

THE Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York has a history that is interesting because much of the prosperity of the Nation and very much of the greatness of the City of New York are due to it and its efforts for advancement and progress during the 139 years that it has existed.

Among its members have always been many of the foremost and most progressive men in this city, and to their civic pride and National patriotism, and a prescience that has never been equaled in this country, is due the proud distinction that this city enjoys among the great cities of the world. The city has a history that is uniquely its own, and the institution that has watched over the city's welfare and at times has firmly grasped the helm and tried to steer it to a haven of safety when beset by political tempests has a history that redounds to the credit of the institution's members, its city, and its country.

The origin and doings of the Chamber of Commerce will be of daily interest as long as it exists. It was formed April 5, 1753, but it was not until March 13, 1770, that it was granted a charter by the Colonial Government of Great Britain. The charter was afterward duly authenticated by the signature of Cadwallader Colden, Lieutenant Governor of the Province of New York, and by the great seal of England.

This ancient organization was founded by John Cruger, Elias Desbrosses, James Jauncey, Jacob Walton, Robert Murray, Hugh Wallace, George Folliot, William Walton, Samuel Verplank, Theophylact Bache, Thomas White, Miles Sherbrook, Walter Franklin, Robert Ross Waddell, Acheson Thompson, Lawrence Kortwright, Thomas Randall, William McAdam, Isaac Low, Anthony Van Dam, John Alsop, Philip Livingston, Henry White, and James McEvers. John Cruger was its first President. The other officers were: Vice President—Hugh Wallace; Treasurer—Elias Desbrosses; Secretary—Anthony Van Dam.

With the history and names of the original members or founders many old New Yorkers are familiar, and if the present generation knows nothing of their personality, it knows of them to a certain extent by reason of their names having been conferred on many of the city's streets, a fair indication of the honor and esteem in which they were held by the men of their day.

At the close of the Revolution an act was passed on the 13th of April, 1784, by the Legislature of the State of New York, "to remove doubts concerning the corporation of the Chamber of Commerce, and to confirm the rights and privileges thereof." Under this act the title of the Chamber was changed to that of the "State of New York."

The original Chamber at first met at the house kept by Bolton & Sigell, which is still standing on the corner of Broad and Pearl Streets, and which afterward became famous as Washington's headquarters and Fraunce's Tavern. The building was erected for a town house for the Delancey family. The meetings from 1769 to 1779 were held in the "great room of the building commonly called the Exchange, at the lower end of the street called Broad Street," and afterward at the Merchants' Coffee House, on the southeast corner of Wall and Water Streets; then, in 1817, at the Tontine Coffee House, on the northwest corner of Wall and Water Streets; subsequently in a room especially set apart for the purpose, in the year 1827, in the original Merchants' Exchange, whence it was removed at the time of the fire which destroyed that building in December, 1835. Thereafter the Chamber for a time occupied the Directors' room of the Merchants' Bank, and in 1858 made its home in a building at the corner of William and Cedar Streets. In that building it remained until 1884, when it removed



PRESIDENT'S DESK, NEW YORK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

to the new building of the Mutual Life Insurance Company, in Nassau Street, where it occupies three rooms on the fourth floor, fronting on Nassau Street.

The old merchants who founded the organization for the honorable pursuit of mercantile purposes were men of high character, and at later periods and under different forms of government the most eminent citizens that took part in public affairs were most always the leading merchants of New York. In the first Colonial Congress were Robert R. Livingston, John Cruger, Philip Livingston, William Bayard, and Leonard Lispenard, all but the first-named at one time members of the Chamber of Commerce. The records of the Chamber indicate the class of men who have formed it. On them are the names of men who have been Governors, Senators, members of Congress, and of the State Legislature. The greatest care has ever been exercised in the choice of members, every name submitted being passed upon by committees of acknowledged prudence and sagacity, and the names now on the roll comprise many of the leading men in this city.

Among the earlier steps taken by the merchants was action to prevent smuggling, and within two years after the evacuation of the city by the British the influence of the Chamber was sufficiently great to defeat the plan of the new State Legislature to issue paper money, to be made by law a legal tender in the transaction of business. At a later day, however, it united with the general sentiment in favor of a currency to be used temporarily as a legal tender in the payment of debts, and it aided in maintaining the credit of the Nation.

