IT BENEFITS THE PUBLIC.

THE COMPETITION BETWEEN PENNSYLVANIA AND CENTRAL.

A Glance at the Luxurious Trains Which These Lines Now Run to Chicago—Will They Strive for a Higher Speed?

In 1871 the Pennsylvania Railroad started the first fast train between New York and Chicago. It would be considered a very slow train nowadays, for it took thirty-six hours for the passage. Those were the days when all-night passengers slept in uncomfortable bunks, and trains made fifteen-minute stops to enable people to eat dyspeptic meals at wayside restaurants. There was little improvement in these respects in the Pennsylvania's fast Chicago train. It is interesting chiefly because the New York Central railroad, which then had, as now, a through line to Chicago, immediately matched it, and thus began a competition which in late years has been productive of interesting and remarkable results.

This competition was not very lively for a long time. Chicago was not of such vast importance as a traffic and financial centre then as now. It was only when the Pennsylvania road perceived its growing importance and established the "limited" train that the contest began to bring about big things. That was about seven years ago. The Central matched the Pennsylvania's limited, and has kept on matching every other improvement upon the line. It made improvements of its own, too, which the Pennsylvania immediately attempted to outdo.

The first direct result of the competition was the limitation upon the number of cars and passenger stops at intermediate places, with the idea of insuring a saving in time. Vestibuled trains also grew out of the competition, and were first used in the Chicago run. Buffet and compartment cars, steam heat in cars, improved light, comfortable living and sleeping apartments and other improvements, and comforts which now make travelling on some American trains as luxurious as life in a high-priced city hotel, followed each other in quick succession upon these Chicago trains, and were afterward adopted upon other trains and other railroads. The contest whetted the invention of the skilful and experienced men into ostrich in both roads, and the improvement in the service was amazing. Most of the improvements of late years originated in this contest, and were copied all over the country. Thus it is that the New York and Chicago run has come to be the inspiration of all recent advance in passenger railroad travel. It bears much the same relation toward railroading as the New York and Liverpool passenger traffic does toward general travel upon the ocean.

The advent of the World's Fair at Chicago has given this competition a new stimulus. There will be a remarkable increase in travel between here and Chicago before very many months have passed, and both railroads are already making great preparations to meet the demands of the occasion. Precedence in the race for popularity is the result more keenly to be sought for than ever, and already both roads have doubled their fast train service. A sign of the coming struggle is found in the names given by the competing roads to their new limited trains. That of the Central road is called the "World's Fair special," that of the Pennsylvania road the "Columbian Express." So far the competition has developed chiefly in the line of increased comforts and luxuries of travel. As yet the roads have decreased their time but little, it being believed that the present schedule of twenty-five hours is approximately a desirable maximum of speed. Under the impulse of the renewed competition it is not unlikely that the roads may begin a contest of time.

The competing railroads are on very nearly equal terms. Indeed, it is a question of personal opinion which has the more desirable route. The Pennsylvania has the advantage of a shorter line, the Central of a more level country. It is 913 miles to Chicago by the Pennsylvania road and 957 miles by the Central. But the Pennsylvania road climbs over the Alleghanies, while the Central has not a single deaving grade. Thus the two routes have each speed advantages and disadvantages which may be said to offset each other. Similarly the routes may be said to balance each other in point of scenic desirability, an element very important in modern railroad calculation. If the Central does travel the navigable length of the Hudson River, winding in and out among its famous mountains, crossing the centre of the great Empire State, and skirt the southern shore of Lake Erie, its beauties are placed second by many people to the picturesque wilds and hill mountain scenery of the Pennsylvania. Thus, though differing widely in many ways, the competing lines are singularly balanced in their natural features. There could scarcely be a more close or parallel lines, a more equitable field for contest.

The Pennsylvania road has pressed the contest from the beginning. It established the limited train at an advanced tariff because there seemed to be a growing number of well-to-do travellers who were willing to pay for comforts. The Central road replied promptly matching the Pennsylvania's then bold move by a train which was limited only on the Western line. Some years later it adopted the limited service both ways, and has since been no laggard in the contest. The Pennsylvania also made the first move in the matter of vestibuled trains through the Pullman company, which furnishes its sleeping car facilities. This was a distinct lead upon the Central until that road, through the Wagner company, matched the move with a vestibule of a somewhat different pattern, but quite as effective. This great advance, which was a direct outcome of the Chicago limited contest, has spread widely and done much to make long distance travel comfortable all over the country. The dining car was brought to some approaching like its present perfection in this contest also. It existed to some train long before, but in this competition it was so rapidly and vastly improved that it is practically a new feature of modern railroading. The buffet, smoking and library car is an entirely new adventure which appeared first upon these famous trains, and which as yet is seen little elsewhere.

