VIEWS OF THE DAY.

BIFF!

An Enraged Philadelphian Smites Mr. Jerome Hopkins.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* A communication signed "Jerome Hopkins" and headed "Philadelphia and Music," appeared in your columns a few days ago. It is now nearly twenty years since I first met Hopkins. You will perceive that I simply speak of him as "Hopkins," just as I would of Mozart or Beethoven, neither of whom, unfortunately, did I ever meet. I was then, of course, younger and more impressionable than I am now, but even with those drawbacks to the full enjoyment of gazing upon him, far less of hearing him speak, I can say that I felt the gods had been good to me. Since that time I have occasionally heard of his wanderings, but have never seen him. Oft in the watches of the night have I awakened from a restless slumber and cried out "Hopkins! Hopkins! where art thou?" But there was no answer, even from echo herself, and I went to sleep again. Imagine my joy, therefore, when THE SUN told me that Hopkins still lived and that, too, in Philadelphia. Fate cannot harm me now; I know that Hopkins is here.

But Hopkins, I find from his letter, is dissatisfied; that is, he is satisfied that Mr. Walter Damrosch has "a mastery of operatic realms," although he does not specify the region that he rules over, and he is dissatisfied to find that there are persons in the world who are not satisfied of this. Hopkins does well to be dissatisfied; nay more, he would do well to be angry, if Hopkins ever could be angry. What must be the mental condition of a man who disagrees with Hopkins and the arguments that he uses? His style of argument is akin to that to which Daniel O'Connell treated the fish-wife, and we all know how effective it was. Hopkins was wont to tell me that the majority of musicians in this country were as unfit for the work to which they devoted themselves as the digger of a hole for a street sewer would be to construct a canal, or a hod carrier to be an architect. They were chiefly beer garden fiddlers; the men who supported them were millionaire pig stickers, and nothing was to be found in the world of music in the United States but supercilious pigheadedness, phenomenal monstrosity, boobyism, stupidity, and hebetude. These arguments were so convincing that I used to look upon Hopkins with a feeling akin to the awe with which little Paul Dombey gazed upon Mrs. Pipchin; who could have done else?

I am glad to find that Hopkins has not yet abandoned this form of argument. The Philadelphia newspapers thought that Mr. Damrosch's season of grand opera in this city was commonplace, that many of his singers could not sing, and, feeling this, they said so, and are now told by Hopkins that they were "carping, antagonistic, and amusingly erudite." In order, therefore, to be unlike them, Hopkins indulges in vituperation, misrepresentation, and a display of consummate idiocy. It is an ill wind for every reputable newspaper in the country to hear this blatant charlatan say that they praised impresarios like Mapleson, Max Strakosch, and other bygone impresarios, and that the presentation of operas by these men was, as compared with the work of Damrosch, like a rushlight to the rising sun. "I saw Mapleson's production of 'Aida' in New York this season," said Mr. Damrosch to me; "it was most complete, the chorus was magnificent." "And why should you not have a chorus like it?" I asked. "Ah!" he replied, "they were singers from Italy, and had two centuries of musical tradition behind them." Does the national possession of traditions impart a voice to an individual? Has not Germany as rich musical traditions as Italy has? The members of Mr. Damrosch's chorus did not have the voice.

When Charles Lamb was once speaking of Coleridge's monologues on the transcendental and the infinite, he remarked that there was a heap of fun in Coleridge. Coleridge is dead, but there is compensation in the thought that there is still a heap of fun in Hopkins.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 4. JOHN V. HOOD.

CHARLES STUART.

A Descendant of the Stuarts Denies That Charles I. Was a Martyr.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Almost 200 years ago before the term ritualism was invented, a church was dedicated to the memory of Charles Stuart, the first English King of that name, and is still known by that style in Plymouth (I think), England. If I mistake not, there is at least another with a similar dedication, whose building antedates by many years even the Oxford (or Tractarian) movement. The Rev. John Keble also, in his "Christian Year," published in the early forties, wrote a hymn in memory of the beheaded King, whose commemoration in the Anglican Prayer Book was set down for Jan. 30 as a day to be observed with fasting, a proper office being likewise assigned to it. In that hymn Keble styles Charles I. "Our own, our royal Saint!" But Keble was not a ritualist in any sense of the word—only a man whose head was full of orthodox, Tory, High Church notions with respect to the "divine right of kings," and with stated ideas as to King Charles being a martyr in the name of Episcopacy.

As a lineal descendant of the Stuarts, I was brought up with the same ideas and for many years, until my eyes were opened at an English university, firmly believed what I had always been taught, that, had Charles I. consented to throw the Church of England overboard, as an establishment, at least, and allow what Oliver Cromwell called liberty of conscience—*i. e.*, the establishment of independence, congregationalism—on the ruins of the Anglican Church, his life would have been spared. But that was away back in the later forties and very early fifties, when as yet ritualism was barely in embryo.

