

SPECIAL LETTER TO THE MIRROR FROM THE COUNTRY'S METROPOLIS

Matters of Interest to the Whole Country are Reported by Edward Staats Luther From New York City.

New York, July 19.—"The Sunday Rowdy is getting to be a serious problem in this town," said a Pittsburg man. "He is destroying all the pleasure decent people get from a Sunday afternoon outing. You take a trip to Broux or Van Cortlandt Park, to the Jersey suburbs, or anywhere in the country; you're then happy, but tired, and you want a peaceful ride back into the city. Instead of that you find yourself entangled in a mass of young ruffians, who terrorize every subway, elevated and suburban train and every ferry-boat regularly Sunday noon till midnight. They are howling, yelling, skylarking and fighting all over the car or ferryboat taking possession as completely as if there were no other passengers on board. In fact, they totally ignore all the other passengers scrambling and falling over them and treating them as so many dummies. Conductors and ferry hands never pay any attention to them. If you venture to remonstrate with any of these young thugs you are greeted with a string of foul-ouls regardless of the women whom you may be escorting, and of all other women present. In the majority of the cases the samples of the coming generation are well dressed and look as if they belong to good families. One wonders what sort of people their parents are.

One of the stately apartments that are made to wear an unusually ponderous air by the prevalence of heavy mahogany furniture, and which bear the chilling title of "Directors' Rooms" was changed into a place of feminine festivity the other day through the courage of a stenographer and the good nature of her chief. The directors' room in question was that in the establishment of a large publishing concern. One of the many young women-stenographers employed by the concern had a birthday and her colleagues decided to give her a surprise party if the gods that ruled over them in business would only nod while the arrangements for the function were going on and fall asleep while it was in progress. On being approached in the matter the particular good who was in charge of the office staff cheerfully agreed not only to allow the girls the use of the room, but also promised that there should not be a single letter dictated for an hour and an half on the particular day. On that morning every girl concerned in the party except the one in whose honor it was to be held arrived at her desk with a mysterious package under her arm. Shortly before noon several of the stenographers closed their desks and disappeared into the directors' room, to which abode of the mighty girl with the birthday and all of the others were invited to enter when the proper hour came. There they found the long mahogany

table decked out with flowers fruits and all sorts of eatable things that go to make up a woman's idea of what a "smart luncheon" should consist. The recipient of this honor was properly overcome by the preparations and what the girls considered the best part of it was that the manager kept the promise and for an hour and a half no one heard so much as a whisper of the words "Please take this letter."

A traveling crematory that excites a mild degree of interest along the midway section of Broadway above Canal street consists of two worn out refuse cans such as the street cleaners move about on wheels one of the cans being placed bottom up on top of the other, with its rim against the rim of the under can; the two cans thus fixed locked together something like a can buoy. A big hole is cut in the bottom of the upper can, which of course, has a hole in its top as the can is now placed, and through this opening waste paper is dropped to be burned within, paper gathered up by the street cleaner as he drags this traveling crematory, mounted on the usual pair of wheels, along the street.

flavored with lemons. Around each secret was wrapped a strip of paper on which was printed a motto or bit of verse. We could purchase six secrets for a cent and found much pleasure in the little love messages we unfolded as in the sweets themselves.

One of the greatest hardships suffered by men who run elevators in the tall office buildings downtown is the bad effect it has on their eyes. The cars are run at a very high rate of speed as a rule and as the men have to look straight ahead of them most of the time their eyes soon feel the strain of the constant motion. "I've worked in the subway," remarked one of these elevator men, "and I thought that was pretty bad; but I ain't a patch to the way my eyes feel after a day's work in these cars. If you ever run across an elevator man toward the close of business day, you just look at his eyes and you will be apt to forgive him. They generally show the strain that has been put on them for eight or ten hours.

"I've had some queer experiences in Wall street," said a Pittsburger, "but listen to this: Recently I had been at the office of a certain banker twice between noon and 2 o'clock and he had been at my office once. It was a day full of important work for us of considerable anxiety for me. At 3:15 I called again but the banker was closeted with two men and could not be disturbed. A few minutes later another man arrived and was shown in to the inner office. Muffled sounds of earnest conversation could be heard with an occasional note of added emphasis. Finally the visitors trooped out mysteriously. "Well, Smith" I said as I faced the banker, "whom are you stealing a march on this time? Millions in it I suppose." "No," he replied. "Been organizing a church choir and so he had.

