

# New York News Letter

NEW YORK, Aug. 17.—With an annual meat bill which long ago passed the \$100,000,000 mark, it has been going up by leaps and bounds, New Yorkers who have seriously considered becoming vegetarians for purely financial reasons are naturally keenly interested in the proposed attempt by the attorney general of the state to clip the talons of the so-called beef rust. In it they see about their last chance to continue their present consumption of succulent chops and beefsteaks instead of what they bitterly denominate "grass." It is reported that an investigation has been under way for the past two months and that the legal representatives of the state believe that they have evidence of the regulation of prices which will justify them in taking action against the National Packing Company as the holding company of the alleged combine of big packers. Such a procedure would be following the lines adopted by the federal government in the Northern Securities and American Tobacco cases. While it would not be possible for state authorities in New York to force the disbandment of a foreign corporation it is held that conviction here of violation of the anti-trust statutes forbidding conspiracies to fix prices would result ultimately in the dissolution of the trust; as was the case with the Northern Securities Company. According to those familiar with conditions in the meat industry the beef trust controls upward of seventy-five percent of the meat trade of New York or sufficient to enable it to regulate prices.

Not contented with its supremacy in the fields in which it might naturally be expected to shine, New York now puts forward the claim to the title of champion horse stealing city of the country. Statistics just collected in this connection show that the claim has good foundation and that if the western punishment of horse thieves were meted out here there would not be enough telegraph poles to go round. Without doubt more horses are stolen in this city than in any area of equal size in the country. These equine thefts average more than one a day and as horseback travel is not over popular generally include the pilfering of a conveyance as well. Indeed the profession of horse stealing seems to have reached its highest development here, and it is known that a regular gang which in spite of all efforts has so far escaped detection makes a rich living by following this as a vocation. Butchers' and grocers' horses and wagons left unguarded during a moment while delivery is being made are not the only ones which are pilfered. The clever gang of thieves has even succeeded in stealing recently in a crowded city street a team of horses hitched to a lumbering ice wagon. Fifth Avenue millionaires too suffer from similar depredations and within the last few days no less than three pair of blooded horses have been spirited away. In two cases the coachman was a member of the horse stealing gang, who had taken his job for the purpose of stealing the animals in question. Not one recovery is made in twenty cases, for these ingenious thieves immediately so change the markings of the stolen animals as to make them unrecognizable. They are then sold to unsuspecting local dealers. It is stated that the value of the horses stolen during the first half of this year exceeds the surprising sum of \$150,000.

The newest way of earning a living has just appeared in New York. To use a Hibernianism it might be explained by the title of "making a living by getting killed." Actually it is not quite so bad as that, however, since it only involves being voluntarily hit by street cars to enable the Public Service Commission to determine by a series of actual tests on human beings which kind of fender is best adapted to the needs of New York's street car lines. To persons who are willing to stand, sit or lie in the middle of a street car track and be scooped up by a fender on a swiftly moving car—that is provided the fender scoops as planned the sufficient remuneration of two dollars a day is to be paid. However, as the work demands neither brains nor training, and as it is unnecessary that "accident models" present even a neat appearance, there is no lack of applicants for jobs. Of course if the automatic fender doesn't work there will be immediate need of the coroner, but the manufacturer of this device has had no trouble as yet in securing men to be scooped at two dollars per. As a result of this surprising means of earning a livelihood various others have arisen until the city has quite a respectable list of what might be called "fool occupations." These include an offer from the inventor of an alleged non-capsizable boat for men to give demonstration rockings, and it really would seem that the fool who rocks the boat may even yet make money from his propensities. The public, however, should benefit, since anything calculated to decrease this class would be a real step in advance.

A peculiarly melodramatic illustration of the manner in which fortunes change in New York has just come to light in the West Side court. Also it raised a memory of the old Tweed ring and the days when the most notorious boss New York ever had was enriching himself and his friends in a way which has been the envy and despair of local imitators ever since. Back in the late sixties when Tweed was in absolute power one of the contracting firms working on the great so-called public improvements started by the ring was that of Hughes and Cooney. Its head was Thomas Hughes whose son known as "Young Tom" Hughes was a boy of ten when in 1871 the Tweed rule ended. At his father's death ten years later "Young Tom" who was just finishing his college course inherited about \$500,000. He immediately became a well known Tenderloin figure, squandering money prodigally. Nearly every day he was to be seen driving a pair of fast trotters about the district, sometimes accompanied by a small boy whom he knew as "Billy" Ennis. This was William J. Ennis who, after Hughes had gone to Europe and disappeared, became a patrolman. A few days ago Police Lieutenant Ennis, as he has now become, saw a crowd of small boys annoying an old man who lay under the stairs of an elevated station. The lieutenant aroused the man, and there in spite of stubble, grime and ravages of dissipation recognized "Young Tom" Hughes. The next day "Young Tom" was sent to the workhouse for six months.

