THE STATE CAPITAL.

Effect of the Rejection of the Governor's Nominations.

A BITTER PARTISAN FEELING.

Examination of Officials Before the Insurance Committee.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE HERALD.]

ALBANY, March 21, 1877.

Governor Robinson has reason to be irritated (and that is a very mild term) over the treatment his nominations received to-day at the hands of the Senate. If Senator Jacobs was ever precise and forcible in his language it was when he characterized this treatment as low, cowardly and undignified. It was supposed there was an *entente cordiale* between the Governor and the republican element of the Senate but that supposition was misleading. With President Hayes at Washington breaking down the barriers of party and setting an example for all the politicians of the country to follow, it is passing strange that in the Senate of this great commonwealth a set of men could avow themselves so utterly prejuiced, so utterly fettered by party bonds as to fling in the face of the commonwealth's executive the insult of to-day.

Last night the republican Senators held a caucus, as already announced in the HERALD, and determined on rejecting all of the Governor's nominations, for no reason whatever than that they belonged to the democratic party. Perhaps the ulterior motive might have been to slaughter all the nominations as a justification for slaughtering that of McClellan—making them a sort of breakwater. Jacobs, in his bold, free way of talking, said that the Senator from the Twenty-fifth (Woodin) had returned from Washington with instructions in his pocket, not, perhaps, from President Hayes, but from some people who may be afraid that if McClellan becomes Superintendent of Public Works he may yet loom up as a very formidable factor in State, if not in national politics. Any how the fiat went forth that McClellan's nomination should be chucked overboard, and though it was not actually done to-day by the Senate it will certainly be done to-morrow.

The extraordinary feature of all was the holding of an open session on the consideration of the Governor's appointments. It was never done before. The chamber was full in every corner, and when the hour of noon arrived the President said that an executive session was in order. Senator Woodin argued that the rules bearing on the question of executive session did not proibit its being held with open doors. Senator Jacobs expressed a perfect willingness to have the session open, and it was accordingly held so by unanimous consent. The first nomination rejected was that of Austin Flint for Health Officer of the Port, then Allen C. Beach for Bank Examiner, then Charles S. Beardsley for Captain of the Port, then W. W. Gordon for Warden of the Port, and then, amid great interest, came up McClellan's name, reported adversely from the Canal Committee by Senator Cole. Old Senator St. John, a member of the Canal Committee, stood up and said, with much feeling in his voice, that he was sorry the majority of the committee had reached the conclusion they did. He thought General McClellan would be a decided improvement on the thieves who had controlled the canals for the years past. And let me here interpolate the expression that I believe these very thieves, who knew their reign of plunder would be put an end to by the confirmation of McClellan, were chiefly concerned in bringing about his defeat. Senator St. John concluded his speech by expressing his sorrow that republicans should have so far forgotten themselves.

After Mr. St. John took his seat Messrs. Cole and McCarthy spoke in opposition to the confirmation, and then the Senate adjourned with this order of business pending. The feeling is not by any means favorable to the conduct of the Senate in slaughtering the Governor's nominations, but the Governor will have his revenge one of these days, when some of the mildewed bills of republican proprietorship come to him for signature. General Martin T. McMahon, who had a recent interview with the Governor, said to me to-night that Governor Robinson not only had no communication or understanding with McClellan about this nomination, but that he actually never saw the man.'

LITTLE HELL GATE.

The Police Department thought it worth while, though nobody here can see why, to transmit the resolutions of the New York Common Council in favor of filling in Little Hell Gate in the discussion on the Supply bill.

THE STATE SURVEY.

A motion by Mr. Spinola was made to substitute the name of William G. McAlpine for that of Egbert L. Viele as one of the Commissioners of the State Survey. The motion was lost, and the bill was made a special order for to-morrow.

MR. COWDIN'S INSURANCE BILL.

The House was occupied with the Supply bill all the day and in the evening with the Insurance bill, reported by Mr. Cowdin. There were no amendments worth noticing made to the Supply bill, and the Insurance bill was amended in a few unimportant points concerning the first and second sections. It was made a special order for to-morrow evening.

PAVING NEW YORK STREETS.

Mr. Healy introduced a bill relative to paving, repaving and repairing streets, avenues and highways in New York city.

It provides for a street-paving commissioner, to be appointed by the Mayor and Comptroller, to hold office for four years and until his successor is appointed, unless sooner removed for cause. His salary shall be $5,000 per annum. He shall appoint an engineer, superintendent and the necessary clerks, and fix their salaries subject to the approval of the Board of Estimates and Apportionment. The Commissioner of Public Works shall transfer all street repairing tools, &c., to the Street Paving Commissioner. The Water Purveyor's Bureau is abolished, and the duties of the same, except paving, repaving and repairing the streets, are transferred to the bureau of the chief engineer of the Croton Aqueduct. The Commissioner can, in his judgment, order streets paved with wood or concrete, to be repaved with whatever material he may select. All such work shall be done by contract, the terms of which shall be settled by the Corporation Connsel. The Commissioner shall from time to time certify to the Comptroller the expenses incurred, and the Comptroller shall forthwith pay the same. The Commissioner is given full power over all work referred to in the bill.