According to the Tombs physician Frank McGuire the condition of Harry K. Thaw, whose health so many stor-

ies have been in circulation of late, is now worse than that of the average prisoner. Dr. McGuire says that Thaw is merely showing the effects of prison life, but that in the last two or three days he has seemed to be more under the weather than at any other time. Thaw has been complaining of indigestion and insomnia. He has apparently no appetite. His meals which are brought in from outside include all kinds of dainties, but they do not seem to tempt him. Then again Thaw hasn't been feeling able to join the other prisoners in exercise in the yard. Evelyn Nesbit Thaw visited her husband this morning. She says that it must be admitted that he is far from being a well man. Russell A. Peabody, Thaw's counsel also his client today. He likewise is of the opinion that Thaw's pretty much run down. Tombs Physician McGuire has recommended that Thaw let up on smoking his black bulldog pipe and that he take more outdoors exercise. Dr. McGuire thinks that Thaw is well enough to take the regular exercise.

charges are included and the various items of interest are entered on the basis of compound interest. Chicago would have saved \$11.07 per lamp had it paid the private companies a rental for the lamps instead of generating the current and maintaining the lamps itself. It closes the subject as follows: "The city of Chicago having netted a loss as reported by the accountants of the Commission all charges, and a credit for the present value of the plant being included in the estimate—cannot console itself for the loss by the contemplation of a fine property. It works are poor and its inventoried value is largely a scrap value.

The Pro-Municipal Report contains similar figures but shows the loss as much smaller amount. The character of the services rendered by these municipal plants is criticised in a number of respects in the Anti-Municipal Report, the most serious criticisms pertaining to the large percentage of outages of street are lamps that characterize most of them, and the inadequate means adopted to ascertain and remedy this trouble. The apparent result of the Commission's investigation in this field, is that a municipal plant is not justified from the standpoint of either good service or financial profit.

Throughout the Pro-Municipal report stress is laid on the alleged corruption which has attended the securing of franchises by private companies. It is difficult to undertake the delicate task of determining the relative evil effects on the community of such cases of corruption occurring at infrequent intervals, on one hand and the ever present political corruption and insidious dry rot that accompany the operation of the municipal department, on the other. The latter seems to be a necessary accompaniment of public employment while it appears probable that the former might be entirely eliminated from the realm of private operation by the adoption of a scheme of regulation based on the sliding scale or some other automatic method. The advantage here is that when the franchise is once granted on such a basis, its operation is indefinitely continuous, and no question of renewal, with its temptation to corrupt methods, arises.

Mrs. Gertrude McKiernan.



MOTHER AND DAUGHTER PRAISING PE-RU-NA.

MRS. GERTRUDE MCKIERNAN, 216 Neosho street, Emporia, Kas., writes:

"I suffered very much with a severe cold in the head and was always complaining of feeling tired and drowsy. When my mother suggested and insisted on my taking a few bottles of Peruna, I did so, and in a short time I felt like a new person. My mother praises it very highly and so do I."

Confidence in Pe-ru-na. Mrs. M. F. Jones, Burning Springs, Ky., writes:

"We have been using Peruna for some time and have no hesitancy in recommending it for the thousand and one ailments of humanity."

"From a personal test I shall not hesitate to recommend it, especially to all suffering women."

"Peruna has gained full confidence and a permanent stay in our home."

A Great Tonic.

Mrs. Anna Linder, R. R. 5, Dassel, Minn., writes: "I took Peruna and am well. I would not be without that great tonic for ten times its cost."

died in infancy. The remaining children are, Mrs. Eva J. Messenger, of Marion, Mrs. Elsie Smith, of Rushsylvania, Mrs. Ella Kaundel, of Ruth, and Charles L. Strawser, of Cochranton. Besides these she leaves 13 grand, nine great grand children, and many other relatives to mourn. Jacob Strawser departed this life May 29th, 1886. Mrs. Strawser sought Christ in early life, and at the age of 16 years became a member of the Free Baptist church. She ever endeavored to live a true, humble, faithful christian life. She was held in high esteem by all who knew her. She was conscious of approaching death, and made many arrangements touching her funeral. The funeral service was held in the Cochranton M. E. church, Friday afternoon, July 12, and was attended by many friends and neighbors. In compliance with the request of the deceased, Rev. J. A. Sutton, of West Mansfield officiated, assisted by Rev. H. H. Holverstott, of Marion.