Its first public banquet, so far as known, was held in May, 1770. After the lapse of many years, in June, 1787, the Chamber resolved that its members should dine together on the Fourth of July at Bradford's Coffee House. It had a centennial dinner in 1868, at Irving Hall, in Fourteenth Street, and since that time has had many public dinners, at some of which affairs of great moment have taken place.

The Chamber had many times considered the question of tribunals of commerce, but it was not until 1874 that a law creating one was passed. Judge Enoch L. Fancher was then appointed Judge of the Court of Arbitration, a court which has been of great value to the members of the Chamber and others who have resorted to it. Judge Fancher still presides over the court.

As early as 1786 a resolution was considered asking the Legislature to create an artificial waterway between this city and the great lakes, and out of this the Erie Canal project ultimately came. Later the Chamber agitated for a ship canal around Niagara Falls and a railroad from Lake Erie to the Hudson River.

Among the other early active measures was an opposition to removing the Custom House from the site it then occupied, (the present site of the Sub-Treasury)

After it had been determined to remove it, however, it was the influence of the Chamber that kept it in Wall Street, and prevented it from going further up town.

The subject of pilotage has from time to time occupied the attention of the Chamber, and it has had the pilot laws amended to suit the views of the shipping interests, and to create the body of able and trained men who now take vessels out of and bring them into this port.

At the annual meeting, in 1848, it took measures to assist in organizing a savings bank for the benefit of merchants' clerks. In 1849 it forwarded a report to Congress in favor of a railroad across the continent, and the following year, upon its application, Congress granted appropriations to provide a steam cutter for the Harbor of New York, to remove sunken rocks from the channel of the East River, and to widen the passages through Hell Gate.

In 1852 it was active in regard to the reciprocity arrangement with the North American provinces for the free interchange of the natural productions of the respective countries, embracing, also, a full and joint participation in the fisheries and the free navigation of the St. Lawrence River.

In the subject of privateering the Chamber always took a great interest, and made itself heard from time to time at Washington, until Secretary Marcy concluded terms with England and France that protected private property on the ocean.

Commodore Perry's expedition to Japan, which opened commercial relations with that country, was a matter of great interest to the Chamber, and in January, 1855, it presented the successful Commodore with a service of plate in recognition of the successful termination of his effort.

When the bark Maury was seized in this port at the instigation of the British Consul and the British Minister the Chamber spoke emphatically, as it also did at a later period when the firm of Phelps, Dodge & Co. was brought temporarily to suffer for the misconduct of suborned officers of the customs.

At a special meeting of the Chamber, held on Aug. 21, 1858, the successful laying of the first Atlantic cable was announced, and the following resolution was adopted: "Resolved, That the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York regards the successful laying of the Atlantic telegraph cable from Valentia Bay, in Ireland, to Trinity Bay, in Newfoundland, as the great event of the age, interesting in the highest degree to the whole human family, reflecting honor on its projectors and those who have been instrumental in mastering the difficulties incident to the undertaking, and, as a scientific achievement, justly commanding the wonder and admiration of the world; that this Chamber recognizes in the new connection of the two continents another bond of union, by means of which two kindred nations of the world are brought into nearer alliance; and that in this successful enterprise

commerce has given to the man of science the practical solution of his problem, as it will aid Christianity's best development by making peace and concord the common interest of all nations."

It subsequently appropriated \$10,000 and had gold medals struck and presented to the prominent officers who were engaged in laying the Atlantic cable. Its action embraced Mr. Cyrus W. Field, as well as the naval and scientific men of the American and English Governments who had taken part in the work.

In connection with this subject the Chamber now has on its walls a grand painting, entitled "The Atlantic Cable Projectors," by Daniel Huntington. It is of great dimensions, and represents Mr. Field and the other projectors, Peter Cooper, David Dudley Field, Chandler White, Marshall O. Roberts, Prof. Morse, Moses Taylor, and Wilson G. Hunt, grouped about a table, while Mr. Field is explaining his views upon the practicability of laying the cable. In the background of the picture stands Daniel Huntington, the artist, who was a great friend of all the projectors, and who for many years had in view the painting of the picture.

