

REMARKABLE CASE

Brooklyn Transit Company Victim of It's Own Generosity.

MAY NOW GIVE FREE RIDES

Street Railway Beggars itself for Public—Ticket Chopper Last Survivor of Custer Massacre—18,000 Lawyers Find Business in New York.

NEW YORK, Feb. 22.—"We are the victims of our own generosity," says the President of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company. "We have done so much for the people of Brooklyn that we have practically bankrupted ourselves." That statement is held to explain several advances in the price of B. R. T. stock which have bewildered and puzzled more than one anxious Wall street broker or speculator in the past few years when he has found himself on the wrong side of the market. They have evidently been due to the anxiety of unknown philanthropists to bankrupt themselves and die poor for the sake of that portion of the New York public which resides in the borough of Brooklyn and does business in Manhattan. All that the ungrateful public has done in return in the past years has been to curse the B. R. T. and contribute 459,649,926 nickels toward defraying the cost of operation. It has just been demonstrated that the fares collected annually on the 2,923 cars utilized for conveying the immense traffic over 5000 miles of tracks outnumber the combined population of China, France and America, and that if every man, woman and child in the United States were to take five rides on the Brooklyn cars, they would fall just short of aggregating the sum total of New Yorkers who annually use these conveyances. Now the startling prediction is made by the engineers of the Rapid Transit Board that the traffic between that borough and Manhattan will be increased by 30,000 passengers or more per hour during the morning and evening rushes as soon as the south tunnel from the Battery is completed, which will be in June. The officials of the road solemnly declare that their institution is too poor to provide additional straps and there is even some fear that it will be necessary to let passengers ride free so as to save the expense of collecting fares.

John Martin, the sturdy little ticket chopper at the 103 St. Subway station is the sole survivor of the Custer massacre of June 25, 1876, when the attack was made upon Sitting Bull and his horde of Redskins at the Little Big Horn. By virtue of this distinction, Martin was the guest of honor when his old regiment, the Seventh Cavalry and other military organizations in full uniform attended a "military night" performance of a popular play a few days ago. Martin was a bugler of the Seventh Cavalry and rode beside Custer when the attack was made. After the charge had been sounded, Custer, seeing that his force was greatly outnumbered, despatched him with a message to Major Reno, who was stationed a few miles away, ordering his forces to be brought up at once. To this circumstance Martin owes his life; but Reno lost his way and Custer and his handful of men had been destroyed before assistance could reach them. Now, Martin comfortably ensconced in a little cage of wood and glass which the Interborough officials, with unusual thoughtfulness, have erected to protect him from the wintry drafts which sweep through the opening to the street, chops tickets and smiles cheerfully upon the crowds of passengers who rush past him morning and evening. On the 25th of every June Martin visits West Point, where Custer lies buried, and the famous bugle which sang Boots and Saddles so cheerfully over many a forgotten camping ground of the Seventh Cavalry sounds taps above the grave of "Chief Yellow Hair".

Eighteen thousand lawyers are now living more or less luxuriously off the controversies of individuals and the by-products of crime in the metropolis. Ninety-two more, candidates from the law schools, were admitted to the New York bar a few days ago, and there is scarcely a week in which a locally prominent legal light from some other part of the country, seeking a wider field, and higher fees, is not added to the steadily increasing number. At the present time New York has a population of approximately 4,500,000, and this means that there is one lawyer to every 250 individuals. Not a very

large number from which to draw a clientele, it would seem, when the lawyers themselves and those who cannot afford the luxury of law are subtracted. Yet the most of them have a full-fed, opulent look that speaks eloquently of prosperity and suggests an inquiry into the methods by which it has been acquired. There is the field of politics, of course, and in New York that takes care of a good many of the poorer lawyers, while practice before the civil and criminal courts of the city and state accounts for a goodly number of pleaders; but it is to the enormous volume of business transactions that the greater number look for support. Many of the great financial and commercial institutions have prominent lawyers at their heads and all of them are equipped with one or more salaried employees whose legal advice is indispensable in transactions involving, as they frequently do, millions of dollars. In addition to these sources of income there were more than 115,000 transfers of real estate last year, involving something like \$1,345,000,000, and most of them provided a handsome fee for a lawyer on either side of the transaction.

President Roosevelt's pardon of Captain George D. Boynton, "gun runner" and revolutionist of three continents and both hemispheres, has brought to light a life history of adventure and strife which reads like an old-world romance transplanted to a prosaic one of business. Captain Boynton's career as a soldier of fortune began at 19

years of age, when he ran away from home to join a New York regiment in the Civil War, where he earned a captain's commission for headlong daring. With an appetite whetted for further adventure, Captain Boynton busied himself for another four years with the affairs of the South American Republic and then hurried to Cuba to take part in the revolution of 1868 as a blockade runner. Becoming disgusted with the ingratitude of his allies, he left the island to join in the Franco-Prussian War, afterwards he ran the blockade in the interest of Don Carlos, the Spanish Pretender, followed that emperor with a few campaigns against the Turks in the Balkans, and then returned to South America and the West Indies, where they serve revolutions piping hot at a moment's notice. It was the devious and unfamiliar ways of business which finally laid the doughty captain by the heels in Blackwell's Island prison, to which he was committed three months ago for trying to pull off in New York, apparently with the best intention in the world, the usual scheme for financing a South American revolution, which consists in turning a small amount of silver bullion into coin of the country to be revolutionized, purchasing therewith a much larger quantity of bullion, and continuing the process indefinitely.

The heart of New York's Chinatown was officially wiped out at a recent meeting of the Board of Estimate, when a new park to cover the acre and a half block bounded by the Bowery, Doyers, Pell and Mott streets was au-

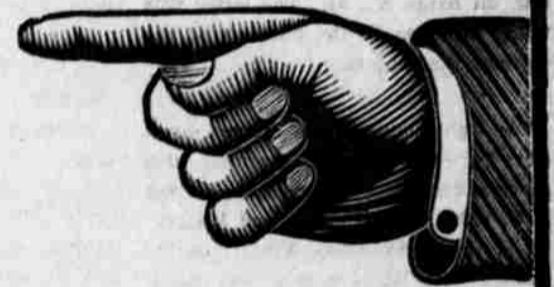
thorized. Most of the property is owned by Chinese firms and individuals and includes the Chinese theatre, in which several Chinese were recently shot to death in a highbinder war, the Chinese Joss House, and all the other Oriental features which have made the locality the most picturesque plague spot in the city. Before the year is out, most of the inhabitants will have been removed to Brooklyn, where they are now establishing a new Chinatown, and the narrow, crooked streets around Chatham Square are affording their last picturesque spectacle to the "rubberneck" tourists in the celebration of the Chinese New Year which is now on. All the business transactions of the past twelve months have been closed, every Chinaman has paid his honest debts, all the prayers have been said, and the advent of the New Year, which occurred on the morning of February 12, has been fittingly celebrated by the explosion of thousands of firecrackers, which a special ordinance of the Board of Aldermen, passed at the intercession of "Little Tim Sullivan," who ranks next to Confucius in the Chinese calendar of saints, permitted to be hung in ropes and festoons from house to house across the trees. Now, togged out in their brightest native garlands, the inhabitants of the quarter are making the customary New Year calls and imbibing much good rice liquor. So far not a "Chink" has been killed, however, and in that circumstance is read the sad fact that the glory of Chinatown has departed.

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