MILLER ON THE FACTORY FIRE

BUILDING DEPARTMENT NOT TO BLAME, HE SAYS.

Systematic Inspection Not Required of His Department, He Says Hasn't Force Enough to Do It—Changes Ordered on Complaint—Funeral Parade.

Rudolph P. Miller, Superintendent of Buildings, said yesterday that the responsibility for the deaths in the Washington place fire certainly did not rest with his department. It has never been the custom, Mr. Miller said, for the Building Department to make systematic inspections, and even if the law compelled him to do so he would not have sufficient men to carry out the provision.

"This bureau is not charged with the systematic inspection of buildings after they are completed," said Mr. Miller. "The law provides what buildings shall be provided with fire escapes, and when we find any buildings that need fire escapes we order them installed. But we find them out as a rule when our attention is called to them through a complaint.

"Most of our information comes from the State Factory Inspection Bureau. I have never looked up the laws as to what the duties of the State factory inspectors are, but my impression is that they are charged with the systematic inspection of factories. Whenever the factory inspector finds that the exit facilities are inadequate he makes report to that effect to this bureau. Then we make an investigation, and if we find the report is justified an order is issued for fire escapes to be constructed."

Mr. Miller said that the Asch building was above the average in fireproof construction and that there had never been a complaint against it so far as he knew from the records in his office. The building could have had open staircases and still have been within the law, and the doors need not have been fireproof. Mr. Miller said that there had been no complaint about the partition on the ninth floor which it is said was responsible for so many deaths. He said the inspectors had no way of telling whether such a partition had been built unless they happened to be going through the building in answer to a complaint.

Mr. Miller then went on to say that he had found it very difficult to bring about safe conditions in building. The laws are inadequate to cope with the conditions he has found, and he cited cases where plans had been filed and a building constructed as an office building and then when it had been completed the owner filled it up as a factory. There was no way, Mr. Miller said, for him to make the owner change his building so as to make it safe under the new conditions. He told of a building in Brooklyn that fulfilled the requirements as an office building and then had been turned into a public school, and the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court had held that as the construction of the building had not been changed there was no way to force the owner to build fire escapes.

The subject of systematic inspection was brought up when it was found that Harris and Blanck, the proprietors of the Triangle Waist Company, whose employees were killed in the fire of last Saturday, were running a shop called the International Shirtwaist Company on the top floor of a six story building at 9 University place. A complaint was made to the Building Department on March 29 that almost the same conditions existed there as in the lofts where the fire occurred. A building inspector recommended that additional balconies be built leading to the fire escape, that fireproof doors opening outward to the fireproof stairways be constructed, that the windows leading to the fire escapes be cut to a level with the floor and provided with metal sills and that obstructions to the fire escapes be removed.

All the doors in the shop open inward, and there is only one small fire escape, that terminates in an enclosed court in the rear. To get to this fire escape in case of fire many of the eighty employees would have to climb over two rows of sewing machines, with only one small opening. These rows of machines are nearly seventy-five feet long, and at the ends there is a space just large enough to let one person through at a time.

Mr. Harris, the proprietor of the shop, said that he is going to make openings through the rows of machines as soon as possible. He never thought anything about it before the fire, and the inspectors who visited the shop were contented with a superficial examination and gave no orders that a passage be cleared to the escapes. He said the conditions in his present shop are no different from those of any other shop in town, and perhaps are a little better.

No investigation would have been made of this shop, according to Mr. Miller, unless a complaint had been made to his office.

The investigation which has been conducted by Fire Marshal Beers into the cause of the Washington place fire was completed yesterday. His report will be ready on Wednesday. One copy will be placed in the hands of the District Attorney.

"The matter of determining if criminal negligence was responsible for the death of any of the victims will have to be attended to by the proper authorities," said the marshal. "It does not lie within my province to say whether the narrow passageway between the end of the machines on the Greene street side and the wall of the cloakroom on the ninth floor was a matter of neglect.

"Other people will have to interpret the section of the Building Code which says that all permanent partitions in a 'fireproof' building must be in themselves fireproof. The code says, I believe, that a wooden partition not more than six feet high is a fixture, but when that partition reaches to the ceiling, as this one did, the question arises whether or not the factory or building inspector should have allowed it to stand.