When the first cable was laid, in 1858, the Chamber of Commerce elected Mr. Field an honorary member and gave him a gold medal. And again, in 1866, when the final success was assured, it was celebrated by the Chamber by a banquet, at which were present not only the merchants and others who composed this great commercial body, but also men of distinction from different parts of the country and from the army and navy. But this was not deemed sufficient, and for an appropriate and lasting memorial some of its members procured the painting of this picture. As Mr. Huntington had painted portraits of all the projectors except Mr. Chandler White, the representation is as lifelike as it possibly could be. The picture was finished and presented to the Chamber in May, 1895. Dr. Chauncey M. Depew made the presentation speech on behalf of the donors, and Alexander E. Orr, then President, accepted it for the Chamber.

The description of the painting is as follows: The projectors are at the residence of Mr. Cyrus W. Field, at Gramercy Park. Mr. Peter Cooper is presiding. Mr. Field is calling attention to a chart of Trinity Bay, pointing to Heart's Content as a safe harbor for landing the cable. Mr. David Dudley Field stands by the President with a law book. Mr. Chandler White is handing estimates of expense to Mr. Marshall O. Roberts, next to whom, at the table, is Mr. Moses Taylor, listening to Mr. Field's argument; near whom, at the end of the table, stands Mr. Wilson G. Hunt, who, though he joined them some time after their first organization, remained a staunch supporter of the project to the end. Prof. Samuel F. B. Morse, the electrician of the company, is standing behind Mr. Roberts, and by his side Mr. Daniel

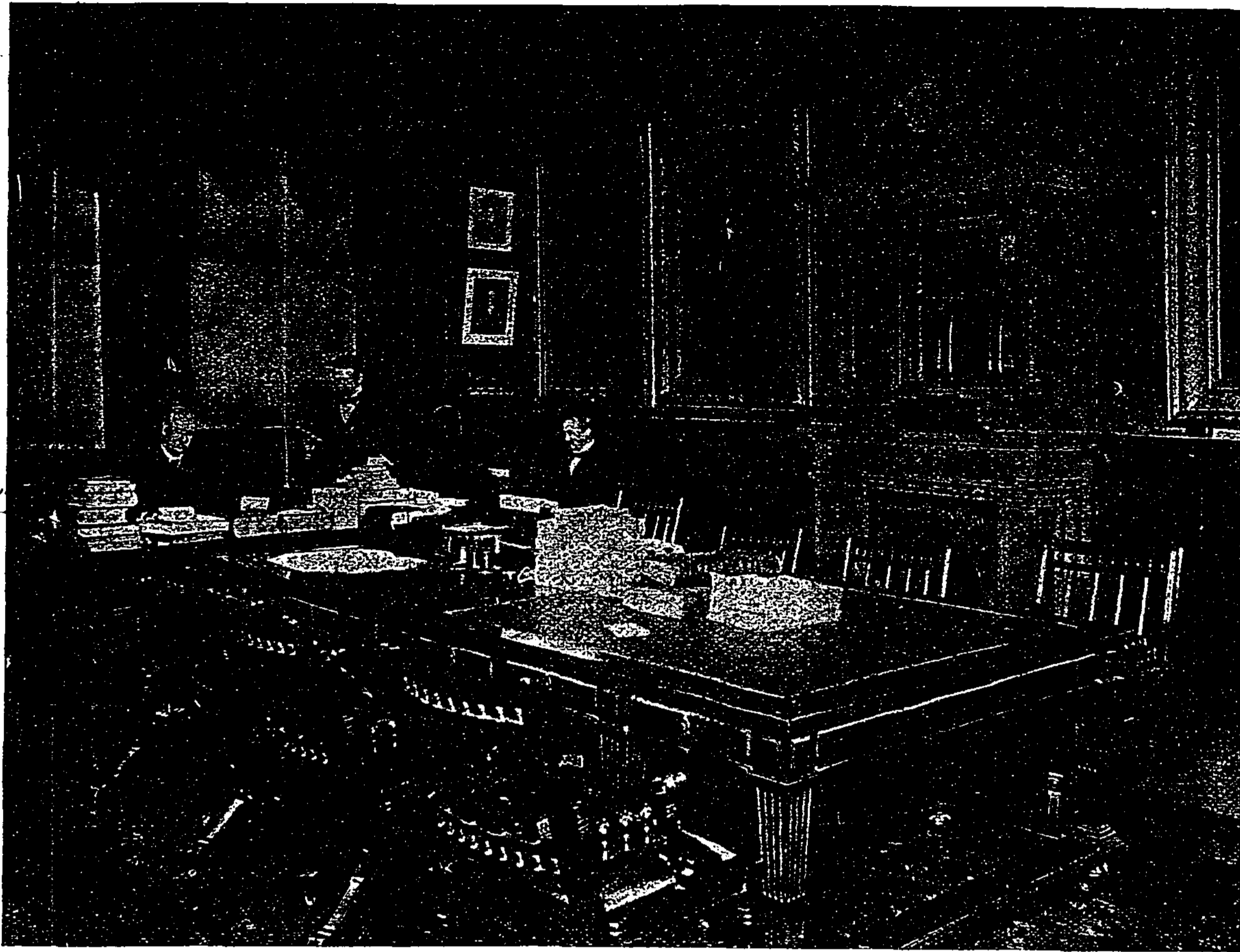
(Continued on Page 10.)