THE INSURANCE COMMITTEE.

YESTERDAY'S PROCEEDINGS—TESTIMONY OF THE OFFICERS OF THE GLOBE, MUTUAL AND NEW YORK LIFE COMPANIES.

ALBANY, March 21, 1877.

The Insurance Committee met to-day at half-past nine o'clock, Mr. Cowdin in the chair, and resumed the examination of witnesses touching salaries and other compensation of officers of life insurance companies.

Mr. James M. Freeman, Secretary of the Globe Company, was recalled, and, in reply to questions, stated that it was the practice of his and other life companies to allow their attorneys to charge about one per cent, besides the usual fees, for all loans made, including legal interest, and that they (the companies) did not think it was usurious to do so. He stated that the Finance Committee of his and many other companies had acted as appraisers, and that the loans never exceeded fifty per cent of the value of approved property; yet he admitted that his company held about $700,000 worth of real estate, bought in within the last year or two under foreclosures, at about three-fourths of the face of the mortgage, interest and legal expenses, and that his company rented the property so bought in, being dwellings, for about five or six per cent of the mortgages; it was the opinion of Mr. Freeman that the experience of his company, the Globe, would compare favorably in that respect with all companies.

He mentioned one case where the value of the property, in his opinion, was $6,000; yet it was bought in for $1,000. He said his company, during the present stagnation of the market, deemed it useless to try and sell all of their real estate, and therefore held it. It was rented and secured by fire insurance. The commissions paid by his company on insurance secured was thirty and seven and a half for seven years, which was the usual price paid. General agents get thirty-five and ten, out of which local solicitors are paid. For collections from one to two and a half per cent is paid. The salaries received by him and the President were $2,500 each, with $10,000 each for allowances of two per cent on the net income; his was a mixed company, part stock and part mutual; the capital was $100,000, on which the stockholders draw seven per cent, and a like amount on the guarantee fund, made up out of dividends on the surplus fund; the amount of this guarantee fund was now $100,000; it may be increased to $500,000; the counsel of the company are Sewell & Pierce, and Fullerton, Knox & Co., to whom the company pay a salary; the company also have attorneys who are paid for special services and receive commissions on loans; the costs of foreclosures bought in are paid by the company; the company had not obtained judgments on the bonds for loans made on property bought in; Mr. William Sturges, managing director of the company, gets a salary of $6,500; the president was ill in Florida; $67,000 would cover all the salaries of the company. The terminations during 1876 would equal about 2,500 policies, or about the amount of new business, on which was paid about $32,000 for losses and some surrender values; the balance was forfeited; the company litigated only a small number, some of which were compromised; a $20,000 risk in St. Louis was compromised for $16,000; the death occurred three months after the policy was issued; the fire insurance was in the hands of Mr. Wright, a clerk, who receives a salary of $1,000; and commissions on the fire insurance placed; the company has local or branch offices in New York and other large cities; the reinsurance is small, not over $150,000; the reinsurance of all companies when made is about fifteen per cent less than the usual premiums charged; the Globe reinsured the risks of the Merchants Life to the extent of about $2,000,000, for which his company received a reserve of four and a half per cent, amounting to about $100,000; his company paid no one anything for securing this reinsurance; the fire insurance of the Globe is in the Liverpool and London and Globe, Continental, Home and Lancashire, of England.

THE MUTUAL LIFE.

Mr. Lloyd, Secretary of the Mutual Life, said he had only been secretary for a year; that the President left about three weeks ago and when last heard from was in California and was expected back in May next; Mr. McCurdy was the Vice President and principal manager in the absence of the President, and was fully conversant with all the practices of the company; Mr. McCurdy is generally away two or three months in the summer; the salary of the Solicitor of the company, Mr. Palmer, was $14,000; other compensation of the attorney or attorneys is charged to the expense account; witness could not name the counsel or attorneys employed outside of the city; that would come under the Law Department, of which Mr. Palmer was the head; all legal matters are referred to the Law Department; witness from memory could not tell the amounts, nor to whom paid, of attorney and counsel fees during 1876 save that represented by Professor Bartlett; the amount paid to general agents for commissions during 1876 would equal $500,000 or $600,000, out of which all solicitors and office and agency expenses are paid; no commission was allowed on the small amount, which was voluntarily secured at the home office; all bills are audited by the Finance Committee and paid by check; William M. Vermilyea and Seymour L. Huested are on the expense committee; the trustees are elected by the policy holders by proxy; but few call and vote in person; these proxies exist to a large amount on policies in force on which the officers elect the trustees annually; proxies are not renewed annually, but continue until changed.