"As to my conclusions: I believe the fire in the Asch building was caused by a cigarette or by a match used to light a cigarette. The great loss of life was caused by panic, by the inflammable nature of the contents of the three floors and by the great congestion of the factory equipment, which made it impossible for the workers to make their way straight to exits.

"The conditions all through the sweatshops in the city are radically wrong. Before a factory is installed there ought to be filed with the Building Department complete floor plans showing the location of the machines, the tables, the motors and so on, and giving the number of people to work on each floor."

Marshal Beers concluded that the hose in the building was in good order. James Casey, the engineer of the Asch building, who lives at 119 Christopher street, said that the water tank on top of the building was full because the automatic pump in the engine room was running at the time. Casey couldn't remember how long ago it was that an inspector had asked to be conducted around the building. No complaint about the standpipes had been made during the five years he has been engineer.

The arrangements committee of the Ladies' Waist and Dress Makers Union and the United Hebrew Trades and the auxiliary committee of the unions under the auspices of the Women's Trade Union League decided yesterday on Wednesday next as the day for the proposed demonstration of the unions in honor of the unidentified victims of the Triangle Waist Company fire. The United Hebrew Trades and the Ladies' Waist and Dress Makers' Union [illegible] for the formation in line of the Jewish unions and the Women's Trade Union League committee is making the arrangements for the marshalling of the German, Italian and English speaking organizations which are to take part in the demonstration.

Both committees are taking it for granted that a permit for the parade will be given. William Mailly, secretary of the committee of the waist makers and the United Hebrew Trades, said:

"The only point to be settled is the question of the funeral of the victims being held in connection with the parade. We would like to have the interment of these bodies by the Department of Charities take place at the time of our demonstration."

The committee of union delegates formed under the auspices of the Women's Trade Union League met yesterday afternoon at the headquarters of the league, Mrs. Therese Malkiel presiding and appointed sub-committees to distribute circulars calling for the parade. It was also decided to appoint a committee of five to confer with the committee on workmen's compensation of the unions in the building and other trades which has been testifying from time to time before the Wainwright commission, with a view of having a permanent bureau established by the unions to watch out for violations of the laws relating to safety in factory and other buildings.

The Grand Jury that is investigating crime conditions in New York was yesterday instructed by Judge O'Sullivan of General Sessions to take up the matter of the Washington place fire.

Judge O'Sullivan said that the District Attorney's office was making an investigation along with investigations in other city departments and that it was important that the Grand Jury at the earliest possible moment get all the available facts. The Judge said that the crime investigation would not engage them exclusively and that they would have ample time to consider the question.

The additional March Grand Jury that had offered its service was thanked by the court.

One of the features of the benefit given for the Washington Square fire sufferers by the entire theatrical profession, which will be given at the Metropolitan Opera House on April 11 under the auspices of the Association of Theatrical Managers, will be an orchestra of more than two hundred members. It will be the largest orchestra that has ever been gathered for a single performance. Victor Herbert yesterday volunteered to conduct it for selections from his best known operas. The orchestra will be made up entirely of members of the Musical Union representing all the orchestras in the city, who have volunteered their services to any extent that the association might require.

The stage hands have offered to handle free of charge the scenery required for the various acts and to assist in carrying it from the various theatres to the Metropolitan Opera House.

The number of unidentified dead at the Morgue was reduced yesterday to twelve, counting one skull. The three identifications were:

LEVIN, JENNIE, 19, of 276 Delancey street.
ROOTSTEIN, EMMA, 32, of 536 Fifth street.
ROSEN, ISRAEL, 17, of 78 Clinton street.

Jennie Levin was the girl whose body, supposedly that of an Italian, remained at the Morgue so long unidentified, despite the fact that she was readily recognizable. Her brother, Joseph Levin, of 173 Howard street, Newark, N. J., told the attendants at the Morgue that she had come to New York only a few days before the fire and that the family with whom she boarded in Delancey street had told him that she had not been there since Saturday and that she might have been caught in the fire. She was a Jewess.

Israel Rosen's sister Esther identified his body. She had been at the Morgue on Monday and had found the body of her mother, Julia Rosen. Mrs. Rosen was the woman who had $869 with her when she was killed.

FIRE SUFFERERS HELPED.

All Emergencies Met and a Total of $64,000 Has Been Contributed.