John Cruger, First President of the Chamber of Commerce.



TWENTY-FIVE REPRESENTATIVE MEMBERS OF THE NEW YORK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.



SECRETARY WILSON'S OFFICE, NEW YORK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

(Continued from Page 8.)

Huntington, the artist, is sketching. The size of the canvas is 7 feet 3 inches by 9 feet.

Going back again to former incidents among the doings of the Chamber, it is found that after treaties had been negotiated with Japan and Siam, at the meeting of Sept. 6, 1860, a resolution was passed declaring the urgent necessity for the establishment of mail facilities between San Francisco and Shanghai, with connection at intermediate ports. This action was the germ from which the Pacific steamship lines sprang.

At the outbreak of the War of the Rebellion, when the firing upon Sumter had lighted the fires of secession throughout the South, a large and enthusiastic meeting was held in the rooms of the Chamber of Commerce. So great was the assemblage that the entire building was thrown open for its accommodation. President Lincoln had theretofore issued his proclamation calling for military aid, and the Chamber was called upon by its President, Mr. Perit, to respond and assist the Government to raise a volunteer force of 75,000 men. Speeches were made, resolutions were passed, and a large sum of money was raised, and from the means thus suddenly obtained two regiments of organized State militia were forwarded to Washington the following day and several regiments of volunteers were organized without delay and dispatched to the seat of war.

The committee which was afterward known as the "Union Defense Committee," and which was appointed at the "Uprising of the North," as the great war meeting, in Union Square, on April 20, 1861, was called, really sprang into existence at the first meeting of the Chamber, on April 19, although its existence was not publicly announced until the following day, at the Union Square meeting. This committee forwarded not less than sixty-six regiments of soldiers, most of them equipped and fitted for service, to the front, in the early stages of the war in Virginia.

The Chamber also prepared, and, as far as possible, presented, medals to all of the officers and soldiers who had been engaged in the defense of Fort Sumter and Fort Pickens.

While the great war was going on the operatives in Lancashire, England, were suffering. The Chamber raised \$150,000 for their aid, and freighted the ship George Griswold, which transported this relief to the sufferers.

Letters of marque at this time claimed the Chamber's attention, and Secretary of State Seward had his attention called to the needs of merchant vessels in time of war.

When the Alabama was sunk, the Chamber paid fitting honor to the commander of the Kearsarge, and an appropriate testimonial was given to Commodore Winslow and his crew—\$10,000 was given to Commodore Winslow and \$15,000 was distributed among his officers and crew.

After Gen. Sherman captured Savannah the necessities of the people in that

city appealed to New York for material aid, and the Chamber of Commerce sent them provisions valued at \$35,000.

When President Lincoln's death was announced appropriate action was taken, and many members went to Washington to take part in the ceremonies and attend the funeral.

Portland, Me., was burned July 4, 1866. At once the sum of \$106,000 was raised and placed in the hands of the authorities of that city for the relief of the sufferers. When the Capitol Building in Richmond, Va., was destroyed, \$15,000 was sent to aid those who were suffering there. During the war between France and Germany distress prevailed in certain parts of France, and \$130,000 was raised and sent to the distressed districts. A fire in Troy, N. Y., desolated a large part of that city, and the Chamber collected and sent \$15,000 to the sufferers.