Thus the contest went on. The question of light and heat, heretofore in the best of trains solved by lamps gas and stoves, was naturally the subject of vast improvement on the competing limited trains. Incandescent electric lamps in soft shades was the solution of the light question on the Pennsylvania train. A patent system of compressed gas which gives out no heat was adopted by the Central. Heat was furnished by complicated steam systems. Sleeping cars were also reconstructed under the influence of the competition. Before the days of the limited trains a sleeper was something much coveted but not often found by all-night travellers. Broad comfortable beds and private sleeping compartments furnished luxuriously with more than the comforts of a room in a city hotel, came in, and today the sleeping facilities upon the fast Chicago run lead the whole world.

At present the two great limited trains stand side by side in point of speed, comfort, and luxury. Each train is vestibuled so as to be continuous throughout, and each has every appointment commonly found in the best hotels. The famous Pennsylvania limited, for example, is made up of drawing and state room sleeping cars, a buffet parlor car, a dining room car, a smoking-room car, and an observation car. A complete kitchen is embodied in the dining-room car, and meals are served equal in quality and variety to those furnished in the very best hotels. There are sofas and writing desks in the smoking car, and a library of popular fiction and general works the catalogues of which are distributed through the train. The city directories of innumerable towns on the route are upon a shelf. A barber's shop with a barber always in attendance, and a bathroom for men, with hot and cold water, are features. There is also a buffet in the smoking car with a stock and facilities equal to any in New York. The stock reports of New York and Chicago are posted three times daily, and the weather reports can also be found on the line. Night stop the latest telegrams of the city newspapers are brought aboard. Stenographers and typewriters are furnished free, and letters and telegrams are forwarded from the train. Throughout the train are colored waiting maids in attendance upon the women and children, and there are women and children's nurses in attendance. In summer the cars are upholstered in a light mohair.

In a general way the central limited is identical. The trains are equally comfortable and luxurious, although they differ in some details. For example, the sleeping cars upon the Central limited are wholly divided into compartments instead of being, as on the Pennsylvania, partly compartments and partly ordinary berths. This insures each party of two a private room as well as private berths, and two or more rooms may be opened into a suite.

The Central road took the lead in the new departure preceding the opening of the World's Fair by putting on a new limited train this spring. This it called the World's Fair special. It is exactly like the original limited, except that it substitutes one ordinary coach for one of the sleeping cars. It is also 1 hour and 40 minutes slower than the limited, which still is a very fast train. In consideration of this slightly reduced speed the extra charge of $3 made to pass up in the limited is not made upon the new train. The charge of $5 for sleeping berths upon the limited is preserved upon the special, but the passenger may, if he chooses, save this money by keeping it in the seats of the ordinary coach. Thus the new train marked a distinct step in the last-time competition. It costs $28 to reach Chicago in the limited in 25 hours, but in the World's Fair special the traveller can get there at the expense of $20 in 27 hours and 40 minutes. For a number of months the Pennsylvania did not heed this move on the part of the Central. In June, however, it responded by matching the Central's new train with one similar in make-up and price, but twenty-five minutes faster in time. At present the Central is one train ahead in the contest. This is the North Shore limited, which is identical in every respect with the original limited except that it takes the Michigan Central along the north shore of Lake Erie.

The interesting question now is whether the competition will enter the field of fast time. It has been pretty much on a drawn game so far, while the contest lay chiefly in the field of comfort and luxury of travel. There are indications already of a cutting of time. For years the two trains have run on the same schedules so far as leaving New York and arriving at Chicago was concerned. There have been reductions from time to time as motors and roadbeds were improved, but there has been up to the present time nothing to indicate a strong competition in point of speed. It is not so since each limited train made the run in 25 hours. The exact times to-day are 24¾ hours for the Pennsylvania limited, 24¾ hours for the Central limited, and 25 hours for the North Shore limited.

The officials of both roads are non-committal upon the question of time but those of each road say they will match any decrease in time on the part of the other. That there is plenty of room for a contest is proved by the recent performance of an express to Buffalo over the Central road. It left New York 1 hour and 5 minutes late. It was 1 hour and 3½ minutes late at Albany and reached Buffalo 24 minutes behind the schedule, with total deductions along the route of 28 minutes. The same speed, if carried out over the entire route from New York to Chicago, would have covered the distance in less than twenty hours. The question of fast time on the part of the Chicago limited trains is, however, complicated with considerations of weight. These English trains which beat our point of speed do so because they are flyers in comparison of weight. The weight of the Central limited, for instance, is:

	Pounds.		Pounds.
Locomotive	121,000	Drawing room car	83,000
Tender	86,500	Drawing-room car	83,000
Buffet car	85,000	Dining room car	80,000
Compartment car	94,500		
Sectional car	93,000	Total	717,500

This will astonish English railroad men. We cannot have luxurious travelling without great weight, and this is incompatible with great speed. That much better time can be made, however, by the limited trains is an assured fact, and if it comes to a competition the weight can be lessened by decreasing the number of cars on limited trains.

A NOVEL DUEL ON A BAR.

Six Bottles and $60 Wagered on the Result.