Mr. Lloyd was excused, as the committee deemed Mr. McCurdy, in the absence of Mr. Winston, the proper person to testify as to the names of counsel employed and the general practice of the company.

THE NEW YORK LIFE.

Morris Franklin, president of the New York Life Insurance Company, was called and upon affirming, expressed an apology for non-compliance with the resolution as to salaries by report in writing, but was now ready to answer all questions that might be put to him. As to salaries he would say that the president and vice president each receive a salary of $25,000 and a bonus of $6,250 each, making $31,250; three medical examiners, $11,000, making a total, including out of town medical examinations of $41,000; other employés receive a total of $21,376, and seventy-five clerks an aggregate of $95,000. The amount paid to the president and vice president for 1876 was the same as for the preceding five or six years. The witness was also a director in several fire insurance companies and banks. Trustees get $5 in gold for each meeting attended; this is the usual custom; in 1876 there was $21,000 paid to counsel; among the counsel employed was Mr. Carpenter, of Washington; all fees on loans are paid by the borrowers; these fees are the usual charges for searches and commissions over legal interest; Messrs. Fullerton, Knox & Cresby are employed; also Mr. Bogert and some thirty or forty other law firms throughout the United States; the company reinsure part of some of its risks, but none in the New York companies; the trustees are elected by the policy-holders by proxy mostly, except a few who appear in person—not over thirty or forty; these proxies run indefinitely, and are used by the officers to elect the trustees annually, who elect the officers and Finance Committee; the fire insurance is placed in known companies, among which are the Farragut and Franklin; in the building of the company loans are made on property worth at least double the amount of the loan; a considerable amount of mortgaged property had been bought in under foreclosure as there were no bidders over the mortgages; this property the company still held and rented; of the four or five thousand lapsed and surrendered policies in 1876, three or four thousand were forfeited and marked off; about one hundred and fifty were restored since January last; the average age of these terminated policies was probably five years; we have agents in the South buying up our Southern risks as our experience is that they are not as good as our Northern risks; we pay an equitable price for them; no company is legally bound to pay anything on a lapsed policy; it is purely a matter of grace with all companies; the Finance Committee act as appraisers on loans made in New York and vicinity; the Chamber of Life Insurance, of which he was the first President, is a voluntary organization composed of the leading officers of the leading companies for the protection of those companies; Mr. Charlton T. Lewis is the present Secretary; not being now President he could not speak as to how it is sustained or who are connected with it; one of its objects is to watch legislation in the several States; William H. Beers, Vice President of the New York Life, could speak more in detail as to the general practice of this and other companies, as to counsel employed, salaries, commissions and expenses; it is my duty merely to give a general supervision, while the Vice President has the practical duties to attend to.

After consultation the committee concluded to adjourn, that Messrs. Beers, of the New York Life, McCurdy, of the Mutual company, and others might be called.

To-morrow the officers of the Knickerbocker will be examined, and others if ready.

MR. GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

Will you please correct the statement of Mr. Brick in the Assembly, to-day, that I am not a taxpayer in Richmond county? It is untrue. Mr. Fish was misinformed. GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

NEW BRIGHTON, S. I., March 21, 1877.

DISASTERS AT SEA.

FOUNDERING OF THE SCHOONER GOVERNOR BURTON—HER CAPTAIN AND CREW RESCUED BY THE STEAMSHIP COLUMBUS—AN AMERICAN BRIG PROBABLY LOST WITH ALL ON BOARD.

The steamer Columbus, of the New York and Havana Steamship Line, commanded by Captain E. C. Reed, moored at pier No. 13 North River, arrived at six o'clock yesterday afternoon, having experienced very severe weather during the homeward passage, and bringing the captain and crew of the schooner Governor Burton, which foundered off Hatteras Lighthouse during the passage from Philadelphia to Charleston, S. C.

WENT DOWN UNAIDED.

On the outward passage, on the morning of March 9, the steamer sighted an American brig about two miles distant, with the ensign union down, and apparently in a sinking condition. The disabled vessel was lying distant about eighteen miles from Hatteras, southwest by west, and the wind was blowing a terrific gale from the south. Captain Reed was unable to render any assistance on account of the high sea, and the brig disappeared shortly after she was sighted.

RESCUED FROM A WRECK.

