

# CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## Fund of \$1,000,000 for the New Building Completed.

### Prominent Candidates for Membership—

Medals of Honor for Abram S.

Hewitt and Hugh H. Hanna.

The Chamber of Commerce met yesterday, and Alexander E. Orr, Chairman of the Building Committee, created some enthusiasm among the members by reading a report, in which he announced that the million-dollar subscription fund for the Chamber's proposed new building had been completed. The Chamber decided not to consider the Stranahan bill, as it had expected to, as, on second thought, it did not seem worth much attention.

Morris K. Jesup presided, and a large number of candidates for membership was offered. Alexander E. Orr nominated John B. McDonald, the rapid transit contractor, William Barclay Parsons, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and Cornelius Vanderbilt. Frank Brainard and Gen. Francis V. Greene were other nominees.

Ex-Mayor Abram S. Hewitt, whom both Mr. Orr and Charles Stewart Smith eulogized in warm terms, and Hugh H. Hanna, noted through the Indianapolis Monetary Convention, were elected honorary members of the Chamber, which voted to have a gold medal struck off in honor of each of them, each medal to be presented by the President to the man for whom it was designed. A public reception will be given to Mr. Hanna in recognition of his work for sound money at the Chamber at 2:30 o'clock next Tuesday afternoon.

Mr. Orr was called on to speak on rapid transit, and his speech was largely a eulogy of Mr. Hewitt for his advocacy of municipal ownership of the rapid transit system.

"The records of this Chamber," said Mr. Orr, "sparkle all through with Mr. Hewitt's brilliant speeches and reports in furthering the best interests of this country and its commercial metropolis, but I cannot help believing that his splendid service in the cause of municipal rapid transit is the crowning act of his life, and will perpetuate his memory and render New York his debtor as long as the city shall exist."

The resolutions decreeing a gold medal for Mr. Hewitt were passed by a standing vote.

Mr. Orr, in his report on behalf of the Building Committee, made special compliment to Morris K. Jesup, who contributed \$51,500 to the fund, and to J. Pierpont Morgan and John D. Rockefeller, who contributed \$25,000 each. The list of contributors contains a large number of well-known men. D. Willis James, John S. Kennedy, Cornelius Vanderbilt, William E. Dodge, Samuel D. Babcock, Kuhn, Loeb & Co., and Andrew Carnegie each subscribed \$25,000. William Waldorf Astor subscribed \$2,600. The subscriptions are by no means donations. The subscribers will receive securities of some sort representing their ownership in the new building, and, as it is to be partially rented out for offices, they may get a return on their subscriptions amounting to 3 per cent. per annum.

The Chamber received a resolution from John S. Kennedy, enlisting its services in an effort to secure better postal facilities above Fourteenth Street. F. B. Thurber presented resolutions calling for the repeal of the war revenue tax, and the passage through Congress of the bill designed to remedy the abuse of second class mail matter. These resolutions were all referred to a committee.

## ATLANTIC AVENUE BILL.

### Mayor Snubs Improvement Commission at Hearing.

Mayor Van Wyck gave a hearing yesterday afternoon on Senator Wagner's bill amending the law regarding the removal of the tracks of the Long Island Railroad Company from Atlantic Avenue so that the railroad company may not be required to construct a tunnel under the East River. The cost of the improvement, which involves the depression of the tracks in one part of the thoroughfare and their elevation in another is estimated at \$2,500,000, of which the city, under the law, must pay one-half.

The bill has been approved by the Atlantic Avenue Improvement Commission, and Eugene G. Blackford, the President of the commission, with a number of owners of property in the neighborhood of Atlantic Avenue, was present to advocate the approval of the bill.

After Mr. Blackford had spoken, the Mayor observed that when the Marshall bill, giving the railroad company certain relief, was passed last year the city did not object to paying \$1,250,000 toward the cost of the removal of the tracks from the avenue, because there was hope that the company would build a tunnel to Manhattan. Since then, however, the tunnel project had been abandoned and he could not see why the cost of the improvement should be shared by the city.

"The Long Island Terminal Railroad Company made an effort in good faith to get a tunnel franchise," said Mr. Blackford, "but failed, and the Long Island Railroad Company can't afford to pay the cost of this work alone."

"That's what I hear all the time," the Mayor observed. "You come here and fight the battles for the railroad."

"The company made every effort to get a franchise from the Municipal Assembly," said Mr. Blackford.

"I don't believe it," said the Mayor.

Mr. Blackford was explaining the difficulties which beset the Atlantic Avenue Commission, when the Mayor interrupted him to ask, "Could not you have got your bill through without requiring the city to defray half the cost?"

"The Long Island Railroad wouldn't consent," Mr. Blackford responded.

"When will the Legislature learn how to pass laws without the consent of the Long Island Railroad?" the Mayor inquired. "The Legislature is quick enough to act when it comes to taking away money from the city. Talk of amending the charter, why, they have sent in about 3,000 amendments. We might as well be a colony like the Philippines or Puerto Rico, the way we are treated."

Alderman Bridges of Brooklyn tried to break into the colloquy, but the Mayor rebuffed him, saying "I'd rather hear any one in the room than you." Subsequently, however, the Alderman was permitted to protest against the city paying any of the expense of the improvement. The Mayor did not indicate what he would do with the bill.