

Record of the Workings During the Past Year.

A Gracious Exhibit—Decrease in Losses and Increase in the Efficiency of the Organization.

The year just closed has been an eventful one to the Fire Department of the city, the members of which have fought the fire season gallantly on 264 different occasions, and with usually confined fire structures in which it originated. It has been noted also for great changes in the discipline and administration of the department and for the establishment of a system of box alarm telegraph.

A SYSTEM OF BOX ALARM TELEGRAPH that has vastly lightened the duties of the men and saved an immense amount of money. The experiment of a paid fire department had before been fully demonstrated a success; but when Commissioners Hennessey, Blair, Galloway, Shaler and Hinchman assumed the direction of affairs they found ample opportunities for improvement. During their term of service they have largely increased the morale of the force, by weeding out, after conviction, the worthless members, and inspiring the command with a desire to excel in watchfulness, courage and all the other qualities that go to make a model fireman.

The work of attending the fire alarm to all parts of the city has been a more exacting one than in the past, and the patience of the commission; but its members have overcome all obstacles, and, probably, New York can, on this 1st day of January, 1895, boast of having the BEST EQUIPPED AND MANAGED FIRE DEPARTMENT in the world.

The Commissioners have just collected data of the year's business, and the results show most gratifying. They declare that in assuming the charge of the department they have endeavored to retain the most rigid discipline, and have been actuated by a conviction that a full paid fire department, to be effective and reliable, must be organized, selected and controlled with reference to its availability in the public service.

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RIGID WEEKLY TRIALS of men it is believed that all, or nearly all, of the dross have been driven from the force, and those who remain may be considered as the veterans of the organization. The admission of new members under thirty-five years of age has been only after critical examination as to their physical and moral fitness for the duties required of them. Dismissals have been made in all grades, from district engineer to private, solely upon the evidence. The Board's object is to give to the citizens of New York, in return for the expenses of the department, a fire department without its superior to render any extensive conflagration simply impossible, and to

with such rapidity that it must be checked before it has time to spread. The Commissioners find that the rapid growth of the north side of the city renders an addition to the force at the upper end of the island a matter of necessity. At the present in the district between Fifty-ninth street and Kingsbridge there are but eight

HALF PAID COMPANIES. They propose to substitute for them full companies, to be located, two on the east side and one on the west side, with steamers and all appliances, to quench fires in those rapidly growing districts. To accomplish this will probably increase the item of expenses for next year; but the Commissioners will not hesitate to assume the responsibility, trusting to the generous support of the public.

FIRE. The Board will likely suggest at some future time legislation securing the retirement of old and valuable members upon half pay. This, it is believed, would be an additional incentive to the men to perform their duties faithfully and fearlessly.

THE ALARM TELEGRAPH. The Commissioners look with pride to the success of the new experiment, the fire alarm telegraph. The system of box alarm telegraph, as planned by Messrs. C. W. & J. Chester is completed and ready for use throughout the island. It is now in use below Fourteenth street only, and is claimed to be very complete, and the cost of the introduction of this excellent system, which already has proved a great means of preventing the spread of fire, is about \$200,000. The advance appropriation will be required to liquidate the claim of the contractors. When it is in operation throughout the entire city, it will be a great decrease in losses will be still more marked. Nearly all the large fires occurring this year have been above Fourteenth street, where the box alarm system is not yet in operation.

THE CHIEF ENGINEER'S REPORT. John L. Purley, Chief Engineer, in his report places the total number of fires during the past year at 229, 212, which, compared with the previous year, shows an increase of 114 fires and a diminution in loss of \$306,111. During the year 74 new fire engines have been placed in service. The cost of the introduction of this excellent system, which already has proved a great means of preventing the spread of fire, is about \$200,000. The advance appropriation will be required to liquidate the claim of the contractors. When it is in operation throughout the entire city, it will be a great decrease in losses will be still more marked. Nearly all the large fires occurring this year have been above Fourteenth street, where the box alarm system is not yet in operation.

RECAPITULATION of the work done by the Board since December 31, 1893: 22 miles of sewer built for \$909,333. Two miles of Fulton avenue repaved with Goidet concrete, curbed, guttered and crosswalked, for \$310,061. Four miles of streets repaved with improved material, selected the Goidet concrete, curbed, guttered and crosswalked, for \$41,208. Five and three-quarter miles of streets repaved with cobble stone, curbed, guttered and crosswalked, for \$77,379. Two hundred and eighty-two repairs made, for \$24,872. Street cleaning, second six months, for \$64,896. Total amount expended, \$1,711,846.

ARMY INTELLIGENCE. The following officers have been honorably discharged—Captains—W. J. S. Nicodemus, Charles N. Graves, Homer J. Ripley, James T. Grimes, Geo. W. Bigby and Nelson Thomason, unassigned; Charles Wilson, Fourteenth infantry; Henry T. Brownson, Twenty-fifth infantry; and A. C. Kissler, Twenty-third infantry, and James W. Long, Twenty-fifth infantry; and the following first lieutenants—Edward T. Budgett, Thirteenth infantry, and John Hunter, unassigned; Charles Banchoff, Tenth cavalry; and William C. Kelly, Second cavalry; John M. Johnson, Seventh cavalry. Second Lieutenants—E. W. Brady, Sixth cavalry, and Orlando L. Wisting, Third cavalry, have resigned.

