

# PETERS ON THE RACK AT BRIBERY INQUIRY

## Aldermanic "Intellectual Giant" Shows Faulty Memory.

### SHIES AT QUERY ON RECORD

#### Says He Shifted to Cowing for Recorder Because Clifford, the Accused Man, Bolted.

Alderman Henry Clay Peters, the "intellectual giant" of the Board of Aldermen and the leader of the M. O. L. contingent, developed a case of faulty memory at the examination yesterday before Magistrate Whitman of Alderman W. S. Clifford, charged with having accepted a bribe of \$6,000 for causing a switch of the M. O. L. votes to Judge Cowing in the recent fight over the Recordership. The Alderman was apparently unable to recollect with any degree of accuracy either names or places.

Mr. Peters was called to the stand at the beginning of the afternoon session. Assistant District Attorney Smythe questioned him as to why he had switched his vote for Recorder.

Only once was Alderman Peters really startled. That was when he had announced loudly that he was proud of his record as a man and as an Alderman.

"Let me see," remarked Mr. Smythe. "What was the name of the firm by which you were employed in 1898 and 1899 before you disappeared?"

Alderman Peters was clearly disconcerted. After waiting several minutes Mr. Smythe remarked:

"You do not seem ready to answer that question?"

Magistrate Whitman came to Peters's assistance and the badgered Alderman seized the help which was extended to him.

"You need not answer if it will tend to incriminate or degrade you," said the Magistrate.

"Then I decline to answer the question," responded Peters, with evident relief.

Alderman Peters experienced the greatest difficulty in explaining why he had shifted his vote, and almost all of the time that he occupied the stand was consumed in an effort to make this clear.

The name of Judge Cowing was mentioned, said the Alderman, when a man had approached him and told him that Senator Raines wished to name a compromise candidate.

"I told him to see Melville G. Palliser, as I would not take Senator Raines's word for anything. It was during his talk with Mr. Palliser that Judge Cowing's name was mentioned," said Peters.

Peters admitted that he had discussed the candidacy of Judge Cowing with some of his colleagues, but he could not remember their names.

"I told them that the Republican members of the board seemed to be tied up with public service corporations, and that we could get nothing out of them."

"You wanted to be Chairman of a committee to investigate the railroad corporations, did you not?" Peters was asked.

Peters admitted that he did, but said that his consultations with Aldermen Davies and Meyers had not resulted in his securing the place.

Peters said he had talked with Clifford, who told him that it would be a good idea to vote for Cowing. Whether Clifford or he started the conversation he could not tell, nor could he remember where it had taken place. During roll-call before the vote was taken, Peters said, he had another talk with Clifford, telling him not to vote for Cowing on the first ballot.

Clifford told him, Peters said, that he was tired of the deadlock, and that he should vote for Cowing immediately.

"I had to decide quickly," said Peters, "and I told the boys to vote for Cowing. I had not so instructed them until after Clifford had bolted."

Mr. Smythe read from the testimony of other Aldermen who had said that Peters had previously told them to vote for Cowing.

"I can't help what they said," declared Peters. "They must be all mistaken."

Peters explained again that he had simply changed his own vote, and persuaded his followers to do so in order that there might not be a break in the ranks.

"But you are the M. O. L. leader, are you not?" asked Mr. Smythe. "Why did you not bring Clifford back into line?"

Peters admitted that he had been unable to do this, but had done the next best thing by following Clifford.

"Sort of a case of the tail wagging the dog, wasn't it?" suggested Mr. Smythe.

Amid laughter, Mr. Peters admitted that it was.

Alderman John J. Cronin, who had preceded Peters during the morning session, admitted that he had testified falsely before the Grand Jury. Lawyer Abe Levy came to his rescue, however, by suggesting that when he had appeared before the

Grand Jury he had been nervous and distraught, and had not understood the questions put to him, but that now he was better able to answer questions. Mr. Cronin hastily agreed that Mr. Levy's explanation was exactly right.

