THE LEGISLATIVE POLICE COMMITTEE.

Examination of Mr. Beale, Agent of the New York Prison Association — Mr. Edward Blankman — Capt. Leonard, and Mr. Gray, Keeper of the City Prison — Further Disclosures of Criminal Abuses, &c., &c., &c.

The Committee of the Legislature, appointed to investigate the abuses existing in the police system of New York and Brooklyn, met yesterday in the City Hall, and examined several witnesses. All the members were present, consisting of Senators Crosby (chairman), and Hopkins, and Assemblymen Baker, Stuyvesant and O'Keefe.

The first witness examined was Abraham Beale, agent of the New York Prison Association, whose testimony was not concluded on the last day of the investigation. Mr. Crosby asked him if he would continue his testimony in regard to abuses that he knew to exist.

I am afraid, said Mr. B. in reply, to answer any questions with that perspicuity that I would desire. In looking over the newspapers, I see that half of what I said is incorrectly reported; one paper stated that in my opinion Judges should be elected and not appointed, while a second says I stated that they should be appointed and not elected; another, that I said, under a solemn oath, I had seen magistrates drunk on the bench, and another again that prisoners could not seen letters out of the prison without the aid of the keeper, who should be feed; this system of reporting will destroy my efficiency—will utterly annihilate my usefulness.

Mr. Crosby.—I understood, when the question was put to you: "Did you ever see a magistrate drunk on the bench?" that you answered yes.

Mr. Beale.—I did, sir.

Mr. Crosby.—Then it is so reported.

Mr. Stuyvesant.—Would you have any objections to giving the name of the lawyer referred to in the case reported, in which he obtained money from a poor woman, under pretence of getting her husband from Blackwell's Island? A. If it is any satisfaction to the gentlemen, I might say it is not Friday, nor Saturday, nor Sunday; I am in the habit of visiting the city prison; the sexes are so separated there that no improper conduct can take place; sometimes young prisoners are placed in company with older offenders; on last Saturday I saw seventeen boys in one cell, and they were allowed the free use of tobacco and pipes; some were put in for burglary, some for petty larceny, and some for assault and battery; some boys are allowed better furniture in their rooms; I know of a boy who was taken up as a witness, named George Hathaway, who has been in prison fifteen days in default of $246 bail; he has had no opportunities to clean himself, and has been without soap or towel or clean shirt during that time, and has in all probability lost his situation; the magistrate knew at the time he committed him to prison he never could furnish the bail; I have never requested a magistrate to leave a case in my charge for investigation; I have never known of a case in which an officer took a warrant for assault and battery during the day, and neglected to serve it, arresting the party at night, and detaining him from his family in the station house; I have never known of a case of a prisoner having been dismissed without examination; I have never known of a prisoner being kept in the Sixth ward station house some days before examination.

Mr. Stuyvesant stated here, that while at the Tombs Sunday morning, he saw a party temporarily committed for drunkenness, pay the fine, before the examination, to the keeper of the prison, and be discharged.

Mr. Beale said he desired to make a few observations on the system of prison discipline, and the necessity of making prison reformations.

Mr. Crosby said, all they wanted to know at present, was about the city prison.

Mr. Beale proceeded to remark that on Friday last he was on Blackwell's Island, when about forty prisoners told him that they could get off the island for a little money—the fee for a lawyer ranging from $2 to $25—and that a man called "Porgie Joe," said to have been a constable, was in the habit of visiting the island and taking off ten or more prisoners a week; he also called on Mr. Kellogg to know how it was done, when Mr. K. informed him that he did not know unless it was by a habeas corpus; he afterwards called upon the District Attorney, and was told that such conduct would not be allowed in future, for that he himself should put a stop to it.

Mr. Hopkins—Is Porgie Joe a constable now?

Mr. Beale—I believe not.

This closed Mr. Beale's evidence, and the next witness called was

Edmond Blankman, who testified as follows:—I am a lawyer; I know of some abuses in criminal jurisprudence; a large number of females who were arrested by the order of the Mayor, charged with being street-walkers; they were taken up one night; I was applied to the next morning by some of their friends or members of their families; the persons who applied to me having stated under oath that some of the females were highly respectable, and not street walkers, I, in accordance with their request, applied to the Recorder of the city in one case for a writ of habeas corpus; I did this on the petition of the sister and husband; on a representation of the facts and a defect in the record of commitment she was promptly discharged by the Recorder; on another occasion, a day or two after, I was again applied to for a similar application in behalf of a female who, it appeared from a statement made to me under oath, had gone out between the hours of 8 and 9 in the evening for the purpose of procuring medicine for a member of a family who was ill—while she was on the way from the drug store, with the medicine in her hand, she was accosted by an officer, and arrested as a street-walker, and taken to the Mayor's office, where she was committed to prison. In that particular case I was obliged to apply for a writ of *habeas corpus* and a writ of *certiorari*, for fear the writ might be properly made out; my application was argued before Justice Roosevelt, and the woman was discharged on the *certiorari*; on the morning of her discharge there were some thirty or forty cases of a similar kind argued before Justice Roosevelt, and all the parties were discharged.

