

MEMBER'S MESSAGE

Review of the Past Year's City Administration Fiscal and Political.

DEPARTMENTAL DUTIES.

Errors of Legislation as They Affect Local Interests.

WANTED—A RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT. Mayor's Office, Jan. 19, 1874. To the Honorable the Common Council...

Since my last annual communication to your honorable body the laws relative to the government of the city have been modified in respect of certain details of administration, and, doubtless, in some minor matters, improved.

The Mayor goes on to say—Indeed, the condition of our financial affairs at the period they were assumed by the present head of the Finance Department was without parallel in the annals of municipal history.

During this period there has been required the vigor necessary to oppose the methods of malversation and corrupt officials of the past, and the forbearance and patience with the inexperience of new incumbents.

The Mayor shows by tables that there has been an increase of \$10,102,872.30 in the city and county debt from 1860 to 1874 in assessment bonds alone.

On the 1st of January, 1874, the amount of the debt was \$24,532,617.50. On 16th September, 1871, the sinking fund amounted to \$1,422,238.48.

Showing an increase of \$4,210,284.02. Of this amount only the sum of \$466,511.31 was derived from the sale of public property...

The expenditures for 1872 did not exceed \$31,500,000.00. The expenditures for 1873 were about \$30,000,000.00.

It may suit the purpose of those interested in the restoration of a régime of misgovernment to charge upon the present administration and taxation which is the direct consequence of the acts of their predecessors in office.

More than 2000 children attend the schools in the course of the year. The amount of money called for to sustain our schools for 1874 is very large.

It may be very well questioned whether there are not already too many of the ornamental branches taught in the schools. The children are crowded out of the schools by the want of studies.

I am clearly of opinion that the improvements contemplated in other parts of the city should be upon a very much less expensive scale than those proposed by the Board of Public Works.

Under the apportionment of 1874 the rate of taxation for the year was \$4.10 per cent. The assessed value of 1873 was \$1,129,139,623.

The average time within which bills for supplies, materials, &c., are paid for, is about 15 days. This is a very long time, and it is to be regretted that it is so.

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MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS.

BOARD OF ALDERMEN.

In order to receive the Mayor's annual Message the Board of Aldermen met yesterday afternoon, the President, Mr. H. H. Vane, in the chair.

The Mayor nominated Thomas Sullivan a city member of the Board of Aldermen, removed. The nomination was laid over and ordered printed.

BOARD OF ASSISTANT ALDERMEN.

A Memorial to Change the Building Laws to Be Sent to the Legislature.

Pursuant to adjournment the Board met yesterday afternoon at two o'clock.

Mr. Betts, the Deputy Clerk, called the Board to order, whereupon Assistant Alderman Simonson moved that the minutes of the previous meeting be read and approved.

The "agreement to disagree" between the political factions of the Board is still in vogue.

Alderman Healey offered a resolution reappointing William H. Mooney and the other officials appointed at a meeting on January 5.

Alderman Simonson moved to substitute the name of Constantine Donohue.

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AQUATIC.

The Course for Next Year's Collegiate Race—Sarotoga Lake Recommended—Meeting of the Delegates at Hartford To-Morrow.

It is always difficult to obtain a true and unbiased judgment concerning affairs of "honor or emolument" for the possession of which communities are striving.

I would like to state here that whatever is mentioned in this letter is authentic, and proceeds from one entirely impartial.

A three-mile straight water course has been laid out by survey, with a width of almost two miles at the start and 1,300 feet at the finish.

The water is generally very smooth, owing to this peculiar natural advantage, and nothing except a small wind can raise the surface.

It is a great advantage to have a straight water course, and it is on a steep hillside, every foot of the course is readily seen with a good glass.

Saratoga is a great advantage to have a straight water course, and it is on a steep hillside, every foot of the course is readily seen with a good glass.

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INTERESTING LIBEL CASE.

John F. Chamberlain's Complaint Against George Wilkes—The District Attorney Represented by Ex-Judge Fullerton—What Counsel for the Defendant Endeavored to Show—The Plaintiff on the Stand.

The examination in the complaint of John F. Chamberlain charging George Wilkes with libel, after one or two postponements, came up yesterday afternoon before Justice Otterbourg, at Essex Market Police Court.

Mr. Wilkes, in company with his counsel, Mr. Samuel G. Courtney, and Mr. Ditzenhofer, came into the court room, and, after conversing a few minutes with friends that he met, took a seat behind the railing and quietly awaited the calling of the case.

Presently at two o'clock Mr. Chamberlain, with his counsel, Ex-Judge Fullerton, and Mr. J. D. Noyes, made his appearance, and so soon as Justice Otterbourg disposed of a few minor complaints the names of "Chamberlain" and "Wilkes" were called.

The Justice, asking Mr. Chamberlain if he was represented by counsel, and being answered in the affirmative, displayed the complaint, which has been published in the Herald, when Mr. Courtney desired that he put his native place on the stand, as they wanted to examine him upon Mr. Chamberlain standing up before the Justice the Clerk of the Court began a direct examination, when Justice Otterbourg summarily stopped it, and stated that the complainant might be cross-examined, to which the counsel for the defendant acquiesced, and commenced by asking Mr. Chamberlain where he was born, to which was answered, "In Lansingburg, 1837."

Mr. Courtney then proceeded to ask the witness how long he lived in Lansingburg, to which Mr. Fullerton objected. Mr. Courtney claimed the right to show the history of the complainant and his general reputation, from the time he took his native place to the present period.

Mr. Fullerton denied the right, and said that in every properly conducted examination no such latitude was allowed. This was the case of the people against the defendant, and it was for the latter to prove his allegations.

Mr. Ditzenhofer answered Mr. Fullerton in the same strain that Mr. Courtney had inquired in, and intimated that Mr. Fullerton was representing the people without the authority of the District Attorney, when this question was settled by Mr. Fullerton showing the Justice a request of Mr. Phelps for him to act in the matter and protect the interests of the people.

Justice Otterbourg decided to sustain the objection of the defendant, and being answered in the affirmative, displayed the complaint, which has been published in the Herald, when Mr. Courtney desired that he put his native place on the stand, as they wanted to examine him upon Mr. Chamberlain standing up before the Justice the Clerk of the Court began a direct examination, when Justice Otterbourg summarily stopped it, and stated that the complainant might be cross-examined, to which the counsel for the defendant acquiesced