direction of Meister Krauss, was the biggest success of the score, the first of which bears the date of 1888. The introduction of the masquerade was the novelty that had much to do with filling the seating and standing room of the academy with spectators, who found almost as much diversion as did the seventy-five riders, who enjoyed themselves immensely in their fancy costumes.

Mrs. John Gerken got the blue ribbon in the grand entrée masquerade for a brilliant spangled creation in red. A blue for the red seemed to please the onlookers, and they also approved the award of the prize to Mrs. Jessie von Klein for the funniest make-up among the equestriennes.

BARRED "MERCHANT OF VENICE."

El Paso, Tex., Dec. 30.—In consequence of the action of the superintendent of schools in eliminating "The Merchant of Venice" from the English course in the El Paso High School at the request of Rabbi Martin Zielonka, the Ministers' Union to-day filed a vigorous protest against what they term "sectarian interference with the schools." The school board will meet next Monday to consider whether the superintendent's action shall be sustained.

BALDWIN HELD FOR SPEEDING.

Leroy W. Baldwin, president of the Empire Trust Company, of No. 42 Broadway, was technically a prisoner in Morrisania Court yesterday on a charge of overspeeding his automobile Sunday afternoon. He appeared by counsel and was held in $100 bail for trial.

PLAN TRANSIT FIGHT.

STOCKHOLDERS ORGANIZE

Metropolitan Committee May Seek Criminal Action.

A committee of minority stockholders of the Metropolitan Street Railway Company was formed yesterday to co-operate with the criminal authorities "for the purpose of bringing to the bar of justice and punishing any of the officers, directors or managers of the street railway systems of this city who have been guilty of acts of a criminal character," and also to push civil suits for the restitution to the company of any moneys wrongfully diverted and to promote legislation to prevent similar crimes in the future.

"This is going to be serious business," said William F. King, ex-president of the Merchants' Association, who has been chosen chairman of the committee. "We are in no mood to trifle, and I do not think the people want any trifling in this matter. It will be a long job, but we are going at it thoroughly and will see it through to the end."

Isaac Blum, a retired merchant, of No. 56 East 81st street, was chosen secretary. Some fifteen minority stockholders of the Metropolitan were at the meeting, in the offices of Griggs, Baldwin & Pierce, No. 27 Pine street, who, with Eugene G. Kremer, of No. 49 Wall street, have been appointed counsel to the committee. No list of those present was given out, as it was said some of them did not want to appear in the case publicly. Fifteen thousand shares of stock were pledged to the committee, and it was said that much more than that would be available before long. Those taking up this movement were among the non-assenting stockholders, representing 95,000 shares, who opposed the merger into the Interborough-Metropolitan company.

The committee named yesterday is composed of Mr. King, Mr. Blum, George L. Degner, a broker, of No. 20 Broad street; William Maas, a leather goods manufacturer, of No. 57 Fifth avenue; Nathan H. Heyman, a retired merchant, of No. 438 East 29th street, and John D. Parsons, of Albany.

The first work of the committee will be the consolidation of two committees of non-assenting stockholders who opposed the merger. It has also been instructed to employ counsel to take such steps as seem advisable to secure the following objects:

1. To institute and to prosecute vigorously civil suits for the restitution to the corporation, and ultimately to the stockholders, of any sum of money which may have been wrongfully diverted from the corporation and the stockholders.

2. To co-operate with the proper authorities in charge of the criminal prosecutions for the state, county and city for the purpose of bringing to the bar of justice and punishing any of the officers, directors and managers of the street railway system of this city who have been guilty of acts of a criminal character.

3. To obtain such legislation, if any, as may be necessary to prohibit absolutely the commission of any such crimes or acts hereafter, so that innocent stockholders in corporations may enjoy fully all the benefits which ought to come to them through their stock ownership.

Mr. King said that a campaign fund of $1 a share would be collected. He intimated that more than $150,000 would be needed to carry out the work the committee had in mind. He issued a statement in which he asked for co-operation on the part of the stockholders and of all citizens interested in the future integrity of investments.

"The financial conspirators have thus far managed to escape punishment," he said. "They are of the class of men who have been characterized by the President of the United States as 'law honest.' From the testimony, however, that has been taken thus far in the various investigations into the actions of some of these men who have conducted the management of the street railway corporations, it would seem as though they had stepped beyond their fancied security of legal protection and rendered themselves liable to the public criminally and the corporations civilly."

KEEP CARS IN ORDER.

Final Command to New York City Company by P. S. Commission.