Other Aldermen who testified yesterday were Henry Falk, Charles Kuntze, Cornelius D. Noonan, Thomas J. Mulligan, and William Rowcroft.

## ASSEMBLYMAN A SUICIDE.

### William J. Donohue of Brooklyn, Friend of McCarren, Dies in a Saloon.

Assemblyman William J. Donohue of Brooklyn, a close friend of Senator McCarren, and who represented the Fourteenth Assembly District, McCarren's home district, in the Legislature, committed suicide yesterday in the saloon of Edward Lingers at 419 Oakland Street by putting a bullet through his head.

The only cause which the police could assign for his act was that Donohue had lately been drinking, and probably feared that he was going to lose a damage suit he had pending against the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company in the County Court, Brooklyn, for an accident in which he was hurt three years ago. At the time this case was called yesterday by Justice Fawcett Donohue had ended his life.

Donohue was 33 years old and lived happily with his wife and two children at 132 Bedford Avenue, Williamsburg. For years he had taken an active interest in Democratic politics in the district from which he was elected last Fall. At one time he was Senator McCarren's political foe. When they buried the hatchet McCarren got Donohue a job in the Register's office in Brooklyn, and last Fall Donohue obtained the nomination for Assembly on the Democratic ticket through the State Senator and was elected by a big plurality. On his return from Albany last Friday he seemed depressed. He did not return to the State Capitol on Monday. He told his wife Wednesday night that he was going to Albany yesterday morning. After he had kissed his wife and children good-bye he left his home and an hour later appeared at the saloon, where he treated a party of men. He then shot himself.

His wife was prostrated at the news of his death.

## THE AGATHA GRUBERS WIN.

### Little Girls of P. S. A. G. L. Branch Get the Junior League Cup.

Hullo-balloo Perackajack,  
Hullo-balloo, get off the track;  
Bow wow don't stop.  
Agatha Gruber on top.

That was the cry which nearly raised the roof of Public School 104 last night when the Agatha Gruber League was the successful competitor to carry off a silver cup in a series of relay games and folk dances. The cup, of fine silver, was presented by the Junior League, whose members are New York's society debutantes.

Miss Janet Henderson, representing the Junior League, two other members of which were present, made the presentation speech, and a tiny Agatha Gruber Leaguer answered with great dignity, in the name of her League, "I thank you."

There were relay games in addition to the dances, and in the flag shuttle relay the girls showed the stuff of which they are made. This game is played with a flag on the end of a long stick, which they carry in the races, and which passes from hand to hand. The Mary Leavitts broke their banner from the stick in the beginning of the game, but without delaying an instant went on carrying their flagless pole.

"Game-All Up," "Hustle Ball," the "German Hopping Dance," and "Mountain March" were among the competitive exercises. The girls were in bloomers and dance costumes, were heartily encouraged, and obliged to repeat two of the dances. There was music, and three little dances also played the violin.

## WESTCHESTER PARTY REFORM

### Democrats Start Crusade Against the Present Leaders.

The Democratic Party of Westchester County is going to make an effort at the elections next Fall to pull itself out of the political obscurity in which it has been quietly reposing for some time past. E. E. Sutherland, editor of The White Plains Reporter, called a meeting at the Manhattan Club yesterday afternoon to discuss plans. There were present about a dozen men, more or less prominent in county politics.

They expressed themselves as opposed to the Democratic organization, which is led by State Committeeman Walsh and ex-Mayor Fiske of Mount Vernon. It was also charged that the Democratic Board of Supervisors is really ruled by the Republican minority, and that there is graft in the construction of the new court house.

Before adjourning it was decided to communicate with State Committeeman Walsh, with a view to having him join in the new movement.

### Growth of Mutual Benefit Life.

The sixty-second annual statement of the Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company of Newark, N. J., issued yesterday, shows assets of \$104,858,395, a growth since the preceding year of \$7,064,668. The total amount paid in by policyholders during 1906 was \$16,708,914.