The homeward passage was without exciting incident until the morning of March 20, when at eleven o'clock, Hatteras Lighthouse bearing northwest by north, distance fifteen miles, an American schooner was sighted showing signals of distress. The wind was blowing a moderate gale from the north, and the sea ran high. On going to her assistance the foundering vessel was ascertained to be the Governor Burton, of Philadelphia, loaded with railroad iron, and bound for Charleston, S. C. The captain and crew were utterly prostrated by the exhaustion of a night of struggle with the sea, and the vessel was in a sinking condition. No time was lost in perfecting the necessary arrangements for bringing off the occupants of the doomed schooner, which, consisting of a captain and five men, were transferred to the comfortable cabin of the homeward bound steamer. Fortunately no lives had been sacrificed, although the men were so completely exhausted that great care was necessary in transferring them. Two days on board the steamer comparatively restored their spirits, however, and they were landed in New York last evening. The last man had scarcely left the foundered schooner when she shivered, careened and went down. The men gossiped of the affair with the reporter, who was present on the pier at the arrival of the steamer, as if it had been an everyday occurrence with them to baffle death by a hair's breadth. They will all leave for Philadelphia this morning. The schooner is, of course, a total loss, and is owned in Philadelphia.

As a last incident, the steamer passed an unknown bark off Barnegat yesterday morning, showing trouble signals.

THE RUSLAND.

HER POSITION UNCHANGED, BUT THE STERN SINKING.

The steamer Rusland lies in about the same position as on Tuesday, although the surf was high and the wind south to southeast all day yesterday. The weather was so thick at times during the day that the vessel could hardly be seen from the shore. The lighters which went down to Long Branch Tuesday had to leave at three o'clock yesterday morning. Nothing was done yesterday toward discharging the cargo, it being too rough to work the surf boats. The Coast Wrecking Company's steamer Relief is anchored off the shore about half a mile, waiting for orders. The prospects for getting the steamer off are bad. Those interested have very little hope and are very much discouraged. They are now more anxious about the cargo and fear the weather will continue to grow worse.

PUMPING HER OUT.

The large pump of the Coast Wrecking Company was put to work for a short time yesterday, discharging a barrel of water each second; but it seemed to be of no avail. They will commence pumping to-day at low tide, and hope the water will be lower, so they can get at the leak. The steamer still crushes out timbers of the old ship Adonis, and the shore is strewn with fragments for miles. The bow rests on the old wreck and does not sink, but the stern is settling badly, and is at least a foot lower than it was on Tuesday. The longshoremen say the steamer shows signs of weakness, and think she will never be gotten off.

The Western Union Telegraph Company are building a telegraph line from the shore opposite the wreck to connect with their lines for the agents of the steamer in order that they may telegraph direct to the steamers from their offices in New York and Philadelphia. The line will be completed this morning.

The Amérique is still fast, the weather not being favorable for moving her. It is believed she will be gotten off finally.

PRODUCE EXCHANGE AFFAIRS.

PROPOSED ACTION ON THE NEW EXCHANGE BUILDING—NEW RULES ADOPTED.

The regular meeting of the Board of Managers of the Produce Exchange was held yesterday, the President, Mr. L. J. N. Stark, in the chair. The call issued to the members to deposit their votes on the 23d inst. either for or against the erection of a new Exchange building was on motion reconsidered and the balloting indefinitely postponed. A petition signed by about 100 members of the Exchange praying the President to call a meeting of all the members was presented to the Board, and in accordance with this request a meeting is now called for Tuesday, 27th inst., to be held on the ground floor of the Exchange, at eleven o'clock in the morning, in front of the President's desk.

The following named gentlemen were elected members of the Exchange:—Messrs. August Buermann, Edward G. Byrnes, Francis C. Crass, William E. Dennis, W. B. Emerson, E. M. Field, John William Follett, J. A. Lange, John E. Leech, Orison McNeill, Louis Morya, Jr.; Jacob W. Schmidt, John Schulting, George B. Smythe and Henry Taylor.

The code of rules hitherto governing the Exchange having become somewhat obsolete the Board of Managers, at their session yesterday, adopted a new series, which will be posted on the bulletin and go into effect immediately. The following is a copy of the new order of governing the Exchange business:—

THE RULES.

RULE 1.—The annual assessment on the members of the Exchange shall be due and payable at the treasurer's desk on the 1st day of May in each year. Members must show their tickets on entering when so required.

RULE 2.—The rooms shall be opened at nine o'clock A. M., and closed, except as hereinafter provided, at five o'clock P. M. Clerks and porters of members may have access to the rooms between the hours of nine A. M. and twelve M. for the purpose of arranging samples, but must withdraw on the completion of their duties.

RULE 3.—'Change hours shall be from eleven o'clock A. M. to two o'clock P. M. All communication with persons on the floors of the Exchange during these hours must be made through the messengers of the Exchange, and should be in writing when practicable.

RULE 4.—The tops of the grain and provision tables shall be free, and may be occupied by those first in attendance; but no person or firm can claim the right to occupy in the front line more than the space over one sample drawer to the exclusion of the other members. Flour stands and grain and provision drawers may be rented on application to the Superintendent.

RULE 5.—The Exchange rooms are designed exclusively for private transactions, and all loud or boisterous conversation is prohibited. The throwing of dough, corn or other articles is strictly forbidden, and any members who shall practise the same shall be deemed guilty of misconduct, as set forth in section 32 of the bylaws governing the Produce Exchange, and shall be liable to the penalties therein set forth. Smoking in any of the rooms of the Exchange, before a quarter past two P. M., is strictly prohibited.