It is, therefore, hardly fair to saddle the modern ritualists with introducing a new cult, that of "St. Charles the Martyr," seeing that it is one of very old standing and that the present outbreak of fervent devotion to his memory is simply the recrudescence of one that dates as far back as the day on which Charles Stuart paid the penalty with his head of his own many crimes against religion and his subjects. His betrayal of Strafford (who certainly deserved his fate) was an act of cold-blooded, coward murder. As such, if there is anything in the Scriptural command that the blood of him that sheds man's blood shall in its turn be shed by man, he died the death of a man-killer. Furthermore, as a traitor to his people, a perjured violator of the coronation oath, and the direct and indirect cause of innumerable deeds of bloodshed, the scaffold was the fitting place on which he should die, and whether or not Cromwell was the righteous judge or his Parliament the rightful court to try the King is not the question. Charles I. got his deserts. Consequently, the whole martyrdom fabric, having no substantial basis to rest upon, comes to violent grief.

I could go further and prove upon the best possible evidence that the claims of austere morality and lily-white purity put forward on his behalf will not hold water. I have no doubt that of these Laches he sincerely repented long before his death, and I will grant that his later trials, his prison surroundings, as well as the nobility of his character—as a man, not as a king—to say nothing of the manner of his leaving this world, even at this late day, call forth a generous sympathy. But, then, he was an Englishman, and like all Anglo-Saxon stocks knew better than to falter in the presence of death. Thousands no more possessed of the martyr spirit than himself have shown similar pluck on the scaffold, on the field of battle, in the dreadest of emergencies, but they were not martyrs, all the same.

As a crowning anti-martyrdom argument I would notice that about forty years ago the Church of England blotted out the name of Charles I. from her hagiography; that the special office for the anniversary of his death no longer appears in the Prayer Book, and that in the cathedrals and parish churches where the service is carried on as in a church by law established the 30th day of January is observed only as any other feria in the calendar. If, therefore, the mind of the Church for which he is said to have died goes for anything (and the minus *Ecclesiæ* is generally considered to count for or against all such theories and observances), that Church, by wiping out his commemoration from her bede roll of saints and martyrs, has officially declared Charles I. to have been neither one nor the other. What need, then, have his *de facto* admirers of any further witness against their revived and in these United States foreign cult? For what has the American branch of the Catholic Church (commonly, but wrongly, known as the P. E. Church) to do with the "man Charles Stuart," whether as a king or a private individual, except it be to recommend its members to study him as a historical freak—even as a monstrosity?

A STUART BY DESCENT.

NEW YORK, Feb. 5.

A SINGING MOUSE.

Its Musical Ability and Its End in a Water Pail—Information Wanted.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* On Thursday night last a curious sound awakened me. It started from the upper end of the hall, and gradually getting nearer seemed to pass right through the door, which we had securely fastened, passed all around the room, and out into the dining room adjoining, and after circling around that room died away in the distance. My wife was very nervous about it. I must confess it puzzled me for a while, but knowing that there never was a sound of any kind that could not be accounted for, I got up and lit the gas. Sure enough, in a little while we heard the same sound again, but very plaintive this time, like the peeping of a little chick in distress, in a few moments the mystery was solved, for there was a little mouse in the line of light and with every movement of the feet he made a corresponding noise with his mouth.

I determined to catch the mouse the next night, and baited a trap with cake. The mouse had not been quiet more than fifteen minutes when there was a great commotion in the closet, and the mouse was in captivity.

In the morning I took the trap out of the closet and set it on the table. I found I had an ordinary looking mouse, fully grown, very sleek, with fine features, large, sharp front teeth, and a dark seal-brown coat. The mouse continued to sing all the time I was studying it, and when I started to whistle it stopped running around and seemed fascinated. As I raised and lowered the tones he followed them in his own way very sweetly and decidedly, but I cut his song short in a pail of water, to the great relief of the women. I account for the sad and plaintive notes of the mouse by the fact that he was shut in the two rooms and had no means of exit.

I have caught a number of mice lately, but this is the only one of the singing variety, and I have inquired among my friends for information, but so far I have met only one man that ever heard of such a mouse before. I have also hunted through my encyclopædia, but can find no information there.

If you or any of your readers can give me any information regarding this variety of mice, I shall be grateful. M. R. TARTAS.

NEW YORK, Feb. 3.

ABUSE OF SOME FOREIGN-SINGERS.

A Tremendous Tribute to Jean de Reszke.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Permit me, as an American citizen and a lover of justice, to protest against the recent continuous and unjustifiable attacks upon foreign singers, published in one of the so-called musical weeklies—exploited under the thin disguise of a "plea for American singers," which have for their sole object notoriety and malicious intent.