The summer of 1908 is likely to be remembered in this city for years to come as the Summer of Seven Plagues. No summer in recent years, at any rate, can be recalled so fraught with annoyance, discomfort and tragedy. First in the remarkable list came the Plague of Heat, six weeks of blistering and rainless sunshine, the worst recorded in thirty-two years. This was followed by the plague of White Moths. From some unknown source millions of these insects suddenly descended on the city, choking gas and electric lights, invading houses and offices and rendering the streets slippery and dangerous of passage. They disappeared as suddenly and mysteriously as they came—whither no one knows. After the moths came the Plague of Flies. Never before have they been so numerous and annoying in spite of the fact that the streets are cleaner than ever before. Then followed the Plague of Mosquitos which threatened for a time to necessitate the closing of offices. Following these came the Plague of Hydrophobia which has been far more prevalent and deadly than ever before, and on top of this a Plague of Murders, which not only in numbers but in respect to mystery and brutality puts any dime novel in the shade. Of course this plague may be largely attributed to its predecessors, as May the seventh, the Plague of Malaria which now has the city in its grasp. Altogether these seven plagues have been so pronounced and deadly as to place the troubles of New York a good second to the historic ones which Moses sent to Egypt. In addition too may be mentioned at least two minor plagues—those of scan and automobiles. Never has New York society been the source of so many startling revelations and never have autos claimed so many and such prominent victims as in the last few weeks. Altogether the Summer of Plagues is one likely to be remembered.

### NEED CHORUS GIRLS.

Horrors And Hardships Keep Shapely Young Women Away.

CHICAGO, Aug. 17.—There is a famine in chorus girls. The big show towns like Chicago, New York, Boston and Philadelphia, where companies are rehearsing for the opening of the season, are suffering from the lack of shapely young women who can dance and sing. One night stands have not yet felt the effects of the shortage. But it is not improbable that these places will be called upon to furnish "Merry villagers" and "Amazons" for more than one musical comedy before the season of 1908-09 is well under way. Stage folks say that never before was there such a scarcity of chorus girls. New York managers have sent emissaries to Chicago during the last two weeks to engage all the girls they could get. Extraordinary inducements have been offered to stage women, but it is almost impossible for them to get girls who know the business.

### MID-OCEAN DROUGHT.

HONOLULU, Aug. 17.—The severest drought experienced in this country for a number of years is being felt in the Kulai region of Maui. This is a region devoted to small farming. There has been no rain there for nearly a year. Crops have failed and animals are dying for want of water. Many of the people have been obliged to leave the region.

# COUNCIL HOLDS A LONG SESSION

## MATTER OF THE IRVING STREET IMPROVEMENT IS DISCUSSED BUT NO SOLUTION FOUND.

In a meeting that lasted until 11 o'clock last night the common council brought up several matters of unusual interest. The matter of the subsidizing and sliding earth on the Irving avenue fill at 18th street was considered at great length, and finally it was decided to appoint a committee to confer with the contractor, Mr. Goodin, with the object in view of seeing if something cannot be done. Mr. Goodin was present at the meeting last night. When the suggestion was made that it would be best for him to drop his contract he said he would like to, but did not see how he can. If he stops the work for a day or two it is probable that he may lose all of the work that he has done, as the whole hill may slide away in that time. The contractor seems to be somewhat in the position of the man who held hold of the bear's tail; he would like to have let go, but dared not.

In the meantime a committee consisting of the city engineer, the city attorney, and the street committee, will look into the matter and will try to devise some plan. It is agreed on all sides that the work should be stopped at once. To keep on filling in with earth is simply like pouring water into a rat hole.

City Engineer Tee suggested that there is really a possibility of great danger. The whole hill may go out with a rush sometime, and thus it is a menace to the people below along the Scow Bay front. Various theories of what causes the submergence of the ground have been advanced, and each had the merit at least of being different from the others. Since The Astorian called attention to this freaky bit of ground scores of people have gone there to look it over and it is well worth an inspection.