RULE 6.—Any stranger visiting the Exchange must be introduced by a member, who shall register his name in a book provided for that purpose. Such visitor shall receive a card of admission for seven consecutive days during one year, which can be renewed only at the discretion of the Floor Committee. Should any person so introduced violate the rules of the Exchange by the transaction of business on the floor the member introducing such visitor shall become liable to pay a fine of not less than $25 nor more than $50 for each offence, at the discretion of the Board of Managers, and be subject to the same penalty for non-payment as provided for assessments in section 21 of the bylaws.

RULE 7.—Any member who shall be incapacitated for attending to his business in consequence of illness, or who shall be temporarily absent from the city, may, on the approval of the Floor Committee, be represented on 'Change during the time of such illness or of such temporary absence from the city by some one person whom he shall designate for that purpose, and for whose acts he shall be responsible. Such substitute shall receive a pass for a period not exceeding thirty days, which pass may be renewed by the Floor Committee in their discretion. Until such pass is returned and cancelled the member himself shall not be admitted to the Exchange.

RULE 8.—The courtesies of the Exchange shall be extended to duly accredited representatives of the press to report markets; but they shall not be allowed to transact any other business.

RULE 9.—The name of any member who may be suspended by the Board of Managers shall be posted on the bulletins of the Exchange during the term of such suspension, and the name of any member who may be expelled shall be likewise posted for thirty days from the date of such expulsion.

RULE 10.—Business on the upper floor of the Exchange shall close daily at half-past one o'clock P. M., of which the following notice shall be given:—

First—A bell provided for that purpose shall be rung as a warning at one o'clock P. M.

Second—This bell shall be rung again at half-past one o'clock P. M. to announce that the hour for closing business has arrived.

Third—Eight minutes later the bell shall be struck three times as a final warning to leave the floor.

Fourth—At forty minutes past one o'clock P. M. the barriers at the head of the stairway leading to the upper floor shall be closed and a fine of fifty cents shall be imposed on all persons remaining on the floor at that time, which fine shall be collected in the same manner and under the same penalty for non-payment as provided for assessments in section 21 of the bylaws.

RULE 11.—Business on the lower floor of the Exchange shall close daily at two o'clock P. M., of which the following notice shall be given:—

First—A bell provided for that purpose shall be rung as a warning at ten minutes to two o'clock P. M.

Second—This bell shall be rung again at two o'clock P. M. to announce that the hour for closing business has arrived.

Third—Ten minutes later the bell shall be struck three times as a final warning to leave the floor.

Fourth—At fifteen minutes past two o'clock P. M. the doors of the building shall be closed for five minutes, and a fine of fifty cents shall be imposed on all persons remaining on the floor at that time, which fine shall be collected in the same manner and under the same penalty for non-payment as provided for assessments in section 21 of the bylaws.

The Floor Committee of the New York Produce Exchange are authorized and directed to enforce the foregoing rules.

CLOSING LITTLE HELL GATE.

INFLUENCE ON THE QUESTION OF RAPID TRANSPORTATION—A PRACTICAL NAVIGATOR'S OPINION.

The opposition to the proposed closing of Little Hell Gate by General Newton continues to meet with strenuous support, both by the Commissioners of Emigration and by the directors of the Children's Home on the island, of which Register Edgar Ketchum is president. Mr. Ketchum has just returned from another visit to Albany, where he had an interview with the Committee on Cities, and, in addition to the strong objections on the ground of the detriment to the health of the people resident in the vicinity and the inmates of the public institutions on Randall's and Blackwell's islands, urged upon the consideration of the committee the effect it would have on the navigation of the Harlem River.

There can be no doubt of the fact, however careless the uptown residents may be about the sanitary part of the question, that they are thoroughly aroused on the question of transportation, and feel certain that the navigation of the Harlem River would be closed during the winter months if Little Hell Gate was stopped up. Practical navigators are almost unanimously of this opinion, and the following letter from Captain Charles H. Longstreet, who for the past twenty years has been on the Harlem River, has been forwarded to Albany. It is addressed to the President of the Harlem Navigation Company:—

SIR—I have the honor to reply to your request asking my opinion as to what effect on navigation of the Harlem River the closing of Little Hell Gate would have. The principal navigation of the Harlem River is by passenger steamers, some of which connect with railroads, and are the sole means of quick transportation for about 7,000 people daily. During the winter, when the harbor and river is partially covered with floating ice, it is almost impossible to keep the Harlem River open, notwithstanding the natural advantages now enjoyed. During the season of ice on flood tide and easterly winds the floating ice passes up the East River, and on approaching the lower end of Blackwell's Island presses over to the west shore and passes up the west channel to the Big Gate, where it generally forms a blockade across the rocks to the Gate, which impedes the current and gives it an additional set to the westward, and together with the wind forces large floes of ice into the mouth of the Harlem River, passing rapidly up the stream until it reaches the Little Gate, where it is drawn through by the rapid current into the East River, and the tides keep it in constant motion and prevent a blockade on the Harlem River. Having shown the natural advantages now possessed, together with the fact that the steamboats are passing through the river from sixty to seventy-five times a day, and that it is yet almost impossible to keep it open, I would say decidedly that to remove the natural advantages of the river by closing Little Hell Gate would be to make it unnavigable during the winter months.