In these articles various members of the company of artists singing at the Metropolitan Opera House have been mentioned, but the concentrated venom of these sensational articles is directed against M. Jean de Reszké, the greatest tenor before the public and the most courteous of gentlemen.

The articles referred to teem with outrageous accusation and insinuations beneath contempt; in fact, the whole method of attack is so vulgar, so vindictive, that one tingles with righteous indignation, and "he who runs may read." Every possible effort is made by the author to lower and cheapen Jean de Reszké in the eyes of the public, a thing that would be difficult—nay, I speak wrongfully—impossible to accomplish, if one adhered to the truth. Absurd as it may seem, the man recently said, in so many words, that M. Jean de Reszké was not wanted in Europe, and that the season of 1896 at Covent Garden was a failure. I therefore append the following extract taken from a London letter, dated Aug. 1, 1896:

BRITISH OFFICE THE MUSICAL COURIER,
21 PRINCES STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE,
LONDON, W., AUG. 1, 1896.

The compliment of the London musical critics to M. Jean de Reszké that I referred to in my last letter took the form of the subjoined testimonial written by the doyen critic, Mr. Joseph Bennett. It being a purely personal expression of regard, no names of newspapers were mentioned, and the signatures, those of men who knew the gifted brothers only from across the footlights, include those of nearly all the leading London critics:

"TO THE BROTHERS JEAN AND EDOUARD DE RESZKÉ: To the great artists who have ever upheld the dignity of their profession and enjoyed the confidence and respect of the public. To the men whom success has failed to enervate and abounding honors to deprive of manly modesty. To the vocalists in whom survive the traditions of a glorious past and through whom the succession of all that is illustrious in their art has continued to the present hour. To the lyric actors who have given substance and vitality to creatures of imagination and made them live in sight and memory. We whose names are hereto appended, being musical journalists in London, desire to offer the homage of our admiration and gratitude—admiration of brilliant talents, gratitude for high example, and the rare delight of perfected art."

I do not publish the foregoing tribute because I deem it necessary to furnish any proof of M. De Reszké's world-wide and well-merited fame, but simply to demonstrate the dishonest purpose of the person who is endeavoring in every way to injure the great artist, for the extract quoted above appeared in the fellow's own paper of August, 1896.

It is time, I think, that cowardly attacks upon foreign artists should be held up to public opprobrium! American singers do not require sensational championship. When they have ability they do not need it in the background; they have not in the past nor will they in the future. Let us rejoice in this rare opportunity of hearing opera given at the Metropolitan Opera House by singers second to none. And, foremost among them, one of the world's great artists, the most distinguished tenor of his day, M. Jean de Reszké! The "Meistersinger," indeed! for when shall we "look upon his like again?"

C. L. WRIGHT.

NEW YORK, Feb. 3.

VARIED SUBJECTS.

Board of Regents Examinations.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Your attitude of justice toward all matters affecting the public good induces me to call your attention to the treatment of the pupils of the schools of this State by the Board of Regents.

The examinations of this board have all tended to a uniform high standard of instruction. This has been abrogated by the question papers in English of the recent January examination. Their absolute absurdity is only equalled by their base injustice to instructor and pupil.

These questions would have been good tests for university students; but when the schools for which they are intended only aim to prepare pupils for the various colleges, they are out of all reason.

I submit a few questions taken from the paper on elementary English, a study that should be completed by pupils 14 or 15 years of age; their absurdity must be patent to all interested in school work:

Question 4. (a) Give the principal parts of each of the following verbs: Wrought, ought, did, quoth, and went. What are the irregularities of these verbs?

(b) Give full comparison of old, next, upmost, last, and first.

Except "did," "went," "old," and "upmost," the forms given are the only ones in use, the other parts and degrees having been obsolete for many years. Still the learned gentlemen who prepared the papers want the standard in English raised by teaching absolutely dead matter.

The advanced English papers are all so difficult and unreasonable I will not quote them. In the paper on "American Literature" it was asked if "Thanatopsis" was a Christian poem, and to give reasons for your opinion. I think to answer this would give university men some thought, much less sixteen and seventeen year old pupils.

Seeing in this morning's issue, Feb. 2, the short article in which the board are trying to defend themselves, I cannot help but try and show you the exact state of affairs.

The result of the examination has been that teacher and pupil are discouraged and do not see the possibility of reaching the standard set.

The board has sent a circular letter to the various schools, attempting to place themselves in a proper light; but not considering those for whom these examinations are held, viz., the student. Not a word is said about the months and years of study upon these topics, or the disappointment and discouragement experienced. In the board's letter they said papers not up to the standard might be sent and they would be looked over.

