

## NEED OF MUNICIPAL BATHS

The Backward Condition of Minneapolis in This Respect—What May Be Done—What Other Cities Are Doing.

Minneapolis is without any public institution where indoor baths may be obtained free or at a nominal cost. In this respect it is not much worse off than most other American cities, but there is throughout the country a general awakening to the public needs in this direction.

New York, which maintains 15 floating swimming baths in the river where 6,000-8,000 persons bathed last season, is now taking up in earnest the question of public indoor baths with hot and cold water to be operated by the city. At present New York has only one such bath house under municipal management, that in Kingston street, which has a weekly attendance of between 20,000 and 30,000, though there are a number of well managed public baths conducted by benevolent societies. At these baths a charge of five cents is made, and this is almost sufficient to maintain them.

### New York's Plans.

Rudolf Gugenheimer, president of the council, is anxious to distinguish himself for some useful public service before his term of office expires and has interested himself in a proposition to have the city build ten or eleven public bath houses in various parts of the city at a cost of not over \$25,000 each. Controller Bird S. Coler says that he believes the board of public estimate will arrange to appropriate the \$250,000 required for the realization of this plan.

At the department of Public Buildings estimates that the baths would cost with sites from \$29,000 to \$37,000 each and he would have eleven erected at once—five in the borough of Manhattan, three in Brooklyn, one in Bronx, one in Queens and one in Richmond. Mr. Kearney estimates that the land for each building would cost from \$5,000 to \$7,000; the building from \$12,000 to \$15,000 and the equipment from \$12,000 to \$16,000. There is, therefore, every reason to believe that next year New York city will have ten or eleven new public bathing houses.

### In New York State.

New York state has a mandatory law requiring cities of the first and second class to erect as many bathhouses as the city health commissioner may deem that the city requires. This law was passed in 1897, but has not been enforced generally as is proved by the fact that the metropolis is only now getting ready to provide itself with a sufficient number of public baths. In Rochester mandamus proceedings compelled the authorities to erect a bathhouse.

Buffalo has had public baths since 1897, the building was erected, 63 feet by 30. There are in it fourteen separate shower baths and six shower baths in one large compartment for the use of children. There is one bath tub for children too small for the showers and three laundry tubs are provided. Eight thousand dollars covered the whole cost of this building. The bath is entirely free, no charge being made for soap or towels. Yorkers have a public bath erected at a cost of \$9,400, besides \$2,000 for the site. Other New York cities have or are providing public baths. Boston has some very good public baths and has some of the smaller Massachusetts cities. The Public Bath association conducts some cheap and admirable baths in Philadelphia. Chicago has several public bathing establishments. Many of these

one bath to those that succeed him. The shower bath gives no opportunity for the accumulation of filth and practically cleanses itself. Moreover, it is the testimony of physicians the world around that the shower or spray is the most healthful form of bath, being more effective than the tub bath in removing dirt and having the tonic effects of the streams of water striking against the surface of the skin.

### Baths in the Courthouse.

Last Saturday it was said in The Journal that Secretary Ridgeway of the park board had suggested the rotunda of the city hall and courthouse as an admirable place for a public bath. It was wished to avoid the cost of erecting and equipping a building. This rotunda is in the interior court of the building, and was originally intended as a lavatory, but will not be used for that purpose for many years to come, if at all. The walls are up, however, standing fifteen feet above the level of the floor, and are ready for the roof, which for the bath could be made of a temporary or permanent character, according to the scale of expenditure. This rotunda is seventy-seven feet in diameter, while the court in which it is placed measures 130x112. If the shower baths might be placed outside the rotunda and the latter used for a swimming pool, which, while adding little to the cleaning function of public baths, does add greatly to pleasure to be obtained.

### The Plan is Feasible.

F. B. Long, the architect of the building, informs The Journal that there are no structural or architectural difficulties in the way of the conversion of the rotunda into a public bathhouse. If the baths were located here the heating and water plant of the big building could be utilized, which would mean a large saving both in the first cost of the bath and in maintenance. The members of the city hall and courthouse commission do not take kindly to the plan of locating public baths in the rotunda, as they are thinking of ultimately utilizing the rotunda as a branch of the public library, with special reading-room facilities or else as a large public hall. Architect Long says that there is plenty of room for public baths in the basement, and it has been suggested that one of the upper floors on the city hall side, which will not be used for years by the municipality, could be fitted up as temporary baths at small cost.

The cost of maintaining baths located somewhere in the public building should not be over \$3,000 a year, including pay of attendants, towels, shaving, soap, etc. The maintenance of baths in a separate building would be much more expensive.

## BATTLESHIP MINNESOTA'S END

Official Circular Asking Bids for the Purchase of the Historical Frigate.

From The Journal Bureau, Room 45, Post Building, Washington.