A number of flies had settled on one end of the bar at a well-known up-town resort the other afternoon, attracted by a few drops of a sweet drink that had been spilled. A group of customers of the place stood near, but the tippling flies were objects of no interest to them until one of the group discovered a reddish-brown ant moving in a very business-like manner toward the flies. The presence of an ant of that kind in such a place was something so unheard of that every person in the house became interested in it at once. The ant hurried along until it was within three or four inches of the flies, and then stopped and seemed to be making a reconnoissance. Presently it advanced in a cautious, sidling manner toward the flies again.

The flies were apparently so much engaged in absorbing the strange delicacy they had come upon that they did not notice the approach of the ant, and even if they had there was nothing in the manner of the insect to strike them with alarm. The ant sidled along until it was close to the unsuspecting flies, when it made a sudden dash and seized a fly by one of its wings. This created a panic among the flies, and the unlucky one was left struggling on the bar alone for a minute. The ant was more than twice the size of the ant, and if the latter had seized the former by a leg or by the body the fly would have had no difficulty in bearing the ant away, whatever its ultimate fate might have been; but the wily ant undoubtedly had calculated on that when it made its attack on the fly, and by grabbing it by the wing made it impossible for it to rise.

In the struggle that followed the ant was tumbled and rolled and pounded about by the big fly, as a bear might tumble a woodchuck which presumed to give it fight. But the ant held on, and presently it accomplished what it had set out to do, probably from the first. It cut the wing from the fly, close to the body, and thus put an end to the insect's power of flight. The attack of the ant on the fly excited the most intense interest in the group of spectators from the start, and when the ant disabled the fly, after the lively rough-and-tumble round, a dozen to a week quickly made on the result, it odds became in favor of the ant.

The fly, unable to take wing, tried to escape by running, but the ant was upon it again in a second, and presently it had dragged it to the bar. By this time two or three of the fly's companions had recovered themselves sufficiently to compare and the trouble, it was in, and came back to aid it. They plunged down on the wingless ant and managed to break its hold on the fly, but the latter despite the serious injury had been done, but the ant dashed boldly to the fight again, and grabbed one of the newcomers by the leg. This fly rose from the bar, taking the ant with it, but the ant nipped the leg off, tumbled back on the bar again, and without the loss of a moment's time started in pursuit of the crippled fly, which was being helped along by its remaining comrades.

They might have succeeded in getting the cripled fly to some place of safety, but the spectators who had bet on the ant interfered at this point, and chased the remaining contingent away. The ant then pitched into the one-winged fly, and after another lively wrestle cut the remaining wing off. All this time the other flies were making efforts to get to their imperiled companion's assistance and had to be kept back by the bets of the spectators. After snipping off the fly's second wing the ant boldly grasped the insect by the head, and, throwing it over his shoulder as a lioness might a deer it had captured, trotted off with its prey, climbed down the end of the bar, and disappeared in a crevice. Sixty dollars in money and six bottles of wine were lost and won on the exciting ant and fly duel, which lasted five minutes.

COL. CORYELL'S WATERMELON.

It Had a Remarkable Interior that Made Good Bass Bait.

HAMMONDSPORT, Aug. 29.—A remarkable story comes from Pulteney, and it is vouched for by Pilot Harry Morse of the Lake Keuka steamer Urbana. It was told him by Alderman Baker of Pulteney, who had it directly from the lips of Col. James Coryell, also of Pulteney.

"I had been fishing over along Bluff Point for two or three hours the other day and couldn't get a bite," said the Colonel, "and so I thought I'd go ashore, get in a nice shady place, and cut a watermelon I had brought with me, and get some satisfaction out of that. I raised the watermelon in my own patch and I knew it had a right to be a good one. I had three hooks on my leader, baited with young frogs, and I left the bait on, placing the line on the ground, so the frogs could go in the water or stay out, just as they pleased. I propped the watermelon open, and I'ad any sooner done so than I dropped it and jumped too fast and, I guess, yelled some.

"Some people might have had nerve enough not to jump and yell, but it is my opinion that any one who had been cutting a watermelon as I was, and saw three green snakes over a foot long come sailing out of the inside of the melon, would have been likely to jump and holler just as I did. The snakes came out of that melon in a hurry as soon as it was cut, and tumbled to the ground. They paused there a minute, and then all three of 'em made a break for those young frogs I was baited with, and the first thing I knew I had three green snakes hanging to my hooks, with the frog bait inside of 'em.

"They kicked and wiggled around and tried to get away, but I held them. I went and poked up the watermelon, and I found that it was nothing but a shell. The snakes had cleaned out the inside until it was as smooth and dry as a tobacco box. There wasn't a hole anywhere where they could have got in but down at the stem, but there came out of it, certain, and I began to get a little scared. But there those snakes hung to my leader, and I didn't know what I had ought to do. I didn't want to lose my leader, and I didn't calculate to take those snakes off of the hooks, so I made up my mind to drag 'em.

