

COMMISSION IS TO BLAME

Old Essex Market Building Might Have Been Turned Into a School for Many Scholars.

But the Gentlemen of the Sinking Fund Frankly Admit That They Have Been Negligent in the Matter.

Comptroller Fitch and Chairman Olcott, of the Finance Committee, on the Crying Need of More Accommodations for Children.

City Officials on the Situation.

"It is much to be regretted that this city is so sorely in need of school buildings, and we have probably been neglectful of the possible relief which the old Essex Market offers. . . . Since reading the reference to this building in the Journal this morning, I have determined to call the matter up at the next meeting of the Commission."—Chairman Olcott, of the Finance Committee.

"The Commission will meet again in a few days, and the matter will be called up before the full Commission for consideration. It has been up several times lately, but nothing has been done."—Comptroller Fitch.

"I really don't know how that matter stands. It is in the hands of a committee."—Mayor Strong.

The suggestion made by the Journal that there is seating room for several thousand school children to be had in the old Essex Market building, a small portion of which is now in use by Primary School No. 37, has forced the Sinking Fund Commissioners to admit that they have been negligent in the work of securing accommodations for the thousands of applicants who have been turned from the doors of East Side public schools.

The old market is a four-story brick structure, occupying almost an entire block. Between 800 and 900 children now study beneath its roof. It might easily be made to accommodate between 2,000 and 3,000. An investigation of the reason why advantages had not been taken of this opportunity fairly fixes the blame upon the Sinking Fund Commissioners.

Superintendent Snyder has made an earnest effort to secure the entire building for school purposes. The upper floor is set aside for meetings of the Exempt Firemen's Association, which occur only once a month. This place was granted the firemen by an act of the Legislature. They declare their perfect willingness to give up the immense hall for school purposes if another meeting place is provided for them. This must be done from the Sinking Fund and with the Sinking Fund Commission it has been resting.

The Sinking Fund Commission consists of the Mayor, the Comptroller, the Recorder, the City Chamberlain and the chairman of the Finance Committee of the Board of Aldermen.

The Mayor said yesterday: "I really don't know how that matter stands. It is in the hands of a committee."

SCHOOL CLOSED AGAINST HIM.



my Father Mr. James Harper has first tried to get me into grammar school No 3 without any success. I wanted to get in there because I heard it was one of the best in this city.

Augustus Harper
age 9

19 Street

FORGETTING HER ARITHMETIC.



Here, in this great city, where there is supposed to be every advantage for education, it is an outrage that a child should be afraid that she should "forget her arithmetic" because she is unable to secure accommodations at school. Poor little Maggie Hayden, who doesn't like "having nothing to do all day," should bring shame to the heart of each member of the Commission on "how not to do it," and each occupant of a stool in New York's "Circumlocution Office."

Maggie Hayden is at an age when it is imperative for the public good that she should not have "nothing to do all day." Her father, Michael Hayden, is a hard-working, conscientious, sober mechanic, who, though he pays no direct tax upon real estate, is indirectly taxed in the rent he pays for his modest but clean tenement. His child is as much or more entitled to public education as any Fauntleroy youngster whose parents are assessed in more than five figures. In the locality in which the Haydens live there are many reasons why children of Maggie's age should not be on the streets.

Parks are far away—too far for frequent visits—and little girls will spend money for candy in preference to rides on street cars. It is necessary that children of Maggie's years should not be perpetually housed up.

Maggie Hayden and hundreds of other idle children who are willing to cudgel their wits over arithmetic, grammar and geography, present a problem that the city officials must solve at once.

Maggie has written in her copy-book "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do," but that will not save her from temptation. Nor will anything shift the responsibility for this awful risk from the shoulders of those responsible for the delay in providing a desk and seat in a class room for such little ones.

I Don't like having nothing to do all day and want get in to school I am forgetting my arithmetic I am going to go to No 13 if I can ever get in

Maggie Hayden

Age 9

(Translation.)
I don't like having nothing to do all day and want to get in to school I am forgetting my arithmetic I am going to go to No. 13 if I can ever get in. MAGGIE HAYDEN (aged 9).

hands of a committee, and has been before the Board, but that is about all I can say of it."