The Public Service Commission issued yesterday a final order providing that all cars of the New York City Railway Company should receive a thorough inspection and overhauling, so they should be placed in "first class operating and substantially new condition." It was further ordered that on and after February 15 the company turn out not fewer than ten such overhauled cars daily, not including Sundays and legal holidays. The company was also instructed to make a daily report to the commission on the progress of the overhauling, and after February 15 to furnish to the commission a transcript of the daily entries in the "run in" books, showing which of the "run in" cars were out of order.

The order was issued after Commissioner Maltbie had reviewed the evidence of A. W. McLimont, the engineer who supervised the inspection of all the cars of the New York City Company. Some 1,600 of the 2,000 cars now being operated were examined. Not every car had defects, but the total number of defects averaged nearly two to a car, in the way of flat wheels, gear noises, etc. In 450 cars examined more thoroughly by putting them over pits it was found there was an average of four defects to a car.

Referring to the statement of the receivers that the most frequent cause of breakdowns was incidental to the operation by the conduit system and failure of the contact plough, Mr. Maltbie remarked:

"This is undoubtedly true, but the defects reported by Mr. McLimont have no connection whatever with the conduit system, and ought to be remedied regardless of what changes or improvements are adopted in the conduits and the methods of transmitting current from the conductors to the motors.

"The order is made applicable to the entire rolling stock of the company, including the summer as well as the winter cars. Of course, the cars now in use are the cars that should be repaired immediately."

NEW FLATBUSH SUBWAY PLAN.

Public Service Commission Considering Proposition to Extend It to Ocean Parkway.

Flatbush residents will be glad to hear that the Public Service Commission has taken up the proposition to extend the Flatbush avenue subway to the point originally proposed, at Parkside avenue and the Ocean Parkway, and has asked counsel to communicate with Park Commissioner Kennedy, of Brooklyn, to find out where he stands on the proposition. He opposed the original plan because it contained a provision for large storage yards, which would have extended under the sidewalk next to Prospect Park, resulting in the destruction of many fine trees. The Interborough company said it would not bid for the extension unless it included the storage yards.

It is understood that the new plans will render the destruction of the trees unnecessary. The extension will cost about $8,000,000, including the yards. The Interborough company may not be the only bidder on this route, if approved, as the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company could use it to advantage in connection with its four track Coney Island service over the Brighton Beach line, and it might also be used by some bidder in connection with the proposed Fourth avenue subway.

CITY RAILWAY CASE DELAY.

Temporary Check in the Attorney General's Action to Dissolve Corporation.

There will probably be some delay in the examination before a referee of certain officials and directors of the New York City Railway Company in the action brought by Attorney General Jackson to dissolve the corporation and forfeit its franchises on the ground that it had been insolvent for more than a year, and that the application for a federal receivership was made by "collusion and fraud." This hearing was to have been held before John Frankenheimer, at No. 25 Broad street, to-day. Justice Davis, in the Supreme Court, yesterday reserved decision on an application for a vacation of the order directing certain men to appear before the referee for an examination. Herbert R. Limburg, special counsel for the Attorney General, said last night he would probably consent to a postponement of the examination out of courtesy to the other side.

The Attorney General in his petition said he expected to show by the examination that the proceedings in the federal court had been instituted as the result of an arrangement between the New York City Railway Company and the Pennsylvania Steel Company and the Degnon Contracting Company, corporations which applied for the receivership.

Samuel Untermyer, making the application for the vacation of the order, said the Attorney General, in asking to examine his clients to prove collusion, was devoting himself to a matter entirely apart from proving his contention that the company had been insolvent for at least a year. They admitted, he said, that there had been an agreement between the interests applying for the federal receivership and the railway company, and that the United States Supreme Court had held in similar cases that the plaintiff and defendant might agree. He denied that the corporation had been insolvent for a year. Referring to the opinion of Justice Seabury in appointing temporary state receivers for the corporation, Mr. Untermyer said:

"The justice distinctly said the reason for doing this was that these receivers might go before the federal court and show that the latter had been imposed upon. You cannot rule that a court of coordinate jurisdiction has been imposed upon; it is for that court to so rule itself if it finds that to be the case."

MOVE AGAINST THIRD AVENUE CO.

New York City Railway Receivers Terminate Agreement with Manhattanville Line.

What is regarded as a part of the apparent purpose of the receivers of the New York City Railway Company to terminate its connection with the Third Avenue Railway Company is a notice served on the Forty-second Street, Manhattanville & St. Nicholas Avenue Railroad Company by the receivers of the New York City Railway Company that they will revoke permission for the cars of the Manhattanville company to use the tracks of the New York City company in Broadway below 45th street if the Public Service Commission insists that the former should run more cars to Murray street.