I may not be a judge, but if the gentlemen who prepared the papers would use more elegant English in their questions it would cause less comment among scholars. These men are paid well by a severely taxed people to help and not retard improvement. As the Regents' Board have not been in high favor for some time with the most prominent members of the best college and university faculties, it would behoove them not to air their knowledge of dead roots.

CORNWALL-ON-HUDSON, Feb. 2. L. W. H.

Sport for 1897.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* This is a critical time for all lovers of true sport. Now that arrangements for the college boat races must be made, every one interested in seeing a boat race, the outcome of which, so far from being a foregone conclusion, would be shadowed with the greatest uncertainty, should lend his influence to bring about a triangular race between Yale, Harvard, and Cornell this spring.

Should Yale expect Harvard to row two races to their one, simply to avoid regattas of more than two crews, or can any one think that this arrangement would fairly decide the supremacy of Harvard or Yale on the water?

Last summer when Yale returned from Henley many rowing enthusiasts expressed their desire to see the Yale crew row at Poughkeepsie in 1897, with all the college crews. This would be the time for suggestions favoring the old time regatta's revival.

If the four-cornered race on the Hudson last spring was a success and proved the practicability of racing at least four crews abreast on that course, why should Yale not enter the race with Harvard and Cornell and save the expense of another trip to England until they have rowed again in America?

Yale's reason for ignoring Cornell, as expressed in a correspondence in yesterday's SUN, is so extremely weak that it would seem very little inducement to cause Harvard to oblige Yale with a separate race.

BROOKLYN, Feb. 3. J. S. S.

The Staten Island Ferryboats.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Will any of THE SUN's readers kindly tell me why the air of Staten Island is so conducive to such meekness on the part of its inhabitants?

I must say they are the most long-suffering lot of people with whom I have ever come in contact. I am not a Staten Islander myself, nor am I likely to take up my abode there until the mode of transit is materially improved, but I am really curious to discover how it is that people who come to New York daily will suffer without protestation the inconveniences to be experienced on the Staten Island ferryboats.

I went down last week hoping to find things so arranged that a business man might get to and from the city with a certain degree of comfort. The boat was the Middletown, and when we arrived at St. George I was thankful to get off alive. The injury to my clothes was nil compared with that to my temper. In my life I have never experienced such discomfort. The boat was slow, dirty, and fearfully overcrowded, the aisles being blocked with people standing. In case of accident or fire it would have been impossible for half of them to have gotten out. Returning home, it was my misfortune to strike the Westfield, which was anything but an improvement on the first named.

If any one can enlighten me as to why these antediluvian craft are permitted to run on a line as largely patronized as the Staten Island Rapid Transit I shall be greatly obliged. A CONSTANT READER.

NEW YORK, Feb. 5.

A Special Plea for Grammar School 85.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* At this time of changes and rumors of changes in the personnel of our city schools, will you permit a mother to enter a protest? My son is a pupil of Grammar School 85, an institution that is sustaining a most admirable record. It is alive and alert, and is conducted in recognition of current needs and demands. The principal of the school has established an "Anti-Cigarette League" among the pupils; has developed the idea of the American guard (inculcating patriotic sentiments), and gives every morning a brief talk on literature, very helpful and stimulating. The discipline of the school deserves special note.

The results that have come from the government of the school are due to the efforts of the principal and his well-trained corps of assistants. The high standing and the progress of the students are directly traceable to the harmonious co-working of many elements and factors, rounded by experience, under the watchful care of an able leader. Unnecessary changes are always perilous. Let historic "No. 85," with its honored past and its splendid present, be spared, if the proposed changes along the whole line be enforced. A MOTHER.

Ashmen and Snowflakes.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Sometime last year I was notified, in common with other householders, that a municipal or other ordinance calling for the separation of garbage and ashes was to be enforced and that after a stated date I must furnish separate receptacles for each section of this refuse. To-day the ashmen universally refuse to remove waste paper unless it be kept apart from the ashes and put in a separate receptacle.

The Commissioner's myrmidons neglect the ash can every snowfall as religiously as every minister is now discussing the story of Jonah and the great fish.

Living as I do on the ultra-fashionable east side I cannot, if I desire to keep the good will of my neighbors, follow the example set by the proprietors of the Colonnade Hotel in Madison avenue, who have adopted the method of disposing of long neglected ashes and garbage is simple and effective, and calls for universal approval. These gentlemen unceremoniously dump the contents of from ten to twelve ash cans and garbage pails right into the street.

For nearly a week not an ashman has been seen in our vicinity, and our neighbors have long cans full to the brim. Not a shovelful of snow has been removed from East Fifty-third street by the Street Cleaning Department the entire winter. Is this weather the inspectors of the Board of Health do not disturb themselves over such trifles: probably they too are esthetic in their ideas and deem a garbage can a fitting ornament to a fashionable street.