"I waded in my boat, rowed out in the lake, and chucked the snakes in the water, letting out line to get 'em as far away from me as possible. I hadn't rowed more than three rods when I felt a tremendous strike, and before I knew it I was having a nice little bout with a big fish. I some kind. It was more than that. Those little green snakes had just happened to strike the fancy of three whopping bass, and I landed 'em after a hard fight. The smallest one weighed four pounds.

"Oh, I just rowed home as fast as I could, and went to my melon patch and broke open, I guess, a waggon load of melons, looking for some more of that boss bass bait, but I couldn't find another one, and I never was so disappointed in my life. I asked Dean of Hess of Pulteney if he could explain how those snakes got in that melon. He said he could, but he hadn't heard of any of the snakes being in the country for forty years.

"The female of this snake lays her eggs in watermelon blossoms, and they stay there until the melon takes up the blossom, when the eggs are covered by the melon and hatch. The young snakes live on the pulp of the melon, and wait the first opportunity of getting out. The three I released had been delayed so long that they were pretty near starved when they did get out, and promptly went for those tempting young frogs of mine. Dean of Hess forgot the name of them snakes, but I'd like to raise some seed of 'em. They're the best bass bait I ever saw.

SARATOGA STILL CROWDED.

Beauty, Jewels, and Toilets at the Hotels—The President at the Races.

SARATOGA SPRINGS, Aug. 29.—For more than a week there has been scarcely elbow room on the principal thoroughfares and in the large hotels here, but with the departure of the President the excursionists have disappeared and the hotel population has decreased, the latter, however, not to any appreciable extent. Saratoga is still teeming with life, and the prospect of two Conventions—the "Templars," 1,200 strong, on Sept. 1, and the Democratic leaders on Sept. 14, will prolong what has already proved an exceptionally prosperous season.

Except on the day of his arrival, when for one hour the President shook hands on the piazza of the Grand Union Hotel, the populace have seen very little of the Chief Executive. No public reception has taken place, and the masses have been obliged to content themselves with stolen glimpses obtained by hovering round the hotel portals. Hosts of churchgoers were disappointed on Sunday by his non-appearance. Every minister in town cordially invited the visitor to worship in his church, and to all the President returned courteous acknowledgment, but ended by remaining at the hotel during the entire morning. Private entertainments in his honor have also been noticeably few, in spite of the fact that both private cottages and hotels show a large contingent of political lights, prominent in army, navy, and social circles.

President Harrison was on Saturday evening at the entertainment in the ballroom of the Grand Union Hotel in aid of the New York Diet Kitchen. Marshall P. Wilder was the drawing card of the occasion, assisted by Mrs. Benjamin Nathan and Mrs. A. D. Jenkins, vocalists, and Mrs. Frank Kussak pianist.

From an educational point of view, if from no other, this race course is worth a visit. Judging from the grandstand, which at racing hours resembles a huge oblong bouquet, one would say more women than men attended the races, but there are hundreds and hundreds of men present who seek more exciting quarters in the vicinity of the bookmakers. If any one has an idea betting is confined exclusively to men, however, a visit to the Saratoga track will undeceive him. Not only women, but even children are there. Little girls go about talking learnedly about "place" and "to win," and from all indications the rising generation will far outdo this in speculative acumen. However, it must be said that while there are doubtless many women on hand who come for the express purpose of making money, the majority bet simply for pastime.

Such an amiable crowd as it is! Scarcely a person shows vexation if the loser or under stakeholder happens to be a young or pretty woman. If the $100 on Waterson, who, every one thought, would surely win, but, of course, did not, The aforesaid young lady never even changed color over the result. Out came a roll of greenbacks, and she started in again on the next race, but not quite so heavily, only to lose again. But the women are scarcely the only ones who missed a race this season. It was interesting to learn by careful inquiry of dozens of women that not one of them had come out ahead this year, the losses in many cases being quite serious. One lady stopping at the Union was out $500 last year and over $200 this, but she will probably return next year and go through the same programme. With her and with the majority, amusement, not money, is the end sought. One day last week a young couple between them lost $1,000. The lady lost $700, and her husband the remainder. The next day the man lost nearly every dollar of his pile. Very few of the women bet large amounts, $5 and $2, or even $1, is the usual sum, and often a party of four will chip in to make up the amount.

But for one thing the race meeting would be to this year's meet could be collected they would prove interesting reading, one declared. "It's all in the jockey. I have noticed that when Simms or Taral rides a horse that horse generally wins." A man remarked: "That's all bosh the jockey has very little to do with it. The better man lost. Tuesday was intently studying a green card bearing the legend "Jacks's selections," secured from a man who assured her the names printed thereon indicated with at doubt the winning horses. Said to relate on in one race all the outcome agreed with the card, but the last race the "probable winner" came in at the wrong end of the line, said a man, chuckling gleefully.

"I had a tip on that, and made $300."

"I wonder," sighed the woman who had been previously following the green card statistics, "how one can get a tip."