OBITUARY

After great suffering for several years, a victim to a complication of diseases, Wednesday, July 19, 1907, Mrs. Mary Coles Strawser, aged 74 years, eight months and 4 days, departed this life at the residence of her son, Charles L. Strawser, near Cochranton. She united in marriage with James Wood, November 1857. To them was born one son, James H. Wood, now a resident of East Liberty. The husband and father departed this life February 14th, 1852, January 18th, 1854, she united in marriage with Jacob Strawser. To them were born six children. Two sons

Review of the Report of the National Civic Federation's Commission of Municipal Ownership and Operation.

Washington, July 19.

General interest attends the publication of the report of the commission appointed by the National Civic Federation to investigate the subject of municipal ownership. The commission has spent nearly two years in exhaustive study of this question. The method pursued in treating the extensive mass of information collected by the commission experts is novel and interesting. A sub-committee composed of two members of the commission who are known to favor municipal ownership has digested this material and summarized results in a comparatively brief report; another sub-committee of two members known to be opposed to municipal ownership has prepared a report based on the same facts.

The inquiry covered the three public services of gas, electrical and water supplies. In each of these fields certain cities where the service was operated by the municipality, and certain others, where it was maintained by a private company, were investigated and the conditions and results compared. This comparative method, while attended by some drawbacks is perhaps the best for the determination of this important question. It has not before been pursued with anything to approach the degree of thoroughness that characterizes the investigation now under discussion. The pro-municipal report is largely historical and statistical. It is a brilliantly written argument for municipal ownership, in which all the points, historical, political, social, statistical, favorable to the writer's contention are marshaled with great skill. The anti-municipal report confines itself almost exclusively to the facts collected by experts; it considers the determining factors—quality of product, quality of service, condition of plant, etc.—comparing one class with another and drawing conclusions based on first hand knowledge. It thus speaks with an authority and forces a conviction which the pro-municipal report, with all its brilliancy and skill fails to command. The question of the adoption, or rejection, by American communities of the municipal ownership and operation of their public utilities will be answered by considerations of another character than the alleged poor service given by private water or gas companies a generation ago. To revive old scandals and charges of corruption in connection with this inquiry is to avoid the present question. Municipal ownership must stand or fall on present day results and conditions. The real question is that between the results to the consumer and the people of municipal operation on the one hand and of private operation on the other.

In the gas field the municipal plant of Wheeling, W. Va., is compared with the gas companies at Atlanta, Ga., and Norfolk, Va. There is also a comparison drawn between the conditions in Philadelphia, under the municipal gas bureau, and under the present lease to a private company. The anti-municipal report reveals conditions in the gas situation at Wheeling about as bad as can be, and draws a damaging contrast between them and those existing at Atlanta and Norfolk. The pro-municipal does not deny that the service and the condition of the plant are bad, but lays stress on the cheap price of the gas and on the fact that the

municipal gas plant has in 34 years turned nearly \$400,000 into the city treasury. The anti-municipal report demonstrates, however, that while the price is nominally cheap (75c per 1000 cu. ft.), when the poor quality of the service, the charges for piping and meter setting and the absence of any care of the consumers' burners and appliances are allowed for, the Wheeling price, measured in net result of service is high and the social good derived from the operation of the plant a negative quantity. The anti-municipal report shows that for the year under investigation, when all proper charges are included, the gas plant showed a deficit of \$16,500 and the service was poor.

In dealing with the gas questions in Philadelphia, the pro-municipal report is particularly unhappy. It strives to create the impression that conditions under the gas bureau were, after all, not so bad, and that the undertaking was financially successful. It closes with a quotation from Professor Rowe of the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the commission, regarding the distrustful and suspicious state of the public mind toward the leasing company, as created by the agitation of 1905. The anti-municipal report, quoting all its statements from Professor Rowe's report, shows that the bad conditions of service and politics under municipal operation have not been exaggerated. It also points out that during the last four years of municipal management, when the price was reduced to \$1 per 1000 cu. ft., the undertaking sustained a large annual loss. That the attitude of the public toward the leasing company is not as alleged, is abundantly proven by the results of the recent agitation, when the most active and persistent attempts to inflame the public mind against the company were unsuccessful. The service rendered under private management was so superior to that given by the city bureau that the inhabitants said in effect, "We are satisfied."