This statement was given out yesterday afternoon at the office of Jacob H. Schiff, treasurer of the Red Cross, relative to the relief work which has been accomplished for the benefit of the families of those killed or injured in last Saturday's fire:

A meeting of the Red Cross emergency relief committee was held yesterday afternoon at which full reports were received of the work already done. A complete list of the names and addresses of those who had been lost or injured, so far as identification had gone, was in the hands of the committee when it opened its office on Monday and other names and addresses have been received as identification has proceeded. Every family has been visited and all emergent needs met. In a number of instances relief has been declined on the ground that the family resources were sufficient. The committee has respected and honored such self-reliance. Nor has it obtruded relief when relatives or friends claimed a preferential right to bestow it.

The committee has not waited for applications to be made to it thinking that those whose real need was greatest might be the last to apply for charitable relief. The amount received by Jacob H. Schiff, treasurer, up to the time of the meeting was upward of $63,000. The committee thought it inexpedient to make any further appeal for funds inasmuch as the amount already received with what is likely to come in will presumably be sufficient for the committee's purposes.

Mr. Schiff's office reported last night that $64,365.92 had been received in all. The amount taken in yesterday, including $2,423.24 received by Mayor Gaynor Thursday and forwarded to Mr. Schiff yesterday, was $8,448.05.

Employees in stores and factories, firms engaged in manufacturing enterprises similar to that conducted by the Triangle Waist Company, and individual sympathizers made up the bulk of Mr. Schiff's list yesterday. Among the larger contributors were: Collected by the New York Times Company, $481.95; W. L. Harkness, 12 East Fifty-third street, $200; Louis Marshall, 37 Wall street, $200; Adler's Young Men's Independent Association, $200.

The contributions received at the Mayor's office yesterday amounted to $1,198.85, making a total received there of $17,408.44. Among the contributors was Mrs. John A. Dix, who sent $50.

FOR FIRE PREVENTION.

Gov. Dix to Be One of the Speakers at Sunday's Mass Meeting.

Gov. Dix will be one of the speakers at the meeting which will be held in the Metropolitan Opera House on Sunday afternoon to discuss methods of fire prevention. Among the others who will express their ideas on the subject will be Jacob H. Schiff, John Mitchell, Rabbi Wise, Rose Schneiderman, Bishop Greer, E. R. A. Seligman and Father White.

The call for the meeting is signed by a committee which includes Bishop Greer and Mary Dreier, who have been especially active in the matter; Felix Adler, Jacob H. Schiff, Lyman Abbott, John Mitchell, the Rev. Anna Shaw, William J. Schieffelin, Edward T. Devine, Mrs. August Belmont and Miss Anne Morgan. Part of the call reads:

The prime question in the mind of every man and woman in New York to-day is what are the next steps forward in fire prevention? The undersigned have been appointed a committee of fifty to consider this question, pursuant to a resolution unanimously passed at a public meeting on last Sunday at the Women's Trade Union League less than twenty-four hours after the fire in Washington place. We believe that the citizens of New York need to meet in common sympathy, to take counsel together and to call upon experts in various lines as to what shall be done to prevent another similar disaster, for it is commonly understood that there are thousands of factory buildings in addition to tenement and apartment houses and other buildings in which a similar frightful loss of life might [illegible] follow a fire.

AUTOMATIC SPRINKLER SUIT

TWO PIANO FACTORIES DIDN'T INSTALL THEM.

City Wants $50 From Each for Failure to Obey Fire Department's Order—Waldo and Croker Tell of Sprinkler Merits—To Be a Test Case, It's Said.

Fire Commissioner Waldo and Chief Edward F. Croker appeared as witnesses yesterday in an action brought by the city in the Yorkville Municipal Court against the John Krissman & Son Piano Company at 597-601 East 137th street and Winter & Co., piano manufacturers at 220-226 Southern Boulevard, The Bronx. The suit was to recover a penalty of $50 in each case for failure to comply with an order of the Fire Department to install automatic sprinklers which Commissioner Waldo had issued on November 10, 1910.

John J. O'Connell, counsel for the defendants, said in the beginning that the section of the Charter giving the Fire Commissioner the authority to issue such orders was unconstitutional in that it allowed a city department to discriminate between factories in issuing such orders. Had a general order to all factories been issued there would be no discrimination, he said. He said the order was not reasonable as the Commissioner might impose an expense of $10,000 to $15,000 on one factory owner and overlook another.