In reply to a question from Mr. O'Keefe, as to what fact or facts were necessary to prove a woman to be a street walker, the witness replied that the fact of prostitution should be proved. It has been held, continued the witness, that where a street walker conducts herself properly in the streets she should be protected by the authorities.

Mr. Stuyvesant—Don't you think if the Mayor broke up those fashionable houses, it would put a stop to prostitution?

Witness—That is a question I could not answer.

Mr. O'Keefe—Couldn't you tell a prostitute in the twinkling of an eye?

Witness—Some people might, and some people might not.

Mr. Hopkins—An expert has a right to give an opinion before the committee, and Mr. O'Keefe appears to be one. (Laughter.)

Mr. O'Keefe—Every one is an expert who has been in New York but a few months.

Mr Hopkins—Did I understand you to say that those 30 or 40 persons were discharged for want of sufficient evidence?

Witness—I could not say, but the two I represented were respectable parties.

Captain Leonard, sworn, testified as follows—I am captain of the Second police district; my duties are defined by written instructions and verbal orders; I make daily returns to the Chief's office every morning, and to the magistrate in the case of persons arrested; I do not know that the Chief of Police has visited my station within the last year; I think he has been once within the last two years; I have never heard of a person being discharged without an examination; the magistrate may have heard the case and discharged; I have heard of people discharged for throwing ashes in the street, and fines of fences discharged without a penalty; had I the power myself I would have done the same thing; there is one gambling house in John street, and there is another in Ann street; I gave all the information in my power about it to the District Attorney; I don't think I have the right to suppress a gambling house; no officer has a right to go into such a house without a warrant; I never knew of the Chief taking any measures to suppress them; in laying out my posts for policemen, I fix it so that they can only meet a few in their beat; I make them as straight as possible; in speaking of the Chief of Police not visiting the station house, I should state that the rules required him to visit them, or cause them to be visited; he has as much as he can do himself in his office, and I think an outside superintendent would be of great service to the department. It is the duty of the Captain to take charge of the police at fires, till the Chief arrives; for a number of years the Chief has been at all fires, but recently he has not; he was, I understand, at that last night in Fulton street; it is the duty of the police to caution people against entering mock auction stores; Mickle, when he was Mayor, had posters placed opposite them, warning strangers, but they did no good, for the auctioneers told the strangers that the poster was intended for the next door, and the merchants say others who did business near the auction store begged of the Mayor to take away his posters; some of the auctioneers had a banner opposite to the Mayor's place of business, cautioning the public against buying his "short cut." (Laughter.)

Mr. Crosby—The money made by the mock auctioneers is made out of citizens?

Captain Leonard—No, sir, it is made out of those from the rural districts; I knew of one instance where a Fourteenth ward policeman got bit; in regard to gambling houses and policy dealers, the witness said that in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred complaints were made against them for the sole purpose of making money out of them; I never knew a case where a complaint was made from honest motives; there is one thing I would wish to speak of, since I have been a member of the department some eight or ten men have been killed in the discharge of their duty, and I think there should be a fund in the department for the benefit of the families of such men.

Mr. Crosby—Don't you find that an increase in the pay would supply a better class of men for the service of the department?

Capt. Leonard—Yes, sir; decidedly so; if the wages of the men exceed those paid to mechanics, there will be a much better class of men applying, as there has been since the wages were increased; the applicant is required to get his application signed by twenty-five respectable citizens; in regard to the Chief of Police, I think he does as much now as any man could do; he is engaged in his office from morning till night.

Mr. Baker—What is your practice in regard to searching parties arrested over night?

Captain Leonard—I have adopted a rule in all cases to search men, and take everything from them at the time, whether they are willing or not; I do this for their protection as well as for my own; I have frequently known parties who have charged the officers with robbing them, and I have therefore found it necessary to follow this rule in every instance.

Mr. O'Keefe—Is there any specific law upon that subject?

Captain Leonard—I don't know that there is; if there is not, there should be a law; there is a rule that all property taken from a person must be brought before a justice on the following morning, and this rule applies to all prisoners; we give the amount of property taken from prisoners and lodgers in our returns at the end of every six months; we had a man once brought in drunk and he said he had forty dollars in gold sewed up in the tail of his shirt, but when we searched him we found he had not a single cent, and I don't believe he had seen eighteen pence of his own for twenty years; neither myself nor my men can be discharged without an examination before the commissioners; the present Board of Commissioners have adopted a rule giving the power to the Mayor to try all policemen charged with offences, but if one of them should appeal to the full Board he can have a hearing before them; the law gives the captain the power to suspend policemen, but we must notify the Mayor within twenty-four hours; the man should be on the police some time before they are detailed as detectives; there are some detectives at present who would not know a well known thief from an old horse.

Mr. Stuyvesant—Have politicians to be a long time in the department before they are elevated in office?