Water supply, in its monopolistic character, its intimate relation to the public health, and its comparative absence of the trading element, seems to lend itself particularly to the method of municipal operation. It is not surprising that there are so few private water companies in the country. It is surprising to learn from these reports how favorably, in all essential particulars, the water companies examined by this commission compared with the city water department. In the two important points of quality and quantity (or pressure maintained in the distributing mains) the two companies at Indianapolis and New Haven have evidently cause for pride. In the means adopted to protect the source of supply, such as the purchase and patrol of water sheds, and the adoption of filtration, the companies are in the lead. A table in the pro-municipal report shows that the typhoid death rate in Indianapolis and New Haven is relatively high. The anti-municipal report, however, contains the explanation endorsed by the health authorities that the trouble in Indianapolis arises from the wide use of water from private wells for drinking purposes. The engineering expert quotes the health authorities of New Haven to the effect that the high typhoid death rate of the city is not due to the quality of the water supplied by the company. The question of water rates is discussed in each of these reports.

Schedules of water rates are usually complicated and difficult to compare as between cities. That this is the case here seems evident from the wide discrepancies in the figures given below. In each report, an eight room house is assumed, with its customary fixtures, and yet the annual bills as shown by the anti-municipal report are, for 1 different cities from 50 per cent to 100 per cent larger than those shown by the pro-municipal report.

The financial results of the municipal water departments examined is too complicated a question to be here considered in any detail. Briefly, the anti-municipal report, by charging taxes, insurance, interest on 80 per cent of the cost of the drainage canal, etc., reduces Chicago's alleged profit of nearly \$2,000,000 in 1905 to a deficit of over \$1,500,000. In a similar manner by charging interest on bonds and on the cost of intercepting sewers, Cleveland's alleged profit of nearly a quarter of a million dollars is reduced to a deficit. Had the sewers been completed as planned and needed, the additional interest charges would have converted this into a very heavy deficit.

At Syracuse, with a gravity system and relatively high charges, the profits for 1905 are \$31,315. The financial figures in the pro-municipal report are not so concisely or clearly stated; they do not admit of a straight comparison with those given below, and it would require an extensive analysis to reconcile the apparent differences. The charging of interest on the drainage canal of Chicago and on the intercepting sewers in Cleveland against the operations of the water departments is condemned. This report also finds fault with the commissioner's experts in the amount charged as depreciation on the distributing system, and in the charge for paying over the street mains. These questions are a matter of judgment which the official engineers and accountants would seem best qualified to determine. On the whole, it seems evident that municipal operation of water supply cannot be justified solely on the grounds of financial gain.

In the field of electrical supply the comparative method had to be abandoned because the municipal plants had no commercial business, confining their activities to street lighting. The four plants examined are those of Chicago, Detroit, South Norwalk and Allegheny. An attempt to reach an accurate cost of the unit of service revealed a remarkable lack of method in accounting in these municipal departments. There was a general failure to include in the operating costs certain items of expense which should be charged.

The anti-municipal report shows that the inclusion of the omitted items and proper interest charges, will increase Allegheny's published operating cost in 1905 from \$104,931 to \$159,982; that the same process will increase South Norwalk's cost nearly 50 per cent, and Detroit's cost over 50 per cent. In no case can the cost per 1000 municipal departments measures the incalculable current supplied to public buildings. Both these reports deal of some length with the financial the apparent discrepancies in backing here to attempt to reconcile the discrepant discrepancies in figures. Briefly the Anti Municipal report alleges that when all proper



MISS EVA WESTCOTT.

An actress cannot always face her audience, it is quite an asset for a neck and shoulders which encourage the camera when viewed in direction. Miss Eva Westcott, as the accompanying photograph shows, that poem described by an English author as being "round and fair."



MISS GRACE GEORGE.

Miss Grace George is one of the comparatively few actresses who can charm New York audiences every night in the year and be in demand at the matinee performances. She is very attractive in person and personality, and she knows how to act. She also knows how to dress. When she played in "Pretty Peggy" three seasons ago she had her costumes for that play alone insured for \$10,000. Recently Miss George has been appearing in an English version of Braccio's Italian comedy, "Comtesse Coquette." She is a native of New York city.