Very decided and entirely opposite opinions are expressed among sporting men in regard to this year's meet at this place. Some say an unusual amount of crooked work has been done, and that the bookmakers have reaped the biggest harvest, the clearest $1,300 on a single day in a week. On the other hand quite as large a number deny the cheating allegation, and emphasize the absence of anything resembling in the smallest degree duplicity. Said one, the latter: "I look at things from different standpoints. The man who loses heavily mutters he has been cheated; the winner is a sure fair play is to the fore."

The attendance at the race track has been larger this season than ever before, and the prospective new management promises great things for the future, among other improvements, a new grand stand, with greater seating capacity.

The grand stand is about as good a place as any from which to judge the beauty of Saratoga's air women. Strong daylight and sunshine are not generally considered, but the woman who owes the greater part of her beauty to cosmetics is not at the same place or in the same place as the shady piazza, or in the softly lighted drawing room. It can positively be said honestly that the quota of beautiful women in attendance this year is in spite of the increased population is not up to that of former years, and compared with that at other watering places is much below the average. Women quoted as beauties are often typical exponents of what art can accomplish nowadays, and exceptionally good looking girls form a very small proportion whose beauty is perfectly natural. At the Grand Union, which for some weeks past has entertained a larger number of the fair sex than any other hostlery at the springs, not more than a score of women can be counted—leaving the young girls who have sufficient natural charm to be called beautiful; and both there and at the other hotels there are more positively homely women than have been seen at Saratoga for many a day. The most attractive women are to be found in private cottages and more private hotels, and, therefore, are not so easily discovered. It must also be said the percentage of beauty here as between the Jewish and Gentile element, is larger in the first.

In the matter of toilets also Saratoga is not up to a very high standard this year. There are hosts of gorgeous gowns, illustrating every material in striking combinations, trimmed with a good deal of glitter but many are veterans in service, sadly wanting in style and freshness. Of course, there are many superb toilets—veritable artistic creations of recent production—but the owners are chary of displaying them. Exquisite morning toilets of the dainty cobweb like variety, a distinguishing feature of this summer's fashionable resorts, gowns which, although apparently simple, cost as much again as many a showy ball creation—are not seen in profusion. There are many and very beautiful ones, but they are not numerous enough to be remarked in such a galaxy of women. In brief, the class of toilet to the fore this summer is distinguished for neither elegance nor estilos.

In one respect—that of jewels Saratoga is not a whit behind former records. On the contrary, it looks as if everything had been sacrificed to meet this requirement. The commonest most dowdy-looking people wear them, while the display in many cases is simply astonishing. There is scarcely anything more beautiful than precious stones, and there is no gainsaying the fact that a more prolific display of perfect gems can be seen here than at perhaps any other watering place in this country. This year may be said to over-top all its predecessors in this respect, and it were worth while taking the trip to this place, if but to enjoy such a dazzling sight.

'TWILL BE A GREAT FAIR.

Westchester County Invites New York to Help Make It Great.

Oliver Sumner Teall, the irrepressible, bobbed up again recently as chief boomer for the Westchester County Fair, to be held the last three days of September and the first three days in October. He is chairman of the Executive Committee, and his associates are Joseph B. See and Edward D. Long. As a document prepared by Mr. Teall puts it, "the province of this committee will be to boom the fair and increase as largely as possible its exhibits and attendance, and to make it in reality the county fair of the city of New York as well as of Westchester county."

One of the features of the fair will be the horse show exhibit, and twenty prize cups have been contributed. Each is worth $50. Some of the donors are President Watson B. Duncan of the New York Stock Exchange, Gen. Ralph Brandreth of Sing Sing, Mr. and Mrs. James M. Waterbury, Henry Villard, William Rockefeller, Jr., D. Archbold, Gen. Samuel B. Thomas, T. J. Havemeyer, Orlando B. Potter, and William L. Ivins.

There will also be pony races.

Two hundred ladies have acted as patronesses of the women's exhibits at the fair. Among these patronesses are Mrs. H. Burton Seelbinder, Mrs. Daniel Drew, Mrs. Henry Clews, Mrs. Dudley Field, Mrs. Howard Mansfield, Mrs. Jeannette Bull, Mrs. Lawrence Lowery, Mrs. John D. Archbold, Mrs. William Rockefeller, Mrs. Schuyler Hamilton, Jr., Mrs. John Sloane, Mrs. Edward Clarkson Potter, Mrs. Lawrence Turnure, Mrs. Chauncey M. Depew, Mrs. Horace Porter, Mrs. Charles Mallory, and Mrs. James W. Gerard.

NOTES ON SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

In a paper on the corrosion of iron and steel, Mr. Rudolph Hering, an expert in this line of investigation, assigns galvanic action as the principal cause, and gives the results of the most recent experiments on the subject, notably those made by Thomas Andrews, a well known English metallurgist and chemist. In these, wrought iron was placed in connection with numerous steels and cast iron, and exposed to sea water for a period of some three hundred days. From these it was found that metals corroded much faster when in galvanic connection than otherwise; the best wrought scrap iron resisted corrosion better than either steel or cast iron, and the electro-chemical position of the steel changed frequently with reference to wrought iron, indicating that corrosion took place alternately in the wrought iron and steel. The position was almost constant, however, when connecting wrought and cast iron, indicating corrosion to take place almost entirely in the latter. Gravimetrical results are also given, showing the amount of corrosion in grains per square foot, per annum, under the conditions assumed in the experiments.