Capt. Leonard—Sometimes they are well versed, from old associations, with the tricks of thieves.

Mr. O'Keefe—But they never formed a part of that association?

Capt. Leonard—Of course not; each one of the detectives have a journal in which they write down everything they do, everything they see, and submit it to the Chief every morning; the detectives seldom wear the uniform, as it would destroy their efficiency; they are formed into squads, under sergeants; the shadows get the same wages as the other officers, but they make a good deal outside, from persons who give them presents for recovering property; they must, however, get permission to receive them from the Mayor.

John Grey, Warden of the city prison, sworn, testified as follows:—My duty is to take charge of the prisoners when they are brought to the prison; there are four city prisons; one on the corner of Centre and Franklin streets, one in Essex market, one in Jefferson market, and one on the corner of Eighty-fourth street and Fourth avenue; the last one is a miserable place.

Mr. Crosby—Is it a fact that in the city prison boys, ranging in number from five to twelve, are confined in the same cell?

Mr. Grey—Yes, sir. We sometimes put them in together, for we would not have room to keep them separate; I have one room in the city prison, over 100 feet long, in which we keep witnesses.

Mr. Crosby—I saw there myself some six or seven boys, and several of them were smoking.

Mr. Grey—Yes, sir; well, they get tobacco in there.

Mr. Crosby—So far as your experience goes, don't you think it is rather injurious to the morals of these boys to have so many of them together?

Mr. Grey—They are only kept in there for two or three days; we have had some as long as two weeks.

Mr. Crosby—Did you ever know one to be there over two months?

Mr. Grey—Such a thing might be, but that is the fault of the Judges not calling for them.

Mr. Crosby—Do you make your returns every morning when the special sessions are held?

Mr. Grey—Yes, sir, every day.

Mr. Crosby—Is it customary for the Judges to take those witnesses that have been first confined?

Mr. Grey—Sometimes they arraign them and send them back to us again; we don't allow lawyers to go into the prison, nor even into the yard, when a lawyer comes, we send for the prisoner, and put them both in the reception room, and after they are through, we send the prisoner back.

Mr. Crosby—Could the man who has charge of messages to prisoners not prevent the presence of counsel by bringing false messages?

Mr. Grey—I have unbounded confidence in the man who is employed for that purpose, and don't believe he could be reached in that way; I have nothing to do with the lockup at the Chief's office; vagrants are generally discharged through a habeas corpus; if a man has got three dollars, you cannot keep him in prison.

Mr. Crosby—Did you ever know of a prisoner to be discharged who was in your city prison, but who was only waiting for the Black Maria to take him to the Island?

Mr. Grey—Yes, sir, I have known them to be discharged at Jefferson Market prison; they have taken them from us by a habeas corpus.

Mr. Crosby—Have you not heard of cases of prisoners confined in the city prison who were found dead in the morning?

Mr. Grey—I know of four men who were found dead, but their death was caused by some gas which escaped from the smoke pipe.

Mr. Crosby—Do you consider the prison in a healthy location?

Mr. Grey—Yes, sir, it is as healthy a place as I ever lived in.

Mr. Crosby—Well, you of course have superior accommodations?

Mr. Grey—The part I occupy is on the same lot with the rest of the building.

Mr. Crosby—What do you think of the accommodations—are they as they ought to be?

Mr. Grey—Yes, sir; but at one time they were not; the prisoners besides having healthy cells, have got the whole yard to run about in.

At this stage of the examination, a motion was made by Mr. Stuyvesant and adopted, that at the next meeting Captains Carpenter, Downing and Norris, of the police, and ex-City Judge W. R. Beebe should be examined. The committee then adjourned to this morning.

Fire Marshal's Office

INVESTIGATION INTO THE ORIGIN OF FIRES.

The following synopsis of testimony taken by the Fire Marshal exhibits conclusively the careless manner of depositing coal ashes to be the means of producing fire at No. 42 Cedar street, on the night of the 6th inst. It also shows the origin of the fire at the Demill Dispensary, on the 5th inst., to have been caused by means equally as thoughtless:—

FIRE IN THE DEMILL DISPENSARY.

Henry D. Mack testified that he resides in the Demill Dispensary, as apothecary of the institution; on Wednesday morning, 5th December, about ten o'clock, my attention was directed, by Dr. Bronson, to a bulging down of the ceiling under the hall; I then heard a crackling noise; in about a minute after some plastering fell down, when we discovered considerable smoke and heat; I immediately gave the alarm of fire, when the firemen came and put it out; since the fire I've made an examination of the premises as to its origin; the Fire Marshal explained to me how, in his judgment, it originated; a wooden spitbox, partly filled with sawdust, it seems, is missing from the room; it is believed that some one at the meeting on the previous evening threw either the end of a segar or a piece of lighted paper into the spitbox, from which the sawdust became ignited, and thus burnt a hole through the flooring; I am of the opinion that the fire originated as represented by the Fire Marshal.