In conclusion permit me to ask why, when a snowfall occurs, the Department of Street Cleaning neglects the removal of ashes and garbage? Does such a condition of things exist on the west side or on Fifth avenue? FRANK H. VIZETELLY,
219 East Fifty-third street.

Rubber Horseshoers and Asphalt Pavements.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I have noticed several articles lately on the danger to fine horses from asphalt pavements, evidently written by some one who is not interested in any improvements and wants the same old block pavements that we have had for years. What is the use of continuing with dirty and noisy pavements just because the owners of a few horses cannot drive on the smooth pavements? Every one must admit that, from a sanitary standpoint, asphalt pavements are a great improvement on anything we have ever had before. No one will deny their cleanliness and advantage for our tenement house districts. Why should the citizens of New York put up with dirty streets and noisy pavements just because a few horses happen to fall or break a leg? I venture to say that ninety-nine hundredths of the falls a horse has are caused by the ignorance and carelessness of the driver, and as improvements in pavements have been followed by improvements in horseshoes—at the present time there are in the market rubber horseshoes that will prevent slipping on our smooth pavements—let the horse owner that wants to save his horses have them shod with rubber horseshoes, which I understand do not cost much more or cost over the ordinary shoe, and our citizens will then not have to put up with filth and noise on account of the carelessness of the driver, and it will be of benefit to horses and horse owners. CONSTANT READER.

Straightening Out the Joke About Bonguereau.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* It is a pity that the Paris landlady was deprived of a laugh at the joke which her American girl boarders could not translate for her, as told in THE SUN this morning about Bouguereau drawing so well that he will draw angels from his wife when he goes to heaven. They were unable to find a word in French meaning draw in both senses. The young woman ought to have used *tirer*. It is very often used in the sense of "to draw" (a picture) by the common people. *Tirer mon portrait*, the peasants say, *or tirer notre maison*. The landlady would have "caught on" at once. WILLIAM A. COFFIN.

NEW YORK, Feb. 8.

FOUGHT FOR THE ROBES.

St. Matthew's Choir Boys Had a Lively Sunday Evening Row in the Vestry Room.

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church on Sussex street, Jersey City, has been a hot bed of dissensions ever since the Rev. Montgomery Hunt Throop, who was the pastor up to a week ago, delivered a lecture to certain members of the male choir on the sacrilege of smoking cigarettes in the vestry room of the church on rehearsal nights. Repeated rebukes from the minister, instead of leading the young men into straighter paths, had the effect of establishing in the congregation two factions, popularly known in Jersey City as the Throops and the anti-Throops. Bishop Starkey finally took the matter in hand, and issued an order last week removing Mr. Throop from the ministry. The order went into effect on Saturday, and as it was necessary to fill the pulpit at the Sunday service, the Rev. Theodore Holcombe of this city was pressed into service. Mr. Holcombe went to Jersey City totally unprepared for the row, which occurred shortly before the evening service between the friends and enemies of the late pastor in the choir.

While the friends of Mr. Throop were triumphant, which was right up to the time of his removal by the Bishop, the anti-Throops deserted the church entirely. They never put in an appearance at the morning or evening services or at the Sunday school in the afternoon. Their place was filled to a very much in the congregation, but the choir was hit hard by the desertions, and Mr. Throop was finally obliged to appeal to the rector of Grace Episcopal Church for help. A number of the choir boys in Grace Church volunteered to take the places of the deserters, and for several weeks they have rendered good service.

Bishop Starkey's decision just reversed the order of things in the church. Mr. Throop's friend's got out in a hurry and the antis, to the number of twenty, were the only ones present at the Sunday evening service. Just before the time for the service to begin the boys who had deserted from the choir came around and tried to take possession. They ordered the new boys out, but the Grace Church singers refused to go. Then there was a rush for the choir robes, and the boys got into a general fight, punching and kicking one another around the vestry room. The lady dozen young women in the choir huddled in a corner while the fight went on, and Choirmaster Fisher made vain efforts to separate the combatants. Mr. Holcombe's entrance restored peace. The Grace Church boys had all of the robes by that time, and they sang throughout the evening service. The defeated ones vow that next Sunday night they will sing or there will be trouble. As a consequence, the police have been called in and will be on hand to keep peace. Whichever faction gets in the choir room first will probably be able to hold the fort before the late comers.

THE ONONDAGA SALT SPRINGS.

A Bill to Increase the Production and Fix a Uniform Price for Salt.