That such notice had been served was announced by Daniel W. Patterson, counsel for the Manhattanville company, when Commissioner Maltbie, of the Public Service Commission, opened a hearing yesterday on an order to show cause why the company should not run more cars from 117th street to Murray street at various hours of the day. For years the Manhattanville, which is a part of the Third avenue system, had a contract by which it used the tracks of the New York City Railway Company in Broadway below 45th street. The contract terminated some time ago, but its provisions have since been carried out by mutual consent.

When Commissioner Maltbie heard of the action of the receivers he adjourned the hearing that the entire board might consider the situation.

DECLARES ASHOKAN AWARD LEGAL.

Stands Unless Fraud Can Be Shown, Says Corporation Counsel.

The Board of Water Commissioners, which awarded the contract for the Ashokan dam to the MacArthur Brothers Company and the Winston Company instead of to the John Peirce Company, the lowest bidder, has found support for its position in a reply by Corporation Counsel Pendleton to a letter the Mayor sent him asking about the legality of the award.

The Corporation Counsel said there was no doubt that the Board of Water Supply had the power to let the contract as it had seen fit; that the contract had been duly executed, and that there was no authority to interfere with carrying it out unless fraud could be shown.

CITY NEWS IN BRIEF.

Henrietta Jewell, who was brought back to this city from Middleboro, Mass., on the charge of grand larceny, preferred by Jules Jorgensen, a jeweller, of No. 2263 Broadway, was discharged by Magistrate Droege in the Tombs Court yesterday.

The second annual entertainment and reception of the New York County Civil Employes' Benevolent Association will be held Tuesday evening, January 7, at the Lexington Opera House.

Robert Worrell, of No. 150 East 91st street, who, it is suspected, belongs to a band of Harlem burglars, was arraigned before Magistrate Crane in the Harlem Court yesterday and remanded for a further examination to-day.

Carmilio Reale, who has been on trial for the attempted murder of his brother and brother-in-law, was adjudged a lunatic yesterday and committed to Matteawan by Judge Crane.

Henry R. Hallet, who was convicted of obtaining $8,000 from the Fourteenth Street Bank under false representations, was sentenced yesterday to serve a year and a half in state prison.

For the first time in five years a day went by yesterday without an autopsy being performed at the morgue. All of the Coroner's physicians were there, but there was "nothing doing."

William Chapman, Henry Volk and the latter's wife, who were arrested for robbing the apartment of Clarence Thompson, in East 183d street, of jewelry valued at $6,000, were arraigned before Magistrate Droege, in the Tombs Court, yesterday, and held in $2,000 bail each for a further examination to-morrow.

John McMahoney, who was convicted in 1904 of assault, sent to Elmira, and then paroled, was before Magistrate Droege in the Tombs Court yesterday, charged with breaking his parole, and was sent back to Elmira.

Magistrate Connorton, at Flushing, yesterday discharged George C. Meyer, a son of Cord Meyer, who was arrested on Sunday for speeding. Mr. Meyer denied the truth of the charge, and the magistrate decided the policeman was mistaken.

Try them for lunch and you will have them for dinner.

Uneeda Biscuit

The most nutritious staple made from wheat.

5¢ *In moisture and dust proof packages.*

NATIONAL BISCUIT COMPANY

BROOKLYN NEGROES TO CELEBRATE.

Parade and Exercises in Memory of Signing of Emancipation Proclamation.

The negroes of Brooklyn have made preparations for celebrating in that borough to-morrow the forty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by Abraham Lincoln.

The exercises are to be preceded by a street parade, the first to be held by the negroes of Brooklyn. Various negro civic, fraternal and religious organizations will be in line, and will be reviewed by Borough President Coler at Borough Hall. After the review a group of young women of the Garrison Guard Girls will, on behalf of the negroes of Brooklyn, place a wreath on the statue of Henry Ward Beecher that stands opposite Borough Hall.

The principal services will be at the Bridge Street African Methodist Episcopal Church, where Dr. W. L. Hunter will deliver the emancipation address. In the evening there will be an emancipation ball at Prospect Hall under the auspices of the Society of the Sons of Virginia and the Sons of North Carolina, the two organizations that proposed the celebration.

NEW HOFFMAN HOUSE OPENS TO-DAY.

Addition and Alterations Occupying Several Months Now Completed.

The new Hoffman House will open for business to-day after alterations which have taken several months. The structure is twelve stories high and has 216 hotel rooms. The new Broadway addition with "L" to 24th street occupies a frontage of 50 feet in Broadway, and this with the 50-foot frontage of the 25th street corner building makes a total frontage of 100 feet in Broadway.

The entire building is fireproof and every room in the hotel is open to fresh air. There will be four different restaurants in the hotel, and one of the features of the new building is an elaborately fitted up laundry on the roof. It is estimated that the value of the hotel property is to-day more than $5,000,000. This does not include the collection of paintings, which is known throughout the world.