John Sweeny testified—I am janitor of the Demill Dispensary; I reside with my family in the building; over the apothecary shop and reception room there is a hall for public meetings; on Tuesday evening—the night before the fire—there was a Know Nothing meeting in the hall; after they left I extinguished all the lights left burning after the meeting broke up, and locked the outer doors and turned off the registers to throw the heat in the Dispensary; I went into the hall again about 11 o'clock and turned the register so as to throw the heat into the school room on the third floor; at that time I did not discover any smell of smoke; in the public hall I had eight wooden spitboxes placed about the hall; each box was about two-thirds full of sawdust; after the fire, I saw the Fire Marshal making an examination of the premises; he asked me how many spitboxes I had in the hall; I replied eight; he then requested me to gather them up; I did so, but could only find seven; in these boxes with pieces of burnt paper and segars; I am of opinion that the fire originated from the sawdust in the missing box taking fire from some lighted segar or piece of paper thrown into it the night previous; I do not intend to use wooden spitboxes filled with sawdust any more in the building; I do not believe them safe.

FIRE IN CEDAR STREET—CARELESSNESS WITH ASHES.

Charles O'Conner testified—I am in the employ of Jacob Lansing, No. 42 Cedar street; I act as clerk; it is my business to take charge of the fourth floor, which is used as a manufactory of mantillas, &c.; I was on the fourth floor about 6½ o'clock on the evening of the fire; I think there were eight or nine girls at work on that floor on that afternoon; Miss Gaines and Miss Thompson swept up the floor; I held open a bag, and they put the sweepings in; they consisted of three or four pounds of cuttings and cotton wadding; the bag was placed about 12 inches or so from the ashbox; I have been informed by Mrs. Wood, since the fire, that Mrs. Hanly, one of the work women, took some ashes out of the stove between 1 and 3 o'clock on that afternoon, and that she placed them in the tin ash box, near the wall; it was near this box that I placed the bag of sweepings; I have examined the room since the fire, and cannot say but what it must have occurred from the ashbox.

Andrew McFarland testified—I am employed by Bancroft, Betts & Marshall, No. 42 Cedar street; Mr. Lansing acts as their agent; I furnished the tin ashbox for the deposit of ashes on the fourth floor, and to the best of my knowledge the bottom of it was sound; in reference to the origin of the fire, from the examination I have made since the fire, I should say it originated in some way from the ashbox; I am satisfied it did not take from the stove.

Mayor's Office.

CHARGE OF FALSE PRETENCES—NINE THOUSAND DOLLARS INVOLVED.

William H. Ritter, who has a contract for supplying the Grand Trunk Railroad in Canada, with axles, was arrested on Friday afternoon, in the city of Rochester, by officer Hope, of the Mayor's office, on a charge of perpetrating a wholesale fraud upon Ames' Iron Company, of Litchfield Co., Conn. The officer encountered some difficulty in effecting his arrest, as it was claimed that the Supreme Court had jurisdiction in his case, and could take bail for his safe appearance there. Judge Selden finally adjusted the matter, by holding the accused to bail in the sum of $5,000, to answer at the Court of General Sessions in this city, on the first of January. It appears that on the ninth day of January last, an agreement was made between Mr. Ritter and Horatio Ames, the manager of Ames' Iron Company, that the latter should send on to Rochester $9,000 worth of railroad car axles to the firm of Carpenter & Dutton in that city, which firm Mr. Ritter represented as having the contract for the Grand Trunk Railroad. The axles were sent on according to agreement, but shortly afterwards it was discovered that Carpenter & Dutton were insolvent, and that they had no such contract, the representations of Ritter being untrue, as he himself was the real contractor. No money having been sent in payment for the axles, Mr. Ames could look upon the affair in no other light than as a grand fraud on the part of Mr. Ritter. Hence he immediately proceeded to the Mayor's office and in an affidavit, taken before Justice Osborne, set forth the whole scheme. A warrant was thereupon issued for the apprehension of Ritter, which was executed as above mentioned, by officer Hope.

Court of General Sessions.

Before Recorder Smith.

There was some little delay in opening this Court yesterday morning, owing to the change made in the detailed police officers of the Court, by his Honor the Mayor. Sergeant A. V. Davis, who, we understand, has been an attaché of this Court for five years past, and for years the crier of the Court, has been removed, together with six other officers, viz: officers Spicer, Lowery, Woolbridge, Farten, Bestwick and Pierce. The newly appointed are—officer W. B. Walsh, crier of the Court, in place of Sergeant Davis; and officers Minchis, First ward; Gaughan, Sixth ward; Gray, Sixth ward; Rice, Second ward, and Files, Fifth ward.

The day was occupied in the trial of a conductor on the Sixth avenue railroad, charged with appropriating sixty-seven cents, railroad fare, to his own use. The case was not ended at the close of the Court.

MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS.