A novel device, one which seems to be regarded as a step at least in rendering railroad travel safer than it is at present, consists of an apparatus for automatically signalling a train at any given station on the line by the train despatcher at the directing point, which may be hundreds of miles away from the station at which it is desired to display the signal. The latter, however, is not intended to take the place of an operator; it is rather in the nature of an emergency signal, and a check upon the operator who may be engaged in other duties away from his instrument at the all-important moment. But not only this, the apparatus automatically returns a response to the despatcher, indicating that the signal as been set, and at the same time a bell is sounded to attract the attention of the operator, who is in this manner notified that his immediate attention at the wire is demanded. This mechanism is flexible in its application and there are many other important uses to which it can be put.

The weight of testimony, thus far, in regard to the various methods proposed for rendering wood incombustible, or non-alterable by heat, appears to be against the claim that a building encumbered with inflammable substances can pass through such a test uninjured. It is known that the methods resorted to for preserving wood against fire are principally two, viz.: the impregnation of the substance and the application of a paint or coating; the former has been found practically ineffective, and has even been pronounced by some as of dangerous tendency in the case of wood of large dimensions, though the treatment may be applicable to pieces of wood of small size. It is remarked that, of all the various substances which have been bought forward for this purpose, the concentrated solution of phosphate of ammonia has proved the most satisfactory, the substance, in fact, notwithstanding its high cost, possessing such peculiar advantages as to have recommended its employment in all cases where the matter of expense is not important. In the majority of cases coating with a brush is the really practical solution of this question, and according to Fels, Bondin and Denny of Ghent, the substance most suitable for use in this manner is the cyanide of potassium and asbestos paint.

An interesting trial has been made in Germany with silk weavers' looms worked by electricity. By a cable of 100 feet in length, a one-horse power electric shunt motor, with 100 volts and four amperes, was put in motion, and the transmission for the weavers' looms was restricted by a commutator to seventy-two revolutions. Two weavers' looms were put in motion, the result, as stated, being that the working by electricity was more satisfactory than that by means of caloric engines or gas motors, and that the swinging masses, otherwise necessary for the working on a small scale, can be dispensed with. The German papers think the results named show that house industry could easily be made to flourish by the transmission of electric power, and that all the machines electrically transmitted equally well under any temperature. Further trials in this direction are being made, also, with long-running dynamo machines, without the use of the commutator, for some looms even without shafting, therefore, with direct impulsion of the electric motor at the loom by friction rollers, &c.

Referring to the fact that photographs of the moon, taken at full, give that body an egg-shaped appearance, with the small end pointing toward the earth, a recent writer argues that this goes to prove that planet's non-globular shape, as was indeed to be expected. According to this writer's reasoning, matter at the surface of the moon is acted upon by two important forces—the law of gravity would arrange the matter in a globe around the centre, the moon alone considered, and the attraction of the earth, being always exerted in the same direction relative to the moon's centre, would cause the matter of the moon's surface to slide next the earth; the moon's slight rotation from different standpoints. The man on loose heavily mutters he has been cheated; the winner is assure fair play is to the fore."

The attendance at the race track has been larger this season than ever before, and the prospective new management promises great things for the future, among other improvements, a new grand stand, with greater seating capacity.

The grand stand is about as good a place as any from which to judge the beauty of Saratoga's air women. Strong daylight and sunshine are not generally considered, but the woman who owes the greater part of her beauty to cosmetics is not at the same place or in the same place as the shady piazza, or in the softly lighted drawing room. It can positively be said honestly that the quota of beautiful women in attendance this year is in spite of the increased population is not up to that of former years, and compared with that at other watering places is much below the average. Women quoted as beauties are often typical exponents of what art can accomplish nowadays, and exceptionally good looking girls form a very small proportion whose beauty is perfectly natural. At the Grand Union, which for some weeks past has entertained a larger number of the fair sex than any other hostlery at the springs, not more than a score of women can be counted—leaving the young girls who have sufficient natural charm to be called beautiful; and both there and at the other hotels there are more positively homely women than have been seen at Saratoga for many a day. The most attractive women are to be found in private cottages and more private hotels, and, therefore, are not so easily discovered. It must also be said the percentage of beauty here as between the Jewish and Gentile element, is larger in the first.

In the matter of toilets also Saratoga is not up to a very high standard this year. There are hosts of gorgeous gowns illustrating every material in striking combinations, trimmed with a good deal of glitter but many are veterans in service, sadly wanting in style and freshness. Of course, there are many superb toilets—veritable artistic creations of recent production—but the owners are chary of displaying them. Exquisite morning toilets of the dainty cobweb like variety, a distinguishing feature of this summer's fashionable resorts gowns which, although apparently simple, cost as much again as many a showy ball creation—are not seen in profusion. There are many and very beautiful ones, but they are not numerous enough to be remarked in such a galaxy of women. In brief, the class of toilet to the fore this summer is distinguished for neither elegance nor estilos.