Justice Boyhan reserved decision on the lawyer's motion to dismiss. Considerable interest was shown in the trial as it was said that a test case was to be made and the matter would be taken to the higher courts, no matter which way it was decided in the Municipal Court.

Julius Winter of 746 Kelly street, The Bronx, was the first witness called by the defence. He testified that he was president of Winter & Co. The piano factory at 220 Southern Boulevard is a five story brick building, he said. The varnishing is done on the top floor. The building is sixty feet high and has two fire escapes. On each floor are pails of water and pails of sand to use on fires. One hundred men and five women work in the place.

Before receiving the Fire Department order he had inquired as to the cost of installing an automatic sprinkling system, as he heard it would lower the insurance rates. The cost was so great he abandoned the idea. He understood it would cost $2,000. He testified that there are 101 piano factories in Manhattan and The Bronx and seventy-eight of these do not have the sprinklers.

"Do you remember June 13, 1907?" asked Assistant Corporation Counsel William J. Millard.

"Yes, sir."

"What happened?"

"A fire broke out in our factory. Two floors were destroyed."

"You didn't have the sprinkling system?"

"No."

He said another small fire occurred on October 16, 1910.

James E. Bale, an insurance broker, testified that he had been in his present business for twenty-five years and had made a study of piano factories. He didn't have a very good opinion of automatic sprinklers. He knew of a piano factory that had such a system, but when a fire broke out six years ago there was a property loss of $100,000. At a small fire in The Bronx the sprinklers caused a water damage of $15,000. He thought the average cost of the sprinkling system was about $10,000. The perforated pipes in the cellar were better, in his opinion.

"Fire insurance rates in The Bronx are higher because there is an insufficient water supply," he said.

The sprinkler system sometimes would not work, but mostly did work. He didn't know of any particular system that was approved or disapproved by the Fire Department, but he did know that the Board of Fire Underwriters approved a certain system.

John Krissman of the John Krissman & Son piano factory said that his factory employed 100 men and five women. Never had a fire there. There were buckets and fire extinguishers.

Mr. Millard then called Fire Commissioner Waldo, who told about issuing the order for the sprinklers which were to be on every floor and would be capable of spreading water over every square foot of flooring in case of fire. He issued the order under section 763 of the Charter.

"The chief of the Fire Department is responsible for all measures designed to prevent or extinguish fire," he testified. "The use of the automatic sprinkling system is an essential feature in auxiliary fire appliances. Automatic sprinklers are installed in almost all the big department stores and large warehouses where the stock is valued at millions of dollars. Insurance rates are lowered as much as 20 per cent. by the installation of the sprinklers. In some places outside the city the reduction is nearly 75 per cent.

"The automatic sprinkler has a constant water pressure of from ten to thirty pounds and is always ready. In the perforated pipe system, which is cheaper, the water must be turned on from the street. It is not so efficient. The protection of human life outweighs every consideration of cost. The danger in large buildings with much inflammable material was shown in the recent disaster where 150 lives were lost."

"I object to that reference," broke in Lawyer O'Connell. "That can only appeal to sentiment and has no relation to this case."

The lawyer asked the Commissioner if he had ordered sprinklers installed in the public schools. The witness said he had no jurisdiction over the schools, that the Board of Education attended to that matter.

"Have you ordered fire escapes on the schools?" asked the lawyer.

"I have no power to order fire escapes on any building. That power is with the Building Department and the Tenement House Department."

He said he had not consulted with the Board of Fire Underwriters as to rules for sprinklers.

Chief Croker said he had been chief for twelve years and was familiar with automatic sprinklers. He knew the system to be efficient and of great value in checking a fire until the apparatus of the Fire Department arrived. He knew of cases where the sprinklers had put out fires before the apparatus arrived. They had greatly reduced the fire loss in the city. Fires in piano factories were dangerous, and sprinklers would be valuable there. Sometimes the sprinklers would not work, but that was seldom.

"Do you remember the Mayor's investigation after the Parker Building fire?" asked the lawyer for the defendants.

"There have been so many investigations that I cannot remember half of them," the chief responded.

The lawyer read some of the chief's testimony at that investigation. The witness said he remembered his testimony. He went on to say that the Fire Department did not order any particular kind of automatic sprinklers but wanted a good one installed. There were blue print plans at Fire Headquarters that any one could look at if they wanted to, but no one was asked to look at them.