Washington, Aug. 9.—After August 12, as Journal readers are aware, there will be no battleship Minnesota. On that day bids will be opened in the office of the secretary of the navy for her purchase. The only bidders, probably, will be junk people, who will want to get the copper sheathing, and the other metal furnishings of the ship. The lumber is practically worthless, and the old hull cannot be put to any service, unless, as the result of extensive repairs, she should follow the lead of some of her sister ships of civil war fame, and become a barge for the hauling of coal up and down Chesapeake bay. The condition of the vessel may be easily imagined when it is remembered that the navy department does not value her at more than \$15,000. From the official circular issued by the department, conveying information to possible bidders, I copy the following:

The Minnesota is a wooden steam frigate, built in Washington in 1855. The ship is housed over and sheathed outside. The masts are cut off below the mainmast. She has been used for many years as a receiving ship for apprentices and as an armory for the Massachusetts naval militia.

All the composition parts of the engine have been removed. The old box boilers are worn out and unfit for use.

Length, 284 feet 3/4 inches; beam, 51 feet 4 inches; draft, 25 feet; displacement, 4,700 tons; gross tonnage, 2,915 tons.

The purchaser of this vessel will be allowed one footman anchor and 30 fathoms of two-inch chain, which will be sold with the vessel. The vessel will be sold for cash to the person offering the highest price above the appraised value.

It would have been a fine thing if the old ship, whose career is glorious and will live in history, could have been towed up the St. Lawrence and through the great lakes to Duluth, there to be taken care of by the state of Minnesota in some suitable manner. But this was out of the question, owing to the fact that the canal connecting the great lakes with the St. Lawrence are not large enough to pass her. Very shortly the old frigate Vermont, a sister ship of the Minnesota, and also unseaworthy and decayed, is to be offered for sale to the highest bidder. The Vermont has been considerably decayed over the years, and she is now in a tank in the idea of having the good old ship go in this way to an inglorious end, and there is talk of raising enough money by popular subscription to purchase her. Should this plan succeed the ship will be sold at one of the upper New England ocean ports, easily accessible for Vermonters, and turned into a training ship or something of the sort, and she will be used by the legislature will be asked to appropriate money to make the necessary repairs.

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## SWIMMING BATHS.

In addition to these permanent baths there is great need for satisfactory summer outdoor swimming baths. It is generally agreed that any further expenditures in this line should be devoted to shore or floating baths in the river some distance from the city. On hot days the waters are now filled with boys who bathe and swim at great risk to life. These baths should be on a big scale like those in St. Paul, which, with the land, have already cost \$14,000 and are to be further enlarged and improved at an expense of \$10,000. It is possible that some way might be found of combining swimming baths on the river with the permanent indoor hot and cold water bath.

## River Front Given Away.

In this connection it is worth noting that with the practice of vacating streets for railroad use, which has been carried on quite extensively in the last few years, the city is losing all means of access to the river front on the west side.

## A Summary.

To sum up what the city may do in the way of providing public baths and the cost, we have the following:

A good public bath with ample accommodations may be erected for not more than \$25,000, total cost, and should be maintained for less than \$5,000 a year, a part of this expense to be covered by a nominal charge for the use of baths, if thought desirable.

If the courthouse and city hall commission should grant authority ample bathing facilities could be provided for less than \$10,000 at the outside and the cost of maintenance should not be far from \$3,000.

Suitable swimming baths on the river above the falls could be erected for \$10,000. The maintenance of these, together with the baths at Calhoun, and on the river, would probably cost about \$2,000 a year.

## Health Department to Manage.

The general management of all these bathing houses should be transferred to the city health department, leaving the financial responsibility with the city council. If any public bath is to be small, it will be necessary for general plans and estimates to be determined upon soon, so that the board of tax levy may be asked for an appropriation.

## THE GYMNASIUM ON MAIN FLOOR.

On the main floor of the gymnasium, occupying a large hall, is a room large and ventilated. The room is finished in hard wood, polished until it shines like a mirror. Here are located a complete set of Zander machines, manufactured in Stockholm, Sweden, and which represent an outlay of \$10,000.

## THE PHYSICIAN IN CHARGE.

Dr. S. S. Black, the medical director in charge, is a practitioner of twenty years' experience. A graduate of Rush Medical college and a member of the American Medical Association of the Wisconsin State Medical Society, the Practitioners' Medical Society, the Brainerd Medical Society, and the Milwaukee Medical Society, he is well equipped with all that is progressive in the practice of healing art.

## STOLEN STAMPS.

A reward of \$250 offered for their return.

An opportunity is given the watchful stamp collector to make some money doing detective work. John B. Brownlow, 207 Delaware avenue, Buffalo, N. Y., custodian of the postoffice department exhibit at the Pan-American exposition, has offered a reward of \$250 for the return of valuable stamps stolen from the exhibit on the night of July 3. Many of these stamps cannot be replaced. Some of them are only reprints, the original plates having been destroyed. Mr. Brownlow has sent the following list of the lost stamps to the Minneapolis office:

Date of issue: 1845—Original and reprint.

1851—Types 2 and 3, denomination 3c, 5c, 10c.

1855—Types 1, 2 and 3, denomination 3c, 5c, 10c.

1861—1c (types a and b), 2c, 3c, 5c, 10c, 15c, 20c, 25c, 30c, 35c, 40c, 45c, 50c, 60c, 70c, 80c, 90c, 100c.

1861—2c (grilled, 12x16), a pair of 3c imperforate and 2c, 3c, 5c, 10c, 15c, 20c, 25c, 30c, 35c, 40c, 45c, 50c, 60c, 70c, 80c, 90c, 100c.

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