In one respect—that of jewels Saratoga is not a whit behind former records. On the contrary, it looks as if everything had been sacrificed to meet this requirement. The commonest most dowdy-looking people wear them, while the display in many cases is simply astonishing. There is scarcely anything more beautiful than precious stones, and there is no gainsaying the fact that a more prolific display of perfect gems can be seen here than at perhaps any other watering place in this country. This year may be said to over-top all its predecessors in this respect, and it were worth while taking the trip to this place, if but to enjoy such a dazzling sight.

POLITICAL NOTES.

Philip Kiernan, the Representative of the Sixth Assembly district, was the only member of the Albany Assembly of 1886 who was chosen at a special election. He succeeded William Hall, who had died. Mr. Kiernan, who died two weeks ago, and was buried from his home in Lewis street, was the fifth member of the New York delegation who has died since 1886. The list includes Robert Ray Hamilton, who represented the Eleventh district, and Charles A. Binder, who represented the Tenth, and who committed suicide in New Jersey some weeks ago; James Haggerty, who died in 1887, and who represented the Twentieth district, and John McManus, who represented the Nineteenth. Of Mr. Kiernan's other colleagues in the Legislature from New York city, five have retired from active politics to conduct liquor saloons, one has moved to Hoboken, one is a deputy sheriff, one has been promoted to the State Senate, three are practising law, one is Deputy Commissioner of Street Cleaning, and one (only one of the twenty-four) was a member of the last Assembly and one is a Presidential appointment, Surveyor of the Port of New York. Six years makes a good deal of difference in politics.

The announcement of the low tax rate of 1.90 for 1891, the smallest since 1862, is a sad blow to the Municipal League reformers, whoused a large amount of printing and stationery last year (to say nothing of lung power) in explaining to the voters of New York how poorly they were governed, how wasteful was the municipal administration, and how near we were approaching to general bankruptcy.

Col. William L. Brown is not the only candidate named for the Congressional nomination in the Tenth district to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Gen. Spinola. Another candidate on the Tammany side, and a resident of the district, is Edward F. Flynn, a popular Democrat, who did not pass through the State of Ohio on his way to New York.

Thursday was the last day for filing applications for election inspectors, ballot, and poll clerks at Police Headquarters. It was a very busy day at that seat of official activity, but it closed with many of the districts unrepresented, wholly, or in part, in the list of applications. The securing of eligible, trustworthy and willing candidates in the month of August for service at the polling places in October and November is not always an easy one and this year was attended by rather more difficulty than is usually the case. The Police Commissioners will make their appointments between Sept. 27 and 30.

It has been determined by the leaders of most of the labor organizations in town to take an active part in the election of legislative officers this year, and in several districts, it is probable, nominations will be made. It is not entirely clear what is hoped to be gained by this course, as the labor people are not officially organized in any one district to be strong enough to carry it, and the running of a candidate over by him defeated has been tried frequently before, but without any justifying results which any one can see.

New York State has had four Ministers to England, five to France, three to Germany, and two, before that, to Prussia, three to Austria, two to Spain, three to Russia, one to Italy, three to Holland, two to China, and two to Turkey.

There is considerable rivalry between friends of Charles A. Stadler and those of Edward P. Hagan for the Democratic nomination for Senator in the Ninth district, which includes the whole of the east side territory north of Fourteenth street and south of Eighty-sixth street, between Third avenue and the East River. Mr. Stadler has served two terms, and Hagan has been a standing candidate for the office for several years. Mr. Stadler represents, in an especial way, the interests of the brewing industry in this district, which is a large one. He is President of what is known as the Sebastian Malt Liquor Company, and he is also at the head of a brewery company. In the Legislature last winter he favored a bill called by its opponents the "Dance House bill," concerning which THE SUN of Feb. 26 said: "The mere fact that the liquor dealers themselves, through a committee of their representatives, have made it a prerogative of the Legislature, and presumably take into their own hands the framing of a law which affects the health, happiness, business, morality, and good order of the State, should be a barrier to its favorable consideration." This was the measure which Mr. Stadler advocated and against which a formal petition, signed by eighty-three Catholic priests of this city, was presented to the Legislature. The opposition to Mr. Stadler's renomination dates from this episode; but Mr. Stadler has many opponents and it is entirely too early to predict who and to whom the nomination in this district will go. Democratic nomination here is about equivalent to an election, as the Republican organization in the district does not amount to much. The Democracy organization to still less, and the outlook for a Republican victory at all. Mr. Stadler's majority in 1889 was 5,090.

The colored miscreant who stole Wright Holcomb's oat and cover would have had much difficulty in locating the genial Assemblyman in the Ninth district a year ago.