Justice Boyham reserved his decision and asked for briefs.

Aldermanic Minority Leader.

Alderman Bryant Willard of the Twenty-first district was yesterday chosen leader of the Republican minority of the board to take the place of Tristram B. Johnson, who resigned at the beginning of the week to accept a place under the Federal Government.

Aero Club Wants a Town House.

The Aero Club of America will hold a special meeting on April 10 to consider the selection of a clubhouse. A committee has recommended a house at 297 Madison avenue.

WOMEN TALK ON THE FIRE.

Call for More Protection for Workers and Also for Votes for Women.

Men outnumbered women last night at a mass meeting held under the auspices of the Collegiate Equal Suffrage League in Cooper Union to protest against the conditions which made the Triangle Waist Company fire possible. The hal was filled a few minutes after the doors opened and members of the league occupied the platform.

The women speakers besides condemning the lack of safety appliances at the building where the fire took place made the meeting the occasion of a plea for woman suffrage. Over the platform facing the audience was a large sheet of white canvas saying:

Votes for women!

November 26—Twenty-five women killed in Newark factory fire.

March 25—One hundred and thirty women killed in Triangle fire.

Locked doors, overcrowding, inadequate fire escapes.

The women could not, the voters would not, alter these conditions.

We demand for all women the right to protect themselves.

Mrs. Jessie Ashley, who presided, said that women were under a handicap in the case of calamities like this fire. They could not punish the administrators of the law at the polls who failed to administer the laws. Mrs. Mary Beers spoke to the same effect and Miss Martha Gruenig, who followed, read a long list of answers by Chief Croker of the Fire Department to questions in relation to the fire. The questions were put to him in the course of an interview by Miss Gruenig and Miss Ellen O. Byrne, another member of the league. Chief Croker's answers covered a good deal of the ground already covered by him in interviews published in the newspapers.

Meyer London said that although he was a lawyer he had more and more contempt for the law as it was administered in New York. Morris Hillquit, a former Socialist candidate for Congress, said that if the waistmakers had won their strike against the Triangle Waist Company the doors would not have been locked when the fire was on and there would not have been the loss of life which occurred.

Dr. Anna Howard Shaw blamed the people for electing persons to office who did not administer the laws and scored the men who are opposed to giving suffrage to women. Regarding the invalidating of the Wainwright compulsory compensation act by the Court of Appeals she said:

"If it is not constitutional to protect the workers of the country then we've got to smash the Constitution and make another."

Resolutions were passed demanding legislation which would give votes to women. Copies of the resolution were ordered sent to every member of the Legislature. It was also resolved that the Governor be asked to appoint a commission of which at least one-half shall be women to frame a bill for efficient fire protection.

PUBLIC STORES FIRE ESCAPE.

Only a Spiral Chute, of Which the Employees Are a Little Shy.

Francis W. Bird, who succeeds George W. Wanmaker as Appraiser of the Port, will be sworn in at the office of Collector Loeb in the Custom House at 9:30 o'clock this morning. He will be informed incidentally that he may have a hard time escaping from the Public Stores at 641 Washington street in case of fire unless he is equipped with an aeroplane. There are no visible fire escapes on the nine storied Public Stores building; nevertheless there are fire escapes in the building. They are the only ones of their kind in this or perhaps any other city. They are about four feet in diameter, tubular and likewise spiral.

At each floor there is a steel door which anybody intending to escape from fire may open. After opening the door the fleeing person may drop into the tube and gravitation will do the rest.

It is said that there is no record of anybody having used the spiral tubes, known also as the shoot the chutes, even in an experimental way, except one negro porter, who having a solid skull did not care much how he landed. Collector Loeb said the subject of fire escapes on the Public Stores had been put up to Alfred Brooks Fry, Chief Engineer and Superintendent of Public Buildings, and that the Public Stores fire escapes doubtless would be made up to date.

SULZER APPEASED.

The Powers That Be Give Him the Chairmanship of Foreign Affairs Committee.

WASHINGTON, March 31.—Representative William Sulzer of New York was turned down for the chairmanship of the Committee on Military Affairs, to which he was entitled by reason of seniority of service, but he made such a roar that the majority of the Ways and Means Committee, which is passing around committee assignments, have decided to appease him. He will be named as the chairman of the important Committee on Foreign Affairs.