This Board did not meet in session last evening. Four o'clock in the afternoon is the hour named for organization and roll call. Yesterday, at five minutes to four by the City Hall clock, ten minutes to four by the clock in the office of the Clerk of the Board of Aldermen, and five minutes past four by the clock in the chamber of the Supervisors, Mayor Wood entered the room, and in his naturally agile and business like manner, walked quickly up to the chair, and said: "Clerk will please call the roll." Mr. Valentine having done so, it was found that nine members answered. When the number was announced to his Honor, he replied, "Nine members only being present, this Board is adjourned;" and taking his hat, he "rushed off like the wind," leaving Supervisors Briggs, Barker and some other gentlemen, just arrived in great astonishment, and admiration, no doubt, at this lesson in official punctuality.

BOARD OF ALDERMEN.

This Board met yesterday afternoon at the usual hour, the President, Alderman Barker, in the chair. After the reading and approval of the minutes the following business was transacted:—

Report of Committee on Assessments—In favor of confirming apportionment of assessment in the matter of the opening of Tenth avenue, from Seventy-first street to Bloomingdale road. Adopted.

Report of Committee on Streets—In favor of concurring to advertise for proposals to groove the Russ pavement where not already grooved. Referred to special committee, with communication from the Mayor on the same subject.

By Alderman BRIGGS—Resolved, That the Street Commissioner be, and he is hereby, requested to report to this Board the cause, if any exist, why the sunken barge at the foot of Roosevelt street has not been removed. Adopted.

By Alderman TROWBRIDGE—Resolved, That the Commissioner of Streets and Lamps be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed to instruct the clerks of the several markets to collect seventy-five cents per month from every person using the burners in the markets where the gas is taken from the Corporation pipes, and to pay the same to the Comptroller with the market fees. Adopted.

The following communication was received from the Mayor and read:—

MAYOR'S OFFICE, Dec. 10, 1855.

TO THE HON. THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN:—

GENTLEMEN—On the 11th January last, in a communication to both Boards of the Common Council, I called attention to the urgent necessity of grooving the Russ pavement in Broadway during the year about expiring, without any conclusive action on the subject. It was again alluded to in a special message to the Board of Councilmen on the 3d inst., a copy of which is annexed, marked A. In reply to this communication, the Board of Councilmen, on the 5th inst., passed a resolution (annexed, marked B), which declares that as early as the January last the Board passed, and sent to the Board of Aldermen for concurrence, a joint resolution directing the Commissioner of Repairs and Supplies to advertise for proposals to do the work referred to, in the manner proposed by me, but that, so far as they know, no notice whatever has been taken of it by the Board of Aldermen, and that if action had been taken the evil complained of would have been removed long since.

The resolution referred to in the message of his Honor the Mayor—passed by the Board of Councilmen February 15th last—

Resolved, That the Commissioner of Repairs and Supplies be, and he is hereby, directed to advertise for proposals for grooving that portion of the Russ pavement not already grooved, and cross grooving the same at the intersection of the various streets that cross Broadway; the upper surface of each block to be grooved at right angles with the line of the street in such manner that the space between the grooves and joints shall not exceed six inches, the grooves to be not less than one and a quarter inch wide on the surface, nor less than three quarters of an inch in depth; and that he send the same to the Common Council for their action.

If this be so, the responsibility for the condition of Broadway throughout the year, rests exclusively with the Board of Aldermen.

Had the resolution of the Councilmen, to which no exception could be taken, been accepted at once, a very large amount of property could have been saved to its owners, which has been destroyed by the condition of Broadway during the present year.

Permit me, therefore, respectfully to call your earnest attention to the matter, and ask that the resolution of the Board of Councilmen for the grooving of the Russ pavement in Broadway, which was sent to your Board in February last for concurrence, be called up and passed. Very respectfully,

FERNANDO WOOD, Mayor.

Alderman HOWARD thought the subject an important one, as it would give employment to a large number of poor men during the winter.

Alderman W. TUCKER was of the opinion that the grooving is not necessary.

Alderman VARIAN thought it should be done, and believed the best way to do this would be to groove at intervals of three instead of six inches, and at right angles with the joints of the stone. To do this would cost from $50,000 to $75,000.

Alderman SIEBS related cases of serious accidents resulting from the present smooth state of the pavement.

Alderman BERRICK said there was no money in the treasury for the purpose, and no appropriations had been made, so he thought it would be useless to refer it to a committee.

Alderman C. H. TUCKER was in favor of referring it.

On motion, the whole subject was referred to a Special Committee, consisting of Aldermen W. Tucker, Voorhis, and Howard.

Alderman BRIGGS presented the following preamble and resolution, and moved its adoption:—

Whereas, the office of Chief of Police has been declared vacant by this Board, by reason of the ineligibility of the present incumbent, who is not a citizen of the United States.

Resolved, That the Mayor be respectfully requested to nominate a suitable person to supply a vacancy.

Alderman HOWARD said the Police Commissioners had the appointing power, and the resolution was clearly out of order. We have, he added, nothing to do with policemen, and I call upon the President to rule it out.

The CHAIR decided that the point of order was not well taken.