The Republicans of the Tenth Assembly district have again come together. This happens every year, and each time they come together there are fewer of them than there were the year before. Judge Patterson has been singularly unfortunate as a lieutenant in the Tenth, no less than seven of them within the last few years, have committed suicide, while several have, on various accounts, fled from the State, moved away, gone in bankruptcy, given up politics or what has proved worst of all for a Republican, joined the Democratic party. He has, however, some friends, tried and true, veterans in his support still, the chief of whom is ex-Coroner Ferdi and Eidman, ex-Internal Revenue Collector. While the Republicans have been getting weak in the Tenth district the Democrats have been getting strong, but the contest in the Democratic organization this year renders this district doubtful and uncertain, and may affect similarly the Eighth, Twelfth, and Fourteenth, which adjoin it.

If Senator Roesch can't carry his district, perhaps Assemblyman Sulzer can.

The consideration of Stewart L. Woodford for the head of the Republican State ticket this year recalls attention to the fact that since he ran for Governor in 1879 six Republicans have been in the field for that office. Three of them, John Adam, John D. Morgan, and Charles J. Folger, are dead. Frederick Davenport and Warner Miller are dead politically, and Alonzo B. Cornell, the last Republican Governor of the State, has his fame perpetuated in the years City Directory as follows: "Cornell, Alonzo B., clerk."

The summary proceedings of the New Orleans mob which attacked the Italian prisoners has had a strong deterrent effect upon the growth of any political movement among Italians in New York. Prior to that time they prep red to organize, and expected to take an active part in affairs of the Second and Third Assembly districts. As it is, the movement has been abandoned, and it may not be resumed for some time to come.

No Republican candidate has ever run for Governor of New York for a third term, and the reason of this is that in every case the candidate had trouble enough in being elected to a second term.

Some adventurous individuals have mistaken the outward indications of the moment for a breach between Statesman Burke and Statesman Barry of the Twenty-third Assembly district. There is no breach, and, what is of greater importance, the interests of the Tammany Hall organization would not suffer in the event if there were one, as neither of the gentlemen named is Tammany leader there. That distinction belongs to Thomas F. Gilroy, Commissioner of Public Works.

From 1850 to 1876 New York State supplied the nation with no President or Vice-President. Since 1876 either the President or the Vice-President has always been a New Yorker.

The renomination of the five Judges whose terms of office expire this year is foreshadowed. They are all members of the regular Tammany organization, and as such are entitled by the Democratic usage which prevails in Tammany to the honor of renomination. Judge Ingraham has twice been a candidate for office, once for Assembly and once for Superior Court Judge. On both occasions he received a union Democratic nomination. Judge Pryor has never been closely identified with local factional differences, and Judge McCarthy was first elected to a judicial position as the nominee of the County Democracy. His opponent was the Hon. Timothy J. Campbell. Judge Ehrlich was nominated for his present position as a member of Irving Hall. None of them, therefore, could be seriously opposed by any Democrat on factional grounds. The case is different with Judge Gildersleeve, whose re-election to the bench would probably be at ended with serious difficulty. Originally a Republican, Judge Gildersleeve was the anti-Tammany candidate for City Judge in 1875. He secured courtesy votes and was defeated by James Fitzgerald. He was appointed to his present position by the Governor, though the State Senate refused to confirm him—a courtesy not withheld from Judge Ingraham, whose nomination was sent in at the same time. Judge Gildersleeve has been renominated, more or less, with all the political parties in town, and those who remember how vigorous a fight the Tammany leaders made for him two years ago without success are not sanguine of his election.

CHINA'S CRISIS.

Intelligent Chinamen in Mott Street Discuss Its Possibilities.

Ever since the publication of the war news from China, the Chinamen of New York have been on pins and needles. Never before have New York Chinamen of every phase of life bought so greedily the morning dailies, and they bribe the nearest newsboys or street loungers to read every line in print concerning China. Chinese interpreters have become very popular, and are the centres of groups of interested Chinamen, who ask for the latest despatches concerning Pekin and Europe. There is hardly anything asked about among them except the probabilities and possibilities of the Chinese complications.

The San Francisco Chinese newspapers arrived here last Monday, and every copy was sold at a premium, but how disappointed all were when they saw in none of them a word about Chinese public affairs! The Chinese newspapers convey to their readers the impression that there is no place in the world as happy and serene as the Flowery Kingdom now.

It is not altogether patriotism that makes the Chinese of New York appear so anxious about their home affairs. They seem to feel that should war be declared by the western powers against China, especially if the United States took an active hand in the matter, the Chinamen in this country would become hostages or prisoners of their country's foe.

THE SUN on last Friday somewhat relieved them by its able editorial on American neutrality, and it has therefore given much comfort to the Chinamen here. Like all soil citizens of any nation, the business men of New York's Chinatown prefer peace to war at almost any cost, but when five or six of the greatest powers on earth try to "wallup" their fellow citizens at home, they will rise to object. They don't care a cent for the safety of their Tartar Emperor's throne and they don't care who occupies it, but