Fitch on the Situation.
"It is true," said Comptroller Fitch, "this question was referred to a sub-committee, consisting of the City Chamberlain and myself, and General McCook has examined the old Essex Market and finds that the Exempt Firemen's Association has a large quantity of historical relics in this hall, and it would be impossible for them to leave unless some depository for these things were first provided. Besides, the act of the Legislature, which gave the association their privileges and quarters also requires the Sinking Fund Commission to furnish them with other quarters before removing them from the old Essex Market. The Commission has accordingly made several efforts to obtain other places, but without avail. We thought we could transfer them to a house in Seventeenth street, but learned that it was to be used for other purposes. We then figured on a place in Twenty-sixth street, but were later informed it had to be used by Bellevue Hospital. The Commission will meet again in a few days and the matter will be called up before the full Commission for consideration. It has been up several times lately, but nothing has been done."

Chairman Olcott Regrets.
W. K. Olcott, the chairman of the Finance Committee of the Board of Aldermen, said yesterday: "It is certainly eminently appropriate that this subject should be agitated at this time. It is much to be regretted that this city is so sorely in need of school buildings."

Seventeenth street, but nothing came of it, as the firemen object to going there.

"I think the Journal is doing a good thing in directing attention to this crying need of the city. No stone should be left unturned. I believe the Journal's work will be productive of positive results, too. I really did not know, until I read the Journal's article, that the Essex Market building was not now used for school purposes."

Two Suggestions Offered.
The Board of Education claims to be helpless in the matter of relief for the army of children which has been turned from the doors of the public schools of the East Side. Of fourteen members of the Board only two offered suggestions yesterday for the immediate seating of the children who had been unable to gain admission in the congested districts.

Dr. Philip Melrovitz suggested that halls and churches be hired.
Emile Beneville proposed that in the districts where it is necessary half-day sessions be held to accommodate all of the children who apply.

Other members of the Board offer no plan, saying immediate relief is out of the question and that the blame for the situation rests with the State Legislature and the Board of Estimate and Apportionment.

In reply to Dr. Melrovitz's suggestion that halls or churches be rented, the members of the Committee on Buildings and the Finance Committee of the Board urge two objections. They say there is no money at the disposition of the Board for this purpose and that in the wards where the children have been forced out there are no suitable places for school purposes.

new schools will always render it impossible for any Board of Education to meet the demands of the increasing population of the city for more schools. They declare it requires about two years' time from the moment the Board determines to erect a new school building to witness its completion.

"To begin with," explained Jacob W. Mack, "the Legislature must be petitioned to authorize the issue of bonds. That must be done before the work of the Committee on Sites of the Board of Education can even begin. When the committee does begin work and considers the various pieces of property available, and the conditions that surround each for half a mile in all directions, and the Board has approved its work, then the survey is ordered and reported. All this consumes several months. Then the Supreme Court must be petitioned to appoint a Board of Appraisers. It takes sometimes as long as six months to get the appraisers named. Then they announce that they will meet in a month or so.

"When the appraisers do meet the property must be gone over carefully and a report made to the Board. Either the Board or the property owners may appeal from the valuations fixed by the appraisers. That means more delay. Finally after all this is agreed upon, the Board of Estimate and Apportionment must be asked to advertise and sell the requisite amount of bonds, and then bids can be advertised for and the contract let. All this, mind you, must be gone through with before the actual work can be begun. About a year is always required for the actual work of construction."

"One reason for the congestion," said Charles B. Hubbell, "is that strong prejudices exist among mothers about where their children shall go to school. Schools are badly crowded in some rooms to spare in the red brick buildings."

"NO GOOD TO TRY



I have been going to school for three years but it is in Albany I haven't school here and my papa heard that it would be good to try to get me in here we moved here April

Jessie Quackenbush
Age 9

(Translation.)
I have been going to school for the three years but it wasn't in Albany I haven't been to school here and my papa heard that it would be good to try to get me in here we moved here last April.

JESSIE QUACKENBUSH (ten years)

WANTS TO LEARN HISTORY

Sept 18th 96
211 West 31st

My father has tried to get me into school so has mama. I want to learn the history of the United States and of England. History is the most interesting study all.