When the Ways and Means Committee learned that the New York Congressman was on the warpath and disposed to create trouble in the caucus to-morrow a special meeting was held to consider the case. Mr. Sulzer was notified that he could get the chairmanship of the Foreign Affairs Committee, and he lost no time in giving assurance that he would keep on the reservation and be good if he received that post.

In order to provide for Mr. Sulzer the Ways and Means Committee had to do some rapid switching. Representative Flood of Virginia, who was slated for the head of the Foreign Affairs Committee, was put at the head of the Committee on Territories, and several other changes in chairmanships were made to carry out the bargain.

The East Fourteenth street Congressman, who has been fighting for years to have this Government influence Russia to grant passports to Jews, is tickled over his assignment. As chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee Mr. Sulzer will press this question.

QUITS STATE DEPARTMENT.

Dr. James B. Scott Becomes Secretary of the Carnegie Peace Foundation.

WASHINGTON, March 31.—Dr. James Brown Scott of California, Solicitor in International Arbitration, has resigned from the State Departmet to become secretary of the $10,000,000 peace fund which was recently established by Andrew Carnegie. Dr. Scott's resignation will take effect to-morrow. He will immediately assume his new duties as secretary of the Peace Foundation. He will be in charge of the headquarters of the Peace Foundation in this city.

Dr. Scott has been in the Government service since January 23, 1906, when he was appointed solicitor of the State Department. On June 28, 1910, the office of Solicitor of International Arbitrations was created to have charge of all work relating to the establishment of the Court of Arbitral Justice which was proposed to foreign countries by Secretary Knox. This office will be abolished and its work will be handled personally by Secretary Knox.

Contracts for Four Submarines Awarded.

WASHINGTON, March 31.—Secretary of the Navy Meyer has awarded contracts for the construction of four submarine torpedo boats to the Electric Boat Company of Quincy, Mass. Two will be built on the Atlantic and two on the Pacific coast.

SHAKEUP IN R. R. MAIL SERVICE

SEVERAL IMPORTANT OFFICERS DEMOTED.

General Superintendent Grant Is Made Head of a Division and Is Succeeded by Division Superintendent Ingalls—Other Sweeping Changes Made.

WASHINGTON, March 31.—Postmaster-General Hitchcock to-night ordered a sweeping shift in the railway mail service. Several of the most important officers in the service, including the general superintendent, are demoted. This drastic action was taken by the Postmaster-General because he believed that his subordinates had failed to cooperate with him in his economy plans and in orders for the improvement of the service. Alexander Grant, the general superintendent of the service, is sent from Washington to St. Paul as the superintendent of a division. The place of general superintendent will be filled by Theodore Ingalls, who up to this time has been superintendent of the division of rural mails. Mr. Ingalls is regarded by the Postmaster-General as one of the best trained postal officers in the Department. He began his service in the railway mail system and has worked through nearly all the grades in the service.

George C. Thomson, formerly superintendent of the division of supply of the Post Office Department and now inspector in charge at Austin, Tex., will succeed Mr. Ingalls as superintendent of the division of rural mails. Charles B. Anderson, inspector in charge at St. Louis, has been shifted to Austin to take the place left vacant by the promotion of Mr. Thomson and Post Office Inspector George Daniel of the New York division has been promoted to the post of inspector in charge at St. Louis.

Besides the general superintendent of the railway mail service the superintendent of the Washington division of the service, Charles W. Vickery, also is demoted, becoming chief clerk of the railway mail service in the Cincinnati division. Norman Perkins, railway mail superintendent at St. Paul, has been promoted to the superintendency left vacant by the transfer of Mr. Vickery.

Charles Rager, superintendent of the Cincinnati division of the railway mail service, has been sent to Atlanta to serve as chief clerk in place of John F. Blodgett, who is removed. Clyde M. Reed, division superintendent at Cleveland, takes Rager's place as superintendent of the Cincinnati division, and John C. Koons, post office inspector in the Washington division, is promoted to be superintendent of the railway mail service at Cleveland.