**Another Problem.**

A problem of hardly less interest has arisen as a result of the improvements on Commercial street, at the west end where the cutting is now going on. There is one place the street is to be filled up to a considerable extent above the land owned by Mr. Hahn. Mr. Hahn refuses to permit the earth to be filled in on his ground to form a lateral support for the street; the only other way to hold up the street when filled in is by means of an abutting bulkhead. The question is: must the city build its own bulkhead to support its street, or, must the adjacent property owner build the bulkhead to keep the street in its proper position and to keep it from falling in on his property. It is a question that some supreme courts have held one way, while others have held the other way. At all events the council adopted a resolution last night calling for the construction of a bulkhead there, with the idea in view, evidently, of forming an assessment district out of Mr. Hahn's property and thus making him pay for the privilege of keeping the street off from his property.

### Mr. Laurin Resigns.

T. F. Laurin, police commissioner, sent in his resignation to the council last night. It was accepted. Mr. Laurin said he was about to leave the city for a considerable period in search of better health. The name of Mr. S. S. Gordon had been suggested as the successor of Mr. Laurin, and last night Mr. Gordon said he probably would accept the place if offered to him. But the council and Mayor filed off into a private room last night for silent meditation and prayerful consideration of this political matter, and when they filed back into the council chamber it was announced that inasmuch as "Doc" Logan was out of town nothing would be done with the appointment of a successor to Mr. Laurin at this time. Evidently time was required for more consideration, and there will be ample opportunity for this before Dr. Logan gets back from his Nehalem vacation.

### The Dancing Hall.

The communication of C. C. C. Rosenberg in relation to the dancing held in the former Irving Club rooms was again referred to. Councilman Leinenweber said that the committee having the matter in charge didn't see that anything can be done. He said one of the men who were running the dance had left the city within the past few days, "leaving," said Mr. Leinenweber, "unpaid bills be-

hind him." The councilman said that the charges against the place were apparently true—or had been true, but since the other man had gone away better things might be hoped for. It was suggested that inasmuch as the charges of questionable conduct at the dances had been ascertained to be well founded the matter should be referred to the chief of police, but it was merely placed on file.

### Smallpox Expensive.

The claims paid for caring for the smallpox patient during the past week or so were paid last night. They aggregated over \$150. There were bills for nursing, bills for guards and bills for a watchman.

### Petition Granted.

The petition of E. Z. Ferguson and others for the raising of the grade six feet on Fourteenth street, Jerome to Lexington, was granted after a long discussion.

### The Marine Parade.

The councilmen were apparently in sunny temper at the opening of the session and when the invitation of the regatta committee was received, inviting the council to make an entry in the marine parade, the subject was discussed after the manner of a mid-summer night's digression.

"I object," said Councilman Henderson, "I object to Astoria making an entry. It isn't goot taste. Astoria is the host—or rather the hostess—and it isn't proper that the hostess should complete with her guests. "Or may be bad taste," Councilman Leinenweber restored, "but it's the sport is the hot stuff."

"Have we the right to spend the peoples' money on this question?" queried Councilman Stangeland.

With this question still unanswered the matter was put to a vote and carried.

### Street Obstructions.

The ordinance which was introduced at the last meeting pertaining to obstructions on the streets and sidewalks was passed on its final reading last night. But as passed it does not appear to be what it purports to be. It permits wood and coal for fuel to be placed on the streets by anyone who wants to, but not for a longer time "than 48 hours"—and not to exceed 30 days in the aggregate. That is, one may place a load of wood on the street for "48 hours" if he wants to or for "30 days" if he wants to. Under the ordinance one might be drying wood in front of his place all summer long, as long as any individual cord did not remain there longer than a month at a time. The ordinance was in reality aimed at certain ice cream stands, and the like, but it was hinted last night that it will even fail to prohibit them.

### Petitions.

From E. Z. Ferguson asking that the grade on 14th street from Jerome to Lexington be raised six feet. Petition granted.

From Astoria regatta committee committee asking that the city of Astoria be represented in marine parade. Referred to committee with power to act.

### Communications.

From Astoria regatta committee inviting the mayor and council to participate in street parade. Accepted, with suggestion of a proper vehicle.

From Badollet & Co. in regard to sewer on Ninth street, asking that

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