EFFECT ON BUSINESS.

The stoppage of passenger transportation on the Harlem River during such periods for all time to come is a matter of great importance, not only to seven or eight thousand persons who now enjoy this route, but to the general interests of the trade and prosperity of the northern portion of the city. With reference to the direct question at issue, the action of the ice, as previously stated, will be the same until it reaches the point where it passes through the Little Gate; that passage being closed it will press up the Harlem River, past the Bronx Kills (a shoal and rocky passage affording no relief), until it reaches the Harlem Bridge, where it will jam with the steamers and vessels moored there and form a gorge. This will continue during the flood tide without regard to the wind. When the tide slacks at the bridge there has been at least two hours' ebb tide in the Big Gate, leaving but little chance for the ice to move in the Harlem River; consequently it must freeze up and stop navigation.

I have navigated the East and Harlem rivers almost daily for upward of twenty years, and have closely watched the ice and tide, and am fully convinced that to close Little Hell Gate would be to close the Harlem River during the winter. C. H. LONGSTREET.

THE DEPARTMENT OF DOCKS.

At the regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Public Docks, held yesterday afternoon, the following communications were received:—

From Alderman Phillips—Petition of citizens of Yorkville for a public dock at the foot of Seventy-fourth, Seventy-fifth or Seventy-sixth street. Referred to Engineer-in-Chief.

The report of G S. Greene, Jr., Engineer-in-Chief, was received, showing the amount of work done for the week ending March 17, including new pier 1 North River Canal street section, old pier 40 North River new walls at Houston street and Leroy street sections.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

The report from the Treasurer *pro tem.*, Commissioner Westervelt, was received, showing the receipts from March 13 to March 17 from all sources to have been $173,453; disbursements, $13,555; on hand, $159,902; amount deposited with the City Chamberlain, agreeably to statute, to the credit of the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund for the redemption of the city debt, $5,878.

No answer as yet has been received from the Corporation Attorney in regard to the legal points submitted to him about the power of the Commissioners to grant the application of the White Star Steamship Company for the privilege of laying a railway track down their pier.

OUR COMPLAINT BOOK.

A STREET BLOCKADED.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

On the south side of Fifty-second street, between First and Second avenues, there are two piles of old bricks and stone, encumbering not only the sidewalk, but more than half of the street, so that but one team can pass at a time and pedestrians must cross over to the other sidewalk or walk around the pile. These mountains of bricks and stone have been lying there for more than two years, though complaints have been made to the Corporation Attorney, to the police and to police and district courts; yet no notice seems to have been taken of it. A SUFFERER.

RECKLESS OMNIBUS DRIVING.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

At about twelve o'clock to-day I drove down Broadt way in omnibus No. 77, of the Twenty-third street line. Our driver and the driver of omnibus No. 36, of the same line, were filled with a spirit of rivalry. A race was the consequence. As a specimen of fancy driving it was a success, but for every other purpose it was a lamentable failure. We dashed along at a reckless speed, now striking the wheel of another omnibus, now coming in violent contact with a truck. Everything tried to get out of our way, and where we passed we monopolized the street. At length our omnibus collided with another vehicle with so much force as to throw one of our horses violently to the ground. At this point the only lady who was in the omnibus got out quite terrified. Worse driving and a more reckless disregard for the rights of others I have never seen. That such a thing should be allowed in the most crowded street of a civilized city is disgraceful. Is there no way of preventing it? F. L. O.

THE CONTRABAND CIGAR TRADE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

Why do not the revenue authorities stop the peddling of cigars in direct violation of the laws. I am a storekeeper near Washington Market, pay heavy rent and do not sell even a five cent cigar that has not given Uncle Sam his profit, and still all around me are men and boys peddling their contraband goods. They are poor, it is true, and so am I, but either the laws should be altered and both allowed to sell without tax or justice done to all alike. Manufacturers of cigars complain of the opposition they have to contend with by men making cigars without paying tax, but if these pedlers were stopped there would be no market for this unlawful trade. WASHINGTON MARKET.

STREET CAR LIFE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

Is there not some way to prevent intoxicated men entering the street cars? It should, at least, be the conductor's duty to see that they do not insult every passenger. Riding up a few days since in a Broadway car a man seated opposite attracted my attention. He was under the influence of liquor and was greatly annoying the young lady who sat next him by staring at her continually until he had attracted general attention, and then began talking in quite an offensive manner forward. In various other ways making his presence so obnoxious that at last she was compelled to ask a gentleman to change seats with her. A CITIZEN.

HANDCARTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

Does not a law exist in the city which prohibits the rolling of these three wheeled "handcarts" upon the pavements and sidewalks? The dirty youngsters who attend to this important business just roll over a man or woman or child, or anything else but a blue coat, if they do not jump aside as soon as this infernal machine appears. ——.

RESERVED SEATS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

The managers of the Grand Opera House advertise reserved seats at fifty cents, and when you inquire at the box office for one in the evening you receive the answer, "They are all taken;" but they give you an admission ticket for fifty cents in the first balcony, not reserved, although after the performance has commenced the reserved seats in the balcony still remain vacant. Is this not a great imposition? THEATREGOER.

THEATRE PRICES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

I desire to enter a complaint against the imposition practised by our theatres in charging an admission fee and compelling one to pay an additional fee for a seat. On Thursday evening I visited the Union Square Theatre and entered at an early hour, having paid $1 for admission. On entering, I was informed by the usher that all the seats were reserved and that I had better go up stairs, which I did, but was told by the usher up stairs that all seats were reserved there and I should go down stairs. I was compelled to pay an additional fifty cents to secure a seat, notwithstanding the fact that not over fifty persons were in the house at the time. JUSTICE.

A DANGEROUS HALL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

Permit me, through your useful "Complaint Book," to call attention to the danger people undergo in visiting a place known as "Dramatic Hall," which said hall is used for dramatic entertainments, and is situated at Nos. 46 and 48 East Houston street, in this city, in case of fire or panic. The hall is a very small and narrow one, and should a fire break out people would have to rush to the only doorway, which is about three feet wide, in order to save themselves. After getting through this door they would come to a narrow stairway, which is also no more than three feet wide. Performances and entertainments are going four or five times during the week and every Sunday, and at times the hall is very crowded. FOURTEENTH WARD.

THE PAWNBROKERS AGAIN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

I see many complaints of the charges of pawnbrokers, and wish to say a word about my experience and make a suggestion. For the last fifteen years I have frequently had to get a temporary loan of "My Uncle," but have always dealt with a firm not far from the HERALD office, and I must say that I have always found them to be honorable in all their transactions with me. I understand there are some eighty pawnbrokers in this city, and that the principal reason for their extortions is that but a very few of them have sufficient capital or patronage to do an honorable business and make a living. I would therefore suggest that the city charge a license fee of say $500 in place of $50, and that would partly remedy the evil. I think pawnbrokerage a good thing for the poor of this city if conducted in an honorable way, as I believe it is done by a few. J. L.

THE POSTAL BOX QUESTION AGAIN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

A few days since a writer in the "Complaint Book" suggested that the charge of $16 per annum for Post Office boxes might be reduced at least one-half; Mr. James replied, through the same medium, that if this were done the rent of the boxes would not pay the salary of the men employed to attend them. With your permission I would like to make a little calculation. There are about 5,800 boxes, which rent for $16 each per annum. This amounts to $92,800. We will suppose one man can take charge of 200 boxes. If there are no other expenses, and Mr. James mentions none, the salary of each man must be $3,200. If my calculation is correct, surely the box rent might be reduced two-thirds, instead of one-half. I would also like to call the attention of Mr. James to the fact that from the New York Post Office annually a surplus of over $1,000,000 is paid, as I suppose, into the national Treasury. Even granting, which I do not, that the boxes would not pay for their maintenance under such reduced rental, should not a part at least of this surplus be returned to the pockets of the people who contribute it in the shape of cheap boxes. CON.

CARRY AWAY THE DIRT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

Will you please draw the attention of the dirtman to take the dirt away from the house in White street, near West Broadway? He very seldom takes it away. F. J. A. W.

DIRTY LIBERTY STREET.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

Allow me a small space in your valuable "Complaint Book" to say a word about the condition of Liberty street, from the New Jersey Central Railroad ferry to Church street. The deposits of snow made during the winter have now turned to mud, which, in some places, is a foot or more in depth, and through this filth the pedestrian is compelled to wade when the sidewalks, as is often the case, are obstructed by trucks. Have citizens no redress for such nuisances? JERSEY.

CHEAP COAL DEALING.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

Will you permit a sufferer to ventilate that class of coal dealers who are just now imposing on the poor with short weight? Every day I see their carts driven through our streets ornamented with large posters showing low figures for a ton of coal. And such a ton as some of them deliver! Let the customer understand that there should be at least eighty pails or twenty bushels to a ton of 2,000 pounds, which he can easily measure for himself, and he will soon see when he is "sold." HONESTUS.