NAVAL INTELLIGENCE. The United States steamer Junata arrived at Lisbon December 9, from Havre.

JOURNALISTIC NOTES. The printer of the Warren Sentinel, at Front Royal, Va., was consumed by fire on Christmas morning.

THE SOUTHERN MINNESOTA JOURNAL has been removed from Olin to Florida, and is now published by Wilson & Clarkson.

J. W. Rich, of Iowa City, has purchased a half interest in the Iowa Register, and will take editorial charge of the paper.

Colonel C. W. Nash and E. A. Calkins, late of the St. Paul Pioneer, have completed arrangements for the new Democratic daily paper which will be started in Milwaukee early in January. It is to be called the Milwaukee Tribune, and will be published by a joint stock company.

Mark Twain will publish, in the course of a few days, through Sheldon & Co., a pamphlet containing a burlesque biography of himself, and also one of two illustrated sketches.

Table with columns for months (January to December) and various categories (Total Fires, Total Losses, etc.).

FIRES AS COMPARED WITH PREVIOUS YEARS. The following will show the losses in 1894 as compared with previous years:

Table comparing fire losses for the years 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, and 1894.

THE MACINERY, MEN, & CO.

The force consists of 600 men, 150 horses, 37 steam engines, 15 hook and ladder trucks, 32 station wagons, 6 fuel depot trucks, etc. All the material and apparatus is in first class order, and the probability is that the showing for the year upon which we are now entering will be still more gratifying.

BROOKLYN WATER BOARD.

The Work of the Department During the Year—Thirty-three Miles of Sewers Built—Thirteen Miles of Streets Repaved—Miscellaneous Work.

William A. Fowler, President of the Board of Water and Sewerage Commissioners of Brooklyn, submitted a lengthy report yesterday, showing the work accomplished by the Board during the past year and what has been done with the money. In regard to the construction of sewers he says:—Demands from the property holders in all parts of the city for the

CONSTRUCTION OF SEWERS have been frequently made and strongly urged, but in complying with such demands, care has been taken to select localities in which the greatest and most immediate needs have been apparent. Where sewers have been constructed during this time the work has been done under contracts awarded in every case to the lowest responsible bidder, and it is gratifying to know that the discrimination and watchfulness of the Board and the faithfulness of its employes have secured the thorough execution of the contracts, and that the construction of sewers, draining immense sections of the city, have been thus constructed this year, but frequent applications for the same have been made, and the Board has not yet been approximately satisfied.

For seven times a list of the streets through which the sewers have been constructed and the cost of each. The total cost was \$908,983. Last year the Board having determined to repave Fulton avenue, from Fulton street to Bedford avenue, a distance of about two and one-quarter miles, with improved material, selected the Goidet concrete, curbed, guttered and crosswalked, for a mile of the avenue was so repaved before the close of the year, at a cost of \$38,995, including curbs, gutters and crosswalks. During the present year the remaining two miles of the avenue have been so repaved at a cost of \$191,061, making the total cost of repaving the avenue a distance of two and one-quarter miles, \$229,956.

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JAPAN.

Some of the Changes and Events of the Last Ten Years and Their Bearing Upon American Interests.

Has Our Diplomacy Been at Fault?

YOKOHAMA, Nov. 24, 1894. The expedition of Commodore Perry having paved the way for American commercial relations with Japan, that country sent to the United States in 1852 an Embassy to strengthen the friendly relations which had so auspiciously commenced between the two nations. At that time our country was well represented by Mr. Harris, whose popularity with the Japanese government and people placed us on the most favored footing in all the dealings of that country with foreigners. American influence was second to none, if it was not greater than any other. Then only one or two ports were open to commerce, and those were under severe restrictions. Now some seven or eight of the principal ports of the Empire are open to the ships of the world, and Yeddo, Yokohama and the great cities of Hogo and Nagasaki are on the direct lines from San Francisco to China. Yokohama, the commercial center of Japan and the residence of foreign Ministers, was then hardly in existence, whereas at present her shipping lists run from fifty to a hundred, including every nationality. Jeddo, the capital, which was then visited only by special permit, and then under a guard of government troops, is now inhabited by foreigners, and daily lines of stages and steamers ply between there and Yokohama.

But if there is a striking change in the commercial aspect of the country there has been no less a change in political affairs, and it soon became evident to any one who remains a short time in Jeddo or Yokohama that this change has been detrimental to American interests; in fact to the interests of all foreigners, except the English, or few who may be so fortunate as, by long and close relations, to have the influence of the British Minister. We venture to assert that the exceptions are few.

HOW THE CHANGE WAS BROUGHT ABOUT. When the present British Minister, Sir Harry Parkes, was sent to represent England in Japan, he was dissatisfied with his style of government, and set to work to build up one more to his liking. This is the plain English of the matter. Until this time the Japanese had two rulers, the spiritual and the temporal. The Mikado was the head of the spiritual, and the Yeddo ruler the head of the temporal affairs. The Mikado, being at the head of spiritual affairs, was looked upon by the Japanese as too sacred to concern himself with earthly matters, which were entrusted to the Yeddo ruler. For a pretext to convene his work Sir Harry Parkes declared that his queen was pregnant, and that he must return to England to attend to her. He then set to work to build up one more to his liking. This is the plain English of the matter. Until this time the Japanese had two rulers, the spiritual and the temporal. 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