The Postmaster-General issued this statement:

"These changes are the result of an investigation Mr. Hitchcock has been making during the last few months into the affairs of the railway mail service. The investigation showed that the service has greatly suffered from poor management and lack of supervision. In certain of the divisions it was found that the chief clerks had not been inspecting their lines, as was their duty. Some of these lines had received no inspection for several years. It was found also that in many instances these officers were giving little attention to the sanitary condition of the cars, thus disregarding the health and comfort of the employees under them. The investigation showed that in many cases the business methods of the service were antiquated and that much duplication of work resulted. Instructions from the Department calling for investigations, as for example the proper consolidation of mail matter and the conservation of equipment, have been receiving indifferent attention. There had been lack of cooperation also in carrying out certain reforms urged by the Postmaster-General, such as separating from the first class mail the bulky mail of other classes and forwarding the latter in storage cars and by fast freight. It is Mr. Hitchcock's desire to introduce this reform as rapidly as possible and he feels that the changes he is making in the executive management of the service will assist in accomplishing the purpose

FOR THE EXTRA SESSION.

Democrats Trooping Into Washington—Caucus to Be Held To-day.

WASHINGTON, March 31.—Democrats have been trooping into town all day for the extra session which begins next Tuesday, and to-night most of the newly elected Representatives and Senators, as well as the old timers, were on hand. The Democratic House caucus will be held to-morrow morning and probably will be an all day affair.

At this caucus the Committee on Committees will announce the committee assignments, and other questions in regard to the organization of the House, including the distribution of patronage on a pro rata basis, will be settled. The Ways and Means Committee programme for tariff revision and Canadian reciprocity will not be discussed at to-morrow's caucus. That will be made the subject of another caucus, probably on Monday.

The House Democrats will make Representative Albert Burleson of Texas chairman of their caucus. This was decided at conferences to-night. The honor will be conferred upon Burleson as a means of placating him for the loss of the chairmanship of the Appropriations Committee, which will go to Representative Fitzgerald of New York.

Movements of Naval Vessels.

WASHINGTON, March 31.—The monitor Tallahassee and destroyers Roe and Burrows have arrived at Hampton Roads, the cruiser Vesuvius, the tug Pontiac and the submarine Octopus at New York yard, the collier Justin at San Diego, the collier Mars at Guantanamo and the submarines Grayling, Salmon, Snapper, Tarpon, Stingray and Bonita at Annapolis.

Army and Navy Orders.

WASHINGTON, March 31.—These army orders were issued to-day:

Major Frederick D. Evans, Seventeenth Infantry, from duty at Columbus Barracks, Ohio, and from recruiting service to join his regiment.

Second Lieut. Bert M. Atkinson, from Twenty-ninth Infantry to Fifth Infantry.

Major F. Eveleth Winslow, from Second battalion of engineers at Honolulu to Washington, D. C.

Capt. William P. Wooten, from Military Academy, West Point, to Honolulu about July 5.

Col. Charles H. Watts, cavalry unassigned, to home preparatory to retirement.

Capt. Emil J. Huebscher, Porto Rico regiment of infantry, to retired list.

These navy orders were issued:

Capt. W. I. Chambers, from assistant to aid for material to member of General Board, Washington, D. C.

Civil Engineer R. E. Peary, retired, from Department of Justice, Washington, D. C., to home.

CAPT. HAYES NO OPPRESSOR.

Woman Lessee in East Twenty-fifth Street Gets Neither Warrant Nor Writ.

An application for a writ of mandamus directing City Magistrate Steinert to issue a warrant for the arrest of Police Captain Cornelius Hayes on a charge of oppression was denied yesterday by the Appellate Division. The application was made in behalf of Jennie Green, lessee of a house in West Twenty-fifth street, who said she was suffering pecuniary loss by the act of Capt. Hayes in keeping uniformed policemen stationed in front of her premises.

The applicant said she took Capt. Hayes before Magistrate Steinert on a summons and then proved that he was guilty of oppression, but the Magistrate refused to issue a warrant. Magistrate Steinert said in an affidavit that the evidence against Capt. Hayes did not prove that he was guilty of oppression.

CRICHTON BROS.
Silversmiths of London

OLD ENGLISH SILVER AT LONDON PRICES

636 Fifth Avenue Corner 51st St.
LONDON: 22 OLD BOND STREET

BORDEN'S COUNTRY-BOTTLED MILK

Brought to you by the most perfect milk delivery service in the world.

