

NEW YORK NEWS LETTER

New York, Aug. 13.—By his own advocacy of the model Subway saloon, which was opened and dedicated the other day by the enthusiastic social reformer, Bishop Potter has decidedly "put his foot in it." Such a storm of indignation as that aroused among the ultra conservative and religious elements and the advocates of prohibition has never before been witnessed in this city. Thousands of letters and telegrams have been sent to Bishop Potter, scathingly criticizing his action and utterly condemning his position in the matter. He has been attacked in the newspapers and nearly every minister seems to have considered it his duty to express his utter disapproval of the reformatory methods of Bishop Potter. While some of the critics merely ridicule the idea of elevating the saloon, others see in the plan of the bishop a direct collusion with the evil powers and influences of the dramshop, which cannot but lead to the most demoralizing effect. In the meantime the Subway saloon is doing a land office business and Bishop Potter says nothing, but allows this flood of "moral" indignation to break over his head. Even among those, who recognize the excellent intentions of Bishop Potter and give him credit for his courage in undertaking what he considered right, knowing that it would arouse a flood of opposition, there are many, who believe that the great reformer allowed himself to be carried away by his enthusiasm and that he made a fatal mistake, which would do a great deal more harm than good.

The refusal of the owners of the excursion steamer Grand Republic to obey the orders of the federal steamboat inspectors, who demanded that the steamer should not be used for carrying passengers to Dreamland until the steamer had been reinspected and found in proper condition, has revealed a peculiar state of affairs. It has practically demonstrated, that the federal inspectors are powerless to enforce their orders. Although the inspectors had sufficient evidence that the equipment of the steamer as to fire apparatus, life belts, etc., was entirely inadequate and not in conform-

ance with the laws, the owners of the boat continued to employ the Grand Republic to transport passengers to and from Dreamland. It has been discovered, that, under the laws the use of the steamer for transporting passengers cannot be stopped. All that can be done is, to bring charges against the owners of the steamer and fine them \$500 for each trip for violating the inspection laws. If the owners of the steamer can afford or are willing to pay the fines, they can keep the boat in commission as long as they choose.

The evidence which a partial inspection of the steamer and of its equipment has brought to light, proves the criminal carelessness of the inspectors, who certified that the Grand Republic was a safe and properly equipped boat. It was found that nearly one half of the life belts were not filled with cork, but with cotton batting and that the latter would not support a weight of 24 pounds, but would actually sink on their own accord, after they had been immersed in water for a few minutes. It was also shown, that the captain had never held a fire drill of his crew and did not even know what signals to give to bring the crew on deck in case of fire. It was also discovered, that most of the fire hose was so old and rotten that it could not stand the pressure of the water. There is considerable indignation over the inspector's criminal neglect of duty and there seems to be the sentiment that an example should be made of the inspectors, who passed on the General Slocum and the Grand Republic previous to the recent disaster. It is generally hoped that the heaviest punishment allowed by law would be meted out to those criminally negligent officials.

Notwithstanding the definite denials by certain officers the rumor has been revived, that a great merger between the Metropolitan and the Interborough traction companies will soon be effected. It is stated, that the deal has practically been arranged and that its consummation is merely awaiting the return of P. A. B. Widener, the

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heaviest stockholder of Metropolitan securities. Mr. Widener is expected here from Europe shortly and it is believed that his signature under the agreement will complete the important deal. The opinions of Wall street are divided. Some really believe that the deal has been arranged, while others are of the opinion, that the rumor is really without foundation and has only been put in circulation for purposes of speculation.

It is stated on good authority that within a short time work on another, the fourth tunnel under the East river will be begun. The concession for the tunnel was obtained from the legislature twelve years ago. About ten years ago a shaft was sunk on the Manhattan side and the work on the tunnel proper begun. The work was stopped, however, after a terrific dynamite explosion at the mouth of the tunnel, by which six persons were killed and over fifty injured. The concession has passed into the hands of a corporation with August Belmont at its head and closely allied with the subway company. It is believed that the tunnel, when completed, will become part of the subway system.

The trouble between the employers and the employes in the building trades which culminated in a gigantic lockout, involving at least 50,000 men, is causing a great deal of trouble and delay in building operations. The work on the subway and on some of the largest buildings now in course of erection, has been temporarily tied up and even if the contractors succeed in securing non-union men enough to complete their contracts, it will be impossible for them to finish the work within contract time. The obstinacy of the unions has greatly injured their cause and lost them, to a great extent the sympathies of the public. The

employers are determined to solve the problem by declaring open shop and declining to have any more dealings with the various unions. It seems that they are in a fair way of carrying their point.

Automobile enthusiasts are highly elated over the result of recent efforts to estimate the number of automobiles owned and used in this city as compared with pleasure vehicles drawn by horses which passed at six carefully selected spots during one day was counted and in this way it was approximately ascertained that about one fifth of the pleasure vehicles of this city are automobiles. The number of autos is rapidly increasing and it is confidently expected that soon the number of autos in New York will be one-third of the entire number of pleasure vehicles.

By the recent transfer of the Archer M. Huntington collection of Spanish books, paintings, coins, manuscripts and objects of historical and archaeological interests to the newly founded Hispanic Society of America the number of valuable and interesting historical and art collections of this city has received a very important addition. Mr. Huntington devoted 14 years and a large sum of money to the accumulation of the collection, which is now in the Huntington library at Pleasanton, Bay Chester. As soon as the proposed home of the Hispanic society is completed the greater part of the collection will be transferred to it. The proposed building of the society will be erected at Audubon park, between 155th and 156th streets and will cover about eight city lots. The collection is by far the most complete special collection of its kind in this country.

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