J. P. Caddagan, the manager of the hotel, last night entertained about seventy-five friends at a dinner, which was served in the remodelled café, on the 24th street side. The toastmaster was Louis Seibold, and speeches were made by Justice Woodward, of the Supreme Court; District Attorney Jerome, Controller Metz, Julius Chambers, James Creelman, Charles T. White, Axel Warn, John R. Dunlap, George Crouch, Walter L. Hawley and others. The hotel will be opened to-night for its usual New Year's Eve business.

THE NEW HOFFMAN HOUSE, BROADWAY AND 25TH STREET.

WALLABOUT IMPROVEMENTS.

Conference Shows Congressmen Favor Them; Navy Yard Officials Oppose.

Plans for furthering legislation in Congress to secure authority for improving the Wallabout channel in Brooklyn were discussed yesterday in a conference held in the offices of Congressman Dunwell. Those present were Representatives Dunwell, Calder and Law; George Dressler, president of the Wallabout Marketmen's Association, and N. E. Drake, a prominent member of the same organization, Colonel P. I. Cooley and James T. Holle, secretary of the Manufacturers' Association.

The improvements contemplated were included in a bill introduced by Congressman Dunwell on December 2, and involve the cutting away of a large part of the cob dock in the Brooklyn navy yard. This measure is opposed by the commandant and other authorities, owing to the already crowded condition of the yard. The improvements are being agitated by the Wallabout Marketmen's Association, and, according to Mr. Dressler, Controller Metz has investigated the situation and declared that the desired improvement would require the removal of a portion of the cob dock.

Colonel Cooley submitted a report at the meeting tending to show how the proposed improvements would enhance the value of both the market lands and the United States government property.

APPRENTICE HELD BY OLD LAW.

Had to Finish Term or Spend Thirty Days in Jail on Bread and Water.

An old law was invoked yesterday to compel seventeen-year-old John Vaynan, of No. 138 Washington avenue, The Bronx, to finish his term as an apprentice for the firm of Untermeyer, Robbins & Co., jewellers, of No. 21 Nassau street.

Vaynan is employed in the shops of the firm, at No. 71 Cherry street. A few weeks ago the boy became angry because he got inferior setting to do. He left his work in disgust. Meyer L. Robbins, secretary of the firm, got a summons for the boy. Before the magistrate Vaynan admitted that he had not served his time as apprentice. Magistrate Droege informed him that he could be punished. The old law provides as a penalty thirty days in the county jail "on bread and water" and hard labor. The boy was discharged on the understanding that he would go back to finish his term.

THE HILPRECHT TABLETS.

Professor Barton, of Bryn Mawr, Demands Reply to Charges of Dr. Peters.

Philadelphia, Dec. 30.—At a meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis held here to-day and which is being attended by Egyptologists, Assyriologists and Bible students from all parts of the country Professor George A. Barton, of Bryn Mawr, presented a resolution demanding a complete public reply to the charges made by Dr. John P. Peters, of New York, reflecting on and questioning the authenticity of tablets which Dr. H. L. Hilprecht, of the University of Pennsylvania, added to the university collection as coming from the temple library of Nippur.

Dr. Peters in questioning the authenticity of the tablets practically accused Dr. Hilprecht of being a "faker" and having purchased the famous tablets. The text of the resolution presented by Professor Barton says that as charges have been made affecting the moral integrity of Oriental scholarship and against Dr. Hilprecht, the body in session share the desire expressed by the American Orientalists for a complete public reply to the charges.

The resolution was adopted unanimously. Mr. Hilprecht said to-night that inasmuch as the resolution was adopted in his absence he would make no statement.

EXCAVATIONS AT HERCULANEUM.

Rome, Dec. 30.—The Italian government, wishing to carry out the work of excavation at Herculaneum, has appointed a commission composed of eight professors and engineers connected with the National Museum at Naples to direct the work and publish reports of their discoveries for the benefit of scholars at home and abroad.

The Mayor of Rome has ordered the suspension of the work on the Aurelian Wall at Rome, wishing to hear complaints which have been made.

TO HAVE A HAND IN CHARTER REVISION.

The Municipal Art Society has appointed a committee, of which John De Witt Warner is chairman, to represent the society in connection with any revision of the City Charter. Regarding its work, Mr. Warner said yesterday:

"We shall take up the question of excess condemnation, provisions for a permanent commission to consider and report upon propositions for the development of civic art, including city plan and summary powers of dealing with public advertisements. We shall undoubtedly add other subjects which come within the scope of our society's work."

Other members of the committee are Charles R. Lamb, Nelson Spence, William Laurel Harris and Charles M. Shean.