ALBANY, Feb. 8.—Assemblyman Bates tonight introduced a bill to perpetuate the fee ownership of the Onondaga salt reservation to the people of the State as provided in the State Constitutions of 1821 and 1846, and to increase the production of salt and prevent combinations from controlling the price thereof. The bill provides that the Governor shall appoint a salt Commissioner, who shall have control of the Onondaga salt reservation property, and shall establish a uniform price at which the salt shall be placed on the markets of the world, which price, however, shall not exceed five cents per barrel of 280 pounds weight over the actual cost thereof. The improvements of the salt manufacturing lots, except the salt manufactories and the necessary appendages, shall be paid for by the State to any manufacturer of salt who shall vacate the reservation or be dispossessed therefrom in consequence of this act, and the appraised value of any building or buildings, machinery, or fixtures of any description paid for by the State shall not exceed the estimated expense of replacing the same. The Commissioner thus the Land Board may lease, for a term not exceeding five years, buildings now on the reservation owned by individuals and corporations and used for the manufacture of salt. They shall entertain no proposition for selling, leasing or otherwise disposing of the property belonging to the salt springs of the State. Thirty thousand dollars is hereby appropriated for the expense of the commission. Two hundred thousand dollars is appropriated to pay the expense for the rental of such buildings as it may be necessary to lease, and for the payment for such buildings, salt vats, or covers, or other articles as the Commissioner may deem necessary to purchase during this year for the purposes of this act.

FAVOR THE BRIDGE SCHEME

EXPERTS SAY ELEVATED TRAINS AND TROLLEYS CAN CROSS.

No Difficulty in the Way of Sending Trains of the Brooklyn Roads Over the Bridge—Arrangements for Extending the Trolley System Not So Easy but Still Feasible.

The trustees of the Brooklyn Bridge met at their office in Brooklyn yesterday at 11 o'clock to elect a President in place of the late Mr. Howell and to receive the report of the commission of experts which was appointed in October to consider whether it would be possible and desirable to allow Brooklyn elevated railroad trains and trolley cars to run over the bridge in addition to its present uses. Mayors Strong and Wurster, Comptrollers Fitch and Palmer, and Messrs. Page, Henriques, Keeney, and Berri, comprising the entire board, were present. There was no contest over the election. Mayor Wurster named Mr. Berri for the place and his election was unanimous. Mr. Page then tendered his resignation as Vice-President, giving ill-health as his reason. The resignation was accepted and Mr. Henriques was elected in his place. Then the report of Virgil G. Bogue, George H. Thompson, and Leffert L. Buck, the expert engineer commissioners who had examined into the feasibility of running elevated and surface cars over the bridge, was presented. The report covers twenty printed pages. The conclusion of the experts is:

"From an engineering or operating point of view, we have discovered no adequate reason why, under suitable contracts, the cars of the surface railroads and the trains of the elevated railroads, or either of them should not be permitted to operate on the bridge.

WILLIAM BERRI.

"If both systems of railroads are permitted to cross, the people will be provided with the maximum of bridge facilities now attainable, while the bridge will be in a position to afford its maximum of utility, both as a factor in furnishing the most agreeable and convenient means of trasit over the river, and as a source of income."

In arriving at this conclusion, the report says, the Commissioners have considered the questions of the strength of the bridge, the possible interference with vehicle traffic on the roadways, plans by which elevated trains may be introduced upon the present bridge tracks and operated in conjunction with the regular bridge trains, and the other necessary plans by which trolley cars may be brought upon the roadways and provided with an adequate and convenient means of taking on and discharging passengers, and with other terminal facilities at the New York end of the bridge and also the means of getting around at this end of the bridge from the incoming track to the outgoing one.

As regards the question of the strength of the bridge, the report says that inasmuch as it is not proposed, by introducing elevated trains, to do more than replace part of the possible service of the bridge trains by this means with trains which are not heavier than the present bridge trains, this part of the proposed change would add nothing to the load.

As regards the proposed trolley service the report is not as satisfactory. The trolley cars could run on the present roadways where the suspended structure is carried principally by the two outer cables. These cables are capable, the experts say, of carrying the greater load with safety, but the stiffening trusses which distribute the load to them are weak. If a fairly uniform distribution of the cars on the bridge can be maintained the present trusses will continue to serve their purpose, but the report says:

"If there could not be such uniform distribution of the load—that is, if the cars were to be frequently bunched together over one portion of the suspended structure, while other portions were clear—or if there were a practice of starting a procession of cars 102 feet apart across the bridge, while there were none ahead on the roadway, the conditions would be unfavorable with respect to the outer trusses.

"The outer trusses are nine feet high, while the inner ones are seventeen feet three and a half inches high. The former are, therefore, less capable of distributing the loads to the cables than the latter. In fact, if the unfavorable conditions mentioned were to prevail, it would be necessary to replace the outer trusses with others made higher and therefore stronger, although, not necessarily of proportionally greater weight. So long, however, as the distribution proposed is well observed, and we believe it can be, the outer trusses will have ample strength for the distribution of the loads.