Alderman BRIGGS said that the Board held its power from the people, and they were acting in accordance with their feelings.

Alderman HOWARD had read the police law, which gave authority only to the Police Commissioners over the Police Department. It took away the power from the Aldermen, because it was said they abused that power.

The PRESIDENT said that the Board had the right to pass the resolution.

Alderman DRAKE thought that there was nothing wrong in it, as it was merely the passage of a resolution.

Alderman HOWARD—There is no vacancy, and how can we make one? I appeal from the decision of the chair.

The vote on the appeal was taken, with the following result:—Yeas, 10; nays, 7. So the Chair was sustained. The vote on the adoption was then put.

Affirmative—Williamson, Moser, Fox, W. Tucker, Voorhis, Briggs, Barker, Christy, Ely, C. H. Tucker, Drake—11.

Negative—Brown, Baird, Hoffmire, Howard, Trowbridge, Siebs, Berrick, Varian—8.

A report in favor of concurring with the Board of Councilmen was received from the Committee on Ordinances, recommending the adoption of an ordinance for the complete organization of the Bureau of Assessments. Adopted.

On motion of Alderman HOWARD the report of the Committee on the Fire Department, concurring to build a new house to the use of Hook and Ladder Company No. 14, and an addition to the house of Hose Company No. 33, also a new engine for Engine Company No. 22, was concurred in.

The Board adjourned till Thursday afternoon.

BOARD OF COUNCILMEN.

The Councilmen met last night at their chambers in the City Hall, the President, D. D. Conover, in the chair.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and adopted.

Petitions were first in order, but none of importance were presented.

Resolutions being next in order, a resolution was offered by Councilman Wilber and referred to special committee, directing the Street Commissioner to report to the Board the reason why the enlargement of the Battery is not completed, and all the information he may have on the subject.

The report of the Committee of Conference, to whom were referred the differences between the two Boards, respecting the removal of offal, &c., was then called up as the special order of the day. This report recommended the following resolution and specifications:—

Resolved, That the City Inspector be, and he hereby is authorized and directed immediately to advertise, for twenty days, proposals for the sale of offal, then to sell, to the highest bidders, who shall furnish adequate security, the right and privilege of collecting and removing dead horses, and other dead animals, blood, offal and other refuse matter and nuisances, in accordance with the following specifications, for the term of five years next thereafter; the contract to be prepared by the Counsel to the Corporation.

SPECIFICATIONS.

First. The contractor shall collect and remove from all parts of the city to the dock and slip at the foot of Forty-fifth street, East river, or to such other docks or slips as the Common Council may, at any time or times hereafter designate and provide, all dead horses and other dead animals; and shall, at all times provide and keep, at his own cost and expense, such a number of suitable carts as shall be necessary for a prompt and faithful performance of such work; said carts shall be approved and licensed by the City Inspector.

Second. The contractor shall, at all times, provide and keep, at each dock or slip as aforesaid, a suitable number of suitable boats, scows, barges or vessels for receiving, and shall receive therein all dead horses and other dead animals and all blood, offal and other refuse matter from butchers' slaughter houses, and all bones, fish fish offal, diseased or tainted meats, and all other nuisances of a similar kind, which may or shall be offered by any person or persons at such dock or slip.

Third. The contractor shall furnish, at his own cost and expense, suitable boxes for the reception of all orders or complaints; the same to be placed, one at each police station house in the city, and the other at the City Inspector's office, to cause all orders or complaints to be collected from each and every station house, and from the office of the City Inspector, at least twice every day; and shall cause all dead animals to be removed, in accordance with the contract, as soon as possible after the reception of any such order or complaint or other notice.

Fourth. The contractor shall, at least once in every day, remove all such dead horses, animals, blood, offal and other matters and nuisances as aforesaid to some suitable and proper place or places beyond the limits of the city; and whenever the City Inspector shall so direct, such removal shall be made twice in each day during the months of June, July, August and September.

Fifth. Approved sureties, to the amount of thirty thousand dollars, will be required for the faithful performance and execution of the contract, to the end of the term, which security shall be renewed within three weeks of the close of each year. In every respect the work to be performed as required, and any neglect or refusal, on the part of the contractor, to perform the whole or any part of the stipulations of the contract, or of the requirements of these specifications, shall be sufficient to empower and authorize the City Inspector to proceed to perform so much thereof as shall be neglected or refused, at the expense of, and chargeable by the Corporation to the contractor and his sureties, and such refusal or neglect shall authorize and empower the Common Council, at any time, to revoke and annul such contracts.

Sixth. The bid shall state the amount which the bidder will pay per annum for such right and privilege, which amount shall be paid by the contractor to the Comptroller, in equal quarterly sums, at the end of each quarter.

Seventh. A strict compliance with the provisions of title 3, of "Contracts for supplies, and work done for the Corporation," and amendments thereto, will be observed and required.