METHODISTS SEEK A CHANGE

LAYMEN ASK THAT PRESIDING ELDERS SHALL GO.

Also Want Resident Bishops in Recognized Districts—They Ask for Votes in the Annual Conferences—Methodism Said to Be Declining Here—Things Needed.

Methodist laymen spoke plainly yesterday at the Methodist Conference, meeting in annual session in Calvary Church, Harlem, and presented resolutions held by some members to be revolutionary. By all they were said to be radical departures in American Methodism. The three things proposed were:

1. To abolish the office of district superintendent, or as it is better known by the old name, presiding elder. This office has obtained in Methodism in America since 1784.

2. To provide general superintendents, or Bishops as they are popularly called, resident in the district for four years at least, and in sufficient numbers to enable them to come into touch with the people.

3. To give laymen seats and votes in annual conferences, such as the one now in session. At present laymen have representation in the general conference, but not in the annual conference.

In the forenoon the Laymen's Association was received formally in the conference session. President Taylor made an address in brief to the Bishop presiding, and Bishop Smith responded. The whole matter was formal, including the addresses, save that Bishop Smith said Methodist ministers have generously turned the Methodist Church over to the laity and that nowhere do laymen have more power than in the Methodist Church. At the Laymen's Association, held in the afternoon, this statement was contradicted. It was said that laymen have no power at all to speak of.

Criticism was set forth in the addresses. A report was read showing that Methodism in New York has grown little within the decade, that it is losing hold upon its own children, and that superintendents do not visit churches under the present system to the extent needed. Foremost in the debate was J. Edgar Leaycraft. He said he favored the abolition of the presiding eldership, but he went even further than the committee in his demand for a resident Bishop. He wanted a Methodist Bishop in New York not for four years only but permanently, upon the diocesan plan. He was not prepared to ask for lay members of the annual conference.

Constant reference was made to the Episcopal Church. Two men said that Bishop Potter found time to go to small Hudson River towns and that his coming to them helped his Church. Another said the Episcopal Church attracts the children from Methodist churches largely by its boy choirs. It was the testimony of all the speakers, of whom there were eight or ten, that there is unrest in Methodism and not anywhere more than in the large Eastern cities. The system needs revision, was said on all sides.

A second matter regarded by all as of much importance adopted by the Laymen's Association yesterday was a resolution favoring the restoration of the pastoral time limit. In 1900 all limits were removed save of the presiding elders, now sought to be abolished. The plan is held by laymen not to be working well.

Last night there was a laymen's meeting addressed by ex-Senator McClellan of Westchester and the Rev. Dr. I. N. Foster, but no further mention was made of the lay agitation. Home missions by women were talked of yesterday afternoon, but in the conference session the Hon. John E. Andrus of Yonkers, a foremost Methodist layman, made an offer of $50,000 for superannuates provided other Methodists would raise $100,000. If Methodists cannot raise so much he will give in that proportion.

SHE WAS SURE HE WAS DEAD.

But Police, to Whom She Came After Telling All Relatives, Were Sure Not.

Francis Steiler, 75 years old, a veteran of the civil war, was found in the kitchen of his flat at 17 Stuyvesant street yesterday overcome by gas by his granddaughter Katherine and two of the neighbors. Katherine immediately cried out that he was dead and disappeared while the neighbors were summoning help.

This was 5 o'clock in the afternoon. At 10 o'clock Katherine, who had not been seen since, showed up in the Fifth street police station. She said she wanted to report to the police the death of her grandfather. When she mentioned the name the lieutenant exclaimed that Steiler was far from dead, but was a prisoner in Bellevue Hospital charged with attempted suicide. Katherine had spent the five hours in going to Brooklyn to tell all the relatives of the family of her grandfather's death.

Steiler was a prosperous real estate dealer after the civil war, from which he retired with the rank of Captain in a German volunteer regiment. Lately he has lived almost entirely from fees he got as a notary public. Two months ago his wife died and a week later a housekeeper who had been with the family for years died.

THE development in America of the publishing business, from early times down to the present, the growth and character of American literature, both fiction and more serious works, will be treated in an historical sketch in THE SUN, SATURDAY, APRIL 8. The subject will be covered in its picturesque rather than in its statistical phases.

There will be Reviews of the Latest New Books, including the most important spring publications of American publishing houses.

News and Gossip about Books and Authors.

Announcements of New Publications.