"The inner cables have greater permanent and transitory loads than the outer ones, and this would still be true if surface cars were permitted to cross the bridge on the conditions proposed. Of the additional load which the surface cars would bring upon the cables and stays of the main span only seventy-five tons would be transferred to the inner cables. The effect upon their margin of safety would be inappreciable.

"The plans for providing terminal facilities for the trolley cars involve the making of much greater changes than do those relating to the elevated trains. These changes would be mostly at the New York end of the bridge. At the Brooklyn end the cars would enter and leave the roadways at grade, and the changes there would be merely in the positions of tracks in the streets adjoining and the providing of routes about the bridge entrance by which the cars of the various lines could make connections with the bridge. The report says of this:

"We think they (the railroad companies) should make such arrangements with each other that all cars destined for New York can approach the north roadway entrance from Washington street, and all cars arriving from New York, on leaving the south roadway, should find their way to their respective lines via Fulton street. This would require the cars of a few of the lines to go around a loop formed by Sands street, Fulton street, and Prospect street to Washington street; where they would reach their several destinations via Washington, Adams, and Jay streets. This would distribute the cars over several streets, and materially lessen the pressure on Fulton street. Liberty street would remain the best vehicle approach to the bridge entrance."

The tracks across the bridge would be on the outer side of each roadway. They would be made of a special form of flat rail made for bridges, with a groove for the wheel flanges. Leaving a clearance of eleven inches between the widest cars and the outer trusses, these cars would take up 8 feet of the inner side of the roadway and leave a space of ten feet clear for other vehicles.

As the track on the northern roadway approached the New York terminal it would be carried out to the northward of the present approach on a curve which would begin 305 feet east of the eastern end of the present terminal building. It would then rise for 165 feet on a grade, which, combined with the drop of the roadway, would bring it fifteen feet in the clear above the roadway. It would return by another curve to a position parallel with the northern side of the roadway. For 100 feet more it would follow a level grade, then descend gently for 133 feet, where it would reach a level stretch of 210 feet in length, with the tracks two feet higher up than those of the present bridge rails. Then it would begin an ascent on a 5 per cent. grade, and running 390 feet more would meet a half-circle curve which would carry it around the west end of the terminal building, over Park row and over the top of the City Hall station of the Third avenue elevated railroad. The loop would carry it to the beginning of a similar arrangement of tracks that would finally connect it with the straight track on the south side of the bridge entrance.

To provide standing room for the cars while they were loading and unloading and means for getting to and from them while at the same time leaving the main track clear for car movements, fifteen side tracks would be built along that part of the loop which began just east of the terminal building. Two of these on each side would be east of the present terminal building, others along the stretches of track to the loop proper, and four of them on an inside loop. These side tracks and the platforms to be provided beside each would be covered by building galleries out on each side of the present terminal structure and an extension of the gables on Park row. There would be standing room for twenty-two cars on the fifteen side tracks. Fifteen of these stations would be used for receiving and discharging passengers, and fourteen new stairways would be provided for reaching them.

Each street railway line would have its separate station and signs would lead the passenger to his proper car. The switches to let cars onto each siding would be operated from a central tower. The switches to let the cars out would work automatically. In operation the cars would run into their proper sidings, the front gate be opened to let passengers out and the rear gate opened to let outgoing passengers aboard. Then the gates would be closed, the car would start, and make no stop until it arrives in Brooklyn.

If the proper siding should be full when a car approaches, the switchman would turn the car into one of the waiting sidings, where it would remain until its own station was vacant. The plan does not involve the taking of any property outside of that belonging to the railroads under one management, and that of the trains, while on the bridge, would be under the absolute control and subject to all the rules and regulations of the bridge management."

The report was referred to a committee consisting of Mayor Wurster, Comptroller Palmer, and Mr. Henriques, with instructions to report at a special meeting of the board next Tuesday afternoon.

PORT RICHMOND STREET MUDDLE.

Village Trustees Cannot Open a Street, but Must Pay Damages.

Sheriff Dailey of Richmond county has levied on the safe and furniture in the meeting room of the Port Richmond Board of Trustees, under an execution issued against the village in favor of David Decker. The judgment is for $1,881.14 and is the outcome of a long fight over the opening of a boulevard. The thoroughfare was laid out, the awards of damages and benefits were made, and bids were advertised for when the village board was served with an injunction obtained by property owners who opposed the improvement. Mr. Decker, representing citizens who favor the new thoroughfare, brought suit to enforce the payment by the village of the amount awarded him for damages. He secured judgment; an appeal was taken to the Supreme Court, and was affirmed by Justice Dykman.

The trustees are now in the position of being forced to pay for the property taken and at the same time are restrained from opening the street or collecting the assessments. The cost of the property taken is about $80,000, and the village has only a few hundred dollars in the treasury.

Until some settlement is arrived at the Sheriff will retain possession of the meeting room of the trustees, together with the safe containing all the village books and papers.

