

Lancaster Intelligencer.

THURSDAY EVENING, SEPT. 8, 1881.

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.

DIFFERENT PLANS PROPOSED.

Report of the Special Committee of City Councils on Reorganization of the Fire Department.

To the Honorable Select and Common Councils of the City of Lancaster.

GENTLEMEN:—Your committee, to whom was referred the resolution to report some plan for the reorganization of the fire department, respectfully beg leave to present their report.

The present system of our fire department has been an engaging one for some time, and there seems to be a diversity of opinion as to the system or plan best adapted to our wants. Therefore your committee are at a loss as to which would be the best plan to recommend to the views of all who seem to have the question at heart.

Your committee, after informing themselves of the cost and working of the fire departments of sister cities, have concluded to submit for your consideration several systems and plans now in use in other cities. The first system we present is for a paid department; the second the volunteer department, and the third the call department.

There is scarcely a candidate in this question a thought, who will not admit that our city, for its size, has too many steam fire engine companies. We are of the opinion that for a paid department four steam engine companies and one hook and ladder company are all that are necessary. We think this number sufficient for our city in any emergency, if conducted upon the paid department system. This would embrace the four companies located in the limits of the old four wards, to-wit: north, south, east and west—and if councils should consider that the centre of our city was by such an arrangement left unprotected, this trouble could be overcome by placing a reserve steamer, or a small chemical engine, in the centre.

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This plan has been more generally spoken of than the call or volunteer, and as a proof of this assertion, any member of councils who has examined the petitioners and their honorable bodies at our August meeting will acknowledge that the heaviest property owners, and therefore, the largest taxpayers, of our city are the names which appear the most numerous and conspicuous on these petitions; and therefore, we think that their request should receive due consideration at your hands. But, gentlemen, while considering and discussing these appeals, allow us to beg of you not to forget the financial condition of our city and the large amount of money necessary to substitute a paid department for our present system. This change should be undertaken with a clear knowledge of the facts connected therewith. Those who have not examined the petitioners and their honorable bodies at our August meeting will not form an idea of the cost of a change of system and the annual expense necessary for the maintenance of the same.

ESTIMATED COST OF PAID DEPARTMENT. Four steam engines, each \$10,000.00. Hook and Ladder Horse, 10,000.00. Four Steam Engines, 40,000.00. One Hook and Ladder Horse, 10,000.00. Four Horses, \$80 each, 3,200.00. Fourteen Horses, \$20 each, 2,800.00. Fourteen Horses, \$20 each, 2,800.00. Pipes, Wrenches, Nozzles, Furniture, &c., 500.00. Total cost, \$105,000.00.

These estimates are based upon prices received from the manufacturers of the different articles herein enumerated and direct from first hands.

COST OF MAINTAINING A PAID DEPARTMENT.

To provide for the maintenance and efficiency of the department, if conducted upon the principle of the cities of Baltimore, Pittsburgh, or Philadelphia, would require a larger amount of money than most people, even those interested in this plan, are aware of. The salaries of the officers and men, feed for horses, etc., at a low estimate, would amount to about fourteen thousand dollars.

But there are ways of conducting a paid department at a much less expense, than is by the majority of the petitioners for the city, at work on the streets, and such other labor as the city is compelled to employ otherwise. This, we fear, would destroy the efficiency of the department.

Where is the money to come from to meet this outlay? It is the question that strikes us most forcibly. To borrow this amount of money under the law the question would have to be submitted to the people for their approval. Your committee have reasons to doubt whether the verdict would be in its favor, when the facts become generally known that the amount necessary would almost exhaust the whole amount allowed under the law to be borrowed.

But there is another serious question connected with borrowing to our constitutional limit, and that is that we would exhaust ourselves too much; for should an unexpected emergency arise in the water department requiring a large amount of money, and here we find us to remark that the question of increased water supply will have to be met by councils—should this emergency arise, we say, we would be in a hopeless condition, and financially unable to meet it by direct taxation.

To meet the cost by direct taxation of the change of system would require an increase of the present rate of five mills or one dollar and forty cents on the hundred valuation for city purposes for the next year. This is a heavy burden, and what complaining would there be were this amount added? There seems to be considerable opposition manifested against the present councils for placing an additional two mills on the present year, when the real cause belongs elsewhere.

These facts, gentlemen of councils, we wish to call your attention to, that you may act intelligently and knowingly. But your committee have reasons to doubt whether the verdict would be in its favor, when the facts become generally known that the amount necessary would almost exhaust the whole amount allowed under the law to be borrowed.

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Medical.

SPECIAL AND CHROMIC DISEASES.

Mary A. Longaker, M. D., OFFICE AND RESIDENCE No. 13 East Walnut Street, LANCASTER, PA.

Particular attention given to the treatment of Diseases of Women and Children. Free examination and treatment daily except Sunday from 10 a. m. to 12 p. m. Consultations in English and German.

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First-Class Driving Horses, Buggies and Phaetons to Hire, at No. 221 NORTH QUEEN STREET, FORMERLY ZECHER BROS.' OLD LIVERY STABLE.

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Spring Trade. which for quality, style and variety of patterns has never been equalled in this city.

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H. GERHART'S THE FALL STYLE OF SILK HAT, SELF-CONFORMING.

ARCIC HAT. Is very light in weight and for a knock-about it takes the lead. We have a few on hand now, but more are coming. They sell for \$1.50.

OLIVETTE HAT. That is so popular in many places, will be on exhibition in our show window by Saturday.

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CHINA AND GLASSWARE. A Large Lot of Damaged WHITE STONE WARE From New York Auction, at CHINA HALL.

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