Eighth. Should the person or persons to whom the contract shall be awarded fail to attend with his or their sureties, and to execute the same in writing, within three days after being notified that such contract is ready, he or they shall be considered as having abandoned it, and shall forfeit all right to such award.

The above resolution and specifications were adopted—thirty-nine voting in the affirmative and four in the negative.

Upon motion of Councilman CLANCY, the report increasing the pay of police captains from $1,000 to $1,250 was taken from the table, and voted for without debate, and lost for want of a constitutional vote. It was then moved that the vote be reconsidered. This motion being carried, the report was again laid upon the table.

A communication was received from the Comptroller in answer to a resolution of the Board asking the various amounts that have been drawn out of the city treasury, by requisition, under $250. The Comptroller replied that a list of these requisitions were in the hands of the public printer, and would, when published, give all the information called for. This communication was laid upon the table and ordered to be printed.

Upon motion, the Board then went into Committee of the Whole, Councilman Cooper in the chair.

After some unimportant business, the report in favor of a special baggage line, to run between the hotels and all steamboat landings in the city, was taken up.

A few minutes after this was called up, Councilman CLANCY entered the room, and being somewhat surprised that it was before the Board, asked if it was taken up in its regular order on the calendar.

The PRESIDENT said it was not taken up in its regular order.

Councilman CLANCY (somewhat excited)—Well, this is a pretty piece of business! When a man's back is turned, who is opposed to a measure involving, perhaps, two or three millions, that measure is brought up, and out of its order. I won't submit to this. By what authority do you put this paper before the Board, I should like to know?

Councilman COOPER (in the chair)—This report lay before me on the desk, and I took it up.

Councilman CLANCY—Well, if you can't do better than that, you had better get out of the chair.

A motion was then carried that the regular calendar be resumed.

After the transaction of some further unimportant business, the Board adjourned.

Williamsburg City News.

EFFECTS OF THE GALE—A CHURCH STEEPLE BLOWN DOWN AND A SUGAR HOUSE UNROOFED.

On Sunday night about 8 o'clock, during the strong gale of wind, the roof of the People's sugar refinery, situated in First street, at the foot of South Second, was blown off. The roof, which covered the main building, was about 70 feet in length, by 35 feet wide. As it was raised up in the air, it broke in the centre, and one portion was carried over two dwelling houses and came down with a tremendous crash in South Second street, a distance of over 50 rods. The other portion was carried across the street and struck against the house No. 174 First street occupied by Mr. William Shepard. The portico and front steps were considerably smashed up, and the fence and trees in front were entirely demolished. Quite a number of panes of glass were demolished in the two adjoining houses by flying fragments. Owing perhaps to the storm but few persons were abroad and no one was injured.

During the same gale, the steeple of St. Mary's Catholic Church, situated at the corner of Leonard and Remsen streets, was blown down, and slightly damaged one corner of the dwelling on the opposite side. The steeple was about 150 feet in length, and has always been considered dangerous. The door on the first platform was said to be open, and, as the steeple filled with air, it was easily carried over. Some considerable excitement was caused from a rumor that a man and boy had been killed. Search was made, and all that was found was the mutilated remains of an aged dog.

The bark Cape Fear, of New York, parted her fastenings on the New York side, and drifted over the river, where she was made fast, at the foot of South street, by the ferry hands.

New Patents Issued.

List of patents issued from the United States Patent Office, for the week ending Dec. 4, 1855—each bearing that date:—

Thomas Batty, of Brooklyn, N. Y., for improvement in suspending ships' yards.

Erastus B. Bigelow, of Boston, Mass., for improvement in cutting pile fabrics.

E. W. Bullard, of Hardwick, Mass., for improved mode of hanging window sashes.

Daniel Campbell, of Washington, D. C., for improvement in military saddles.

Thomas A. Chandler, of Rockford, Ill., for improvement in making plow mould boards.

John A. Cole, of Washington, D. C., for improvement in machine for sawing out tapering blocks of marble.

Alonzo R. Dinsmoor, & Levi J. Bartlett, of Salisbury, N. H., for improved instrument for chamfering the edges of shoe soles, &c.

Thomas A. Elden, of Westbrook, Me., & Wm. J. Thorn, of Holliston, Mass., for improvement in the arrangement of flues and dampers of cooking apparatus.

Joseph T. England, of Baltimore, Md., for improvement in railroad car coupling.

Peter Fairbairn, of Leeds, and John Hargrave, of Kirkstall, in the county of York, for improvement in wool combing machines. Patented in Eng and Nov. 26, 1852.

Henry Fornecrook, of Eldridge, N. Y., for improvement in feed warmers.

Joseph Francis, of New York, N. Y., for improvement in military wagons.

Samuel H. Gluman, of New Orleans, La., for improvement in bagasse furnaces.

Samuel Hamilton, Jr., of Tolland, Mass., for improved burglars alarm.

Sewer H. Hatch, of Rochester, N. Y., for improvement in machine for cutting out boot and shoe soles.

Horace L. Hervey, of Quincy, Ill., for improved burglars alarm.