TWO NUISANCES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

I desire to have the attention of the proper authorities called to the filthy pile of ashes and garbage in front of two houses on West Thirty-fifth street, south side of the street and just east of Ninth avenue. Also, cannot the Superintendent of Public Schools organize some remedy for the residents of Thirty-fifth street, between Eighth and Ninth avenues, in regard to the ruffianly conduct of the children on the street, hooting and yelling like wild Indians in their going to and from the public school on Thirty-fifth street? ONE WHO PAYS RENT.

HATTIE BROWN'S DELUSION.

Can a Breathing Animal Exist in the Intestines?

WHAT THE FACULTY SAY

Dr. McDonald's Interesting Clinic.

On the stage of the lecture hall of the New York Medical College yesterday sat in a row eight men all pretty well advanced in years and clothed in uniform suits of light gray, the reflection of which deepened their cadaverous complexions and gave to their lackluster eyes a still more stony coldness. They were patients from the asylum for the insane on Ward's Island, and had been brought to the city by Dr. A. E. McDonald, of that institution, to illustrate some curious phases of the mental disorders on which he was about to lecture to the students. In the course of his address the Doctor explained the nature of hypochondriasm and hysteria, which he said are almost identical in their symptoms, the former attacking men only and the latter being almost exclusively confined to women. Describing hysteria, he spoke of the case of Hattie Brown, of Harlem, who believes that a living reptile has taken up its abode in her stomach. It very frequently happens, Dr. McDonald said, that patients suffering from hysteria have a conviction that there is an animal in the stomach. It was not, he said, very often safe for a physician to make a diagnosis without seeing the patient; but he did not think any one could investigate the case in question without seeing that it was hysteria. Hattie Brown was a colored girl, and colored girls were very apt to have that malady. The physician who attended the girl and who made the wonderful discovery that an air-breathing animal could exist in her intestines, stated that his reason for believing that there was a reptile was the fact that hysteria could not last so long as three years. Many instances where it had lasted as long as that were, Dr. McDonald said, upon record.

KEEPS HIS OWN DOCTOR.

"Come here, Mr. Horne," said he, turning towards the unhappy creature behind him; and one of them, a low-sized, well-built man of about forty years of age, came forward.

"Well, sir, how do you do?" asked the doctor, cheerily.

"I was all right," muttered the patient sullenly, "until the Governor took me up and put me in the castle over on his island." Then the subject placed the tips of the fingers of one hand in the palm of the other and scrutinized them intently for several moments.

"Well, how are you now? Is there anything wrong with you?"

"Oh, yes; I have a doctor." (Smiles all round.)

"What doctor? Where is he?"

"He is inside me," responded the patient gravely. "See," he continued, putting the tip of his right forefinger upon his stomach, "his shoulder is against my finger now."

"How long has he been there?"

"About twenty years."

"How did he get in?"

"Well, there were four men who caught me in the street one day, and two of them held me by the arms and feet and the other two cut me open from here to here (indicating the lines), and they put him in and sewed me up again."

"How do you know he is there now?"

"Because I can feel him," was the reply, as the poor fellow pressed his hands one against either side. "And he has got a tail," he continued, "and it hurts me. No, I never heard him speak or cry out; but he's there. I feel him now, and besides the man tells me——"

"What man?"

"The man in my head—in there;" and he laid his hand upon his forehead.

"That will do," said Dr. McDonald, finding the patient would say no more, and the man quietly shuffled back to his seat. "There is no question," said the Doctor, "that in this case, as in most others, there is some feeling which gives rise to the delusion. That is shown by the fact that when opium is given to relieve the pain he loses the delusion. It is also evinced by the fact that when he has indigestion he always complains very loudly of the way 'the doctor' is kicking up."

PURSUED BY MURDEROUS ENEMIES.

"There is no insanity about me," said, indignantly, another patient with whom the Doctor conversed.

"Anybody could see that," was the reply, "but what is it that troubles you?"

The unfortunate man—who looked like an honest mechanic—said he was pursued by enemies who wanted to take his life. They had attacked him on his way from the island, and he could hear them at that moment under the floor of the platform on which he was standing. Before he was taken to the asylum he said these mythical murderers had given him a draught of something to take his mind away. "But they did not succeed," he said exultantly. In response to a series of questions he went on to tell about the enormous alligators which attacked him when he went near the river, and about the dreadful peanuts which were always scattered in his path. He had never been bitten by an alligator, he said; but once he had been bitten by a snake. Then he related very minutely and with an earnestness and apparent sanity that would deceive any but an expert how a certain man had cut a snake into two pieces, and then, cutting the tip off one of the patient's fingers, had held the head of the writhing reptile so that its fangs were struck up into the bleeding stump, and had then, when the end of the finger was in the snake's mouth, squeezed the latter until the "teeth" met in his flesh. The narrative was so graphic and was supplemented with such expressive gestures that it fairly thrilled the listeners.

Another patient entertained the conviction that the heart and lungs had been removed from his body.

CONSUMPTION OF THE HEAD.

"Well, Dorsey,