QUEENS COUNTY TRAMP BILLS.

Common Usage Permits Officials to Collect Exorbitant Fees.

HEMPSTEAD, L. I., Feb. 8.—Thomas M. Griffin of Riverhead and James R. Willets of Roslyn, who were appointed by Justice Garretson a committee to investigate the manner in which the members of the Town Board of Hempstead are alleged to have collected exorbitant fees, began their inquiry in the Town Hall to-day. Former Town Clerk Francis Brill was the star witness. He admitted that he charged 165 days' service for a period of 113 days' actual work, at the rate of $2 and $3 a day, but said that the excess of days was probably due to an error made on the part of his daughter, who acted as his deputy. When he examined the bill and swore to its correctness he didn't notice the overcharge. The witness said it was the custom to charge for Sundays and holidays. As to other alleged unauthorized charges he was asked if he knew of any law that permitted him to make the charge.

"None except the law of common usage," was the answer.

This investigation is being pushed by the Taxpayers' Association of Queens county and Hempstead. Constables and deputy sheriffs have made $1,500 and $2,000 in three months by filling the Queens county jail with tramps will be asked to make an explanation.

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FEW OFFICES TO GIVE OUT.

87,107 FEDERAL PLACES ARE NOW IN THE CLASSIFIED SERVICE.

Of the 91,610 Not Yet Classified, 66,725 Are Fourth-Class Postmasters, and the Commission Now Recommends That They Be Included in the Classification.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 8.—The annual report of the Civil Service Commission shows that at the beginning of President Cleveland's last Administration there were about 43,000 places included in the classified service. The total approximate number of positions in the civil branch of the Government is 178,717, of which 87,107 are now in the classified service and 91,610 in the unclassified service. Of those in the classified service, 84,239 are arranged in classes by compensation and subject to examination or registration, 26 are appointed by the President alone, 781 are exempted from examination or registration, and 2,061 are Indians in the Indian service. Of those in the unclassified service, 5,570 are excluded from classification for reasons deemed best for the service, 4,815 are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, 8,854 are persons employed merely as laborers or workmen, and 72,371 are considered as classifiable but are not yet classified. Of these not yet classified, 66,725 are Postmasters of the fourth class. Of those remaining in the classifiable but unclassified group many will be transferred to the classified service by the action of the rules, as, for instance, in the customs service, when the number of employees in a Custom House becomes as many as five, and in the Post Office service when a Post Office becomes a free-delivery office.

The aggregate compensation paid in the executive civil service of the United States during the year ended June 30, 1896, was approximately, $100,000,000.

The whole number examined for the five branches of the classified service during the year ended June 30, 1896, was 31,270, of whom 20,493 passed and 10,876 failed to pass. Compared with the previous year this shows an increase of 379 in the whole number examined, an increase in the whole number who passed of 601, and a decrease in the whole number who failed to pass of 312.

Under the head of removals the report says that during the last four years the removals from competitive positions in the classified departmental service at Washington have been less than 2 per cent. a year for all causes, not including such removals as resulted from necessary reductions in the force. In the unclassified and excepted service at Washington the removals are believed to have aggregated in the four years at least 50 per cent. From these figures the conclusion must be drawn that either the persons brought in through examinations are far more efficient than the others, or the removals from the unclassified positions have been made for other causes than the good of the service.

By the revision of the civil service rules, practically all of the excepted positions were transferred to the competitive list. The commission believes that the greatest benefit will result to the public service by this action, which transferred to the competitive list many important positions, including those of chiefs of divisions. Heretofore chiefs of divisions became the football of politics, as those who were adherents of one political party had to give way to the adherents of another party upon each change of administration. Subordinate employees have been selected for recognition on account of their fitness while previously chiefs of divisions have often been appointed without regard to their qualifications. Naturally the chiefs who had short terms of service required the knowledge of their own duties and knew practically nothing about the work of their subordinates, who were supposed to carry out their instructions in regard to the manner in which the work should be done.

The report shows the number of removals from the service for violation of rules, and quotes from various Cabinet officers and bureau officials, who testify to the great benefit of the merit system, and says it was the intention of the founders of our Government that administrative officers should hold office during good behavior. The report mentions the consolidation of small Post Offices with free-delivery offices, and says that fourth-class Post Offices should be included in the classification by executive order. "When these extensions of the classification have been made and the four-year tenure of office acts are repealed, and when registrations are in peaceful operation in all the departments requiring that promotions be based upon the efficiency of employees, the reforms in the executive civil service will be practically complete."

OBJECTS TO "EXPLOITATION."

Meredith Wants an Injunction Against the Zinc Trust Proposition.

Vice-Chancellor Pitney heard argument in Jersey City yesterday on a motion for an injunction