George A. Howe, of Worcester, Mass., for improvement in hand cotton pickers.

Matthias Keller, of Philadelphia, Pa., for improvement in cutting the fronts and backs of violins.

Edward N. Kent, of New York, N. Y., for improvement in amalgamators.

Edward Kershaw, of Boston, Mass., for improvement in locks.

Hosea Lindsey, of Ashville, N. C., for improvement in pumps.

Thos. R. Markillie, of Winchester, Ill., for improvement in spoke machines.

G. M. Moore, and J. Newton, of Watertown, Conn., for improvement in machine for scouring knives.

J. H. Pomeroy, of Bloomington Ill., for improvement in locks.

Isaac Rehn, of Philadelphia, Pa., for improved photographic bath.

James H. Sampson, of Grafton, Mass., for improvement in boat trees.

Charles Schinz, of Camden, N. J., for self regulating hot blast for furnaces.

Nathaniel Simons, of Providence, R. I., for improvement in cloth stretching rollers.

John Tremper, of Philadelphia, Pa., for improved means of connection between regulator valve and governor's stem.

Daniel E. True, of Lake Village, N. H., for improved blind fastener.

Levi Van Horsen, of New Haven Conn., for improvement in machines for paring and slicing apples.

Richard Vose, of New York, N. Y., for improvement in quartz crushing machines.

Moses D. Wells, of Morgantown, Va., for improvement in land reed sewers.

R. C. Wynn, of Covington, Ky., for improvement in machines for preparing cotton seed for planting.

John H. Gates, of Franklinville, Pa., assignor to Abraham Edwards, of Towanda, Pa., for improvement in water wheels.

John Taggart, of Roxbury, Mass., assignor to himself and Vernon Brown, of Boston, Mass., for improvement in machine for channeling stone.

Charles C. Tolman, of Shelburne Falls, Mass., assignor to James Sargent and Dan. P. Tucker, of same place, for gimlet.

Major B. Clarke, of Newnan, Ga., for improvement in machinery for opening and feeding cotton to the gin.

RE-ISSUE.—Samuel Slocum, of Providence, R. I., for machine for sticking pins in paper. Patented September 30, 1841. Extended September 30, 1855.

The Neutrality of Brazil—Theatrical Compliments to France.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD.

Brazil has broken its neutrality. France and England conjointly, have just been the object of the gravest insult that a nation can receive from one with whom it is a peace. It is true the Japanese habits of the Brazilians naturally place them beyond the law of nations. Here is, it is said, what happened at Para on the 26th of last August, and was renewed on the 30th of the same month:

SUNDAY, 26th—I accompanied Mr. Ch. Klepper to the theatre. This is what we witnessed:—They represented a piece for a benefit. A large and very fine Cossack danced a solo, in character, and was greatly applauded. After this a male and female singer—such as there only are at Para—howled a very interesting, merry song. This duo ended, there appeared a made up dwarf, announced in the bills posted up as "a French officer arriving from Sebastopol!" This laughable caricature was dressed in a red jacket, which had once belonged to an English deserter; the headdress the historical hat of the old Napoleon, in which was displayed a tri-color cockade of the French, as large as a dish. This dwarf wore a mask, on which there had been an attempt to produce a beard moustaches, and a profile of the present French Emperor, Napoleon III.

At this moment, if the theatre had tottered under bravos and applause, no one could have been surprised; but what astonished me was to see, in the President's box, the Vice President of the Province applauding more than any one an insult of such a nature—which cannot be without results. It must be, as has been so often said, that the Brazilian is as destitute of common sense as of moral sense, to forget himself so far.

On Thursday, 30th, the same farce was repeated, with this peculiarity: the calls for *Napoleon pequeno* (little Napoleon,) and applause were more numerous and more vehement than on Sunday.

The Chancellor of the French Consulate was present at this representation, from which I conclude that the French government will soon learn how the Brazilian authorities honor the name and colors of France. Algiers, if I remember aright, was conquered for a much less insult.

I do not think France will take the trouble to conquer Para, but I believe that this folly of the Paraenses will cost Brazil the free navigation of the Amazon.

THE LATE TELEGRAPHIC FEAT.—Last night, at 10 o'clock, two telegraphic operators sat conversing together in the office at New York—not orally, but by means of "the wires"—their words passing from one to the other by the way of New Orleans. The circuit was completed over the whole route, and they communicated without the aid of any other operator. A dispatch dated New York, November 29, 10 o'clock, 25 minutes P. M., (New York time,) was received here at 9 o'clock, 10 minutes P.M. (New Orleans time).—*New Orleans Courier, Nov. 30.*

POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE.

Letter from Francis P. Blair.

SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND, Dec. 12, 1855.

To Messrs. DANIEL R. GOODLOE and LEWIS CLEPHANE, Corresponding Committee of the Republican Association of Washington city, D. C.:—

GENTLEMEN—Having relinquished political employment, and, to avoid encountering again its anxieties, addicted myself to