After the great conflagration in Chicago, in October, 1871, committees were appointed without delay in the Chamber, and under its auspices \$1,050,000 was collected and placed in the hands of the

proper representatives of the people of Chicago.

Nor have these been all the charitable contributions that the Chamber has made or has been instrumental in having made, for all the appeals of late years have been listened to, and substantial aid has been given.

International coinage, harbor improvements, quarantine matters, usury laws, import duties, and other matters that affect the city and the Nation have always been cared for with a jealous regard for the commercial interests of this country, and, whenever occasion has required, the Chamber has played no inconspicuous part in the framing of proper and adequate laws.

Whenever it has been necessary to take aggressive action to purify the political affairs of this city the Chamber of Commerce has been prominent in the field. Its action which led to the last investigation of the departments in this city is well remembered, the investigation being made possible by its raising a guarantee fund of \$20,000 to cover the expenses that might be incurred. Following close-

ly upon the heels of the investigation came the fight for municipal reform, and the part that the Chamber and the Committee of Seventy took in the election of Mayor Strong is fresh in every one's mind.

As it is not possible for the Chamber to ally itself with any political party on party lines, and as it has for years been opposed to the free coinage of silver, it having in the past gone so far as to ask for a special session of Congress to repeal the purchasing clause in the Sherman silver law, now extinct, it made strenuous efforts last year to impress upon both parties at their National Conventions the necessity for inserting gold planks in their platforms. With the party of Bryan its agents met with no success; with the Republican Party it was otherwise, and thereafter nearly all its members, irrespective of party affiliations, worked for the election of Major McKinley and sound-money ideas.

The President of the Chamber of Commerce is ex officio a member of the Board of Trustees of the Sailors' Snug Harbor, on Staten Island, and is also Chairman of its Executive Committee. Of members elected by the Chamber to official positions outside of its organization are three Commissioners of Pilots, a Commissioner for licensing sailors' hotels or boarding houses, and three Trustees of the Nautical School of the Harbor of New York, which is held on the ship St. Mary's.

The present officers of the Chamber of Commerce are: President—Alexander E. Orr; Vice Presidents—Morris K. Jesup, J. Edward Simmons, Horace Porter, Cornelius N. Bliss, J. P. Morgan, William H. Webb, D. Willis James, John A. Stewart, John Claffin, Henry Hentz, A. D. Julliard, John L. Riker; Treasurer—Solon Humphreys; Secretary—George Wilson. Mr. Wilson has held this position since 1858.

Those who have been elected honorary members of the Chamber are: Charles King, William E. Everett, Cyrus W. Field, William L. Hudson, W. H. Woodhouse, Jules Brunet, John A. Dix, Hamilton Fish, John A. King, Francis Lieber, Silas H. Stringham, John Ericsson, Townsend Harris, William M. Evarts, William J. McAlpine, Carl Schurz, Enoch L. Fancher, E. M. Archibald, Chester A. Arthur, John Bigelow, Grover Cleveland, Thomas A. Edison, William T. Sherman, George William Curtis, John Sherman, Whitelaw Reid, S. D. Babcock, W. W. Phelps, Charles S. Smith, and Seth Low.

The large list of active members (there are 1,000 of them) consists of the names of prominent men whose object is to promote good laws, to amend those that are imperfect, and to defeat the enactment of bad ones. They are quick to go to the relief of sufferers by famine, fire, or flood, and during the last quarter of a century have collected and distributed over \$2,000,000 in charity.

The rooms occupied by the Chamber of Commerce, in the Mutual Life Build-



Peter Cooper. Chandler White. Prof. Morse. D. Huntington. Cyrus W. Field. Wilson G. Hunt.
David Dudley Field. Marshall O. Roberts. Moses Taylor.

THE ATLANTIC CABLE PROJECTORS.

ing, are handsomely, but plainly, furnished, the main decorations being portraits of great Americans like Hamilton and Senator Sherman, and former members of the Chamber, and a few bronze casts of men of prominence. With the pictures the walls of the rooms are covered, and many others stand about on easels, the wall space not being sufficient to accommodate them all. The great picture of the Atlantic cable projectors, which has been mentioned, hangs opposite the President's desk, and holds the place of honor.

The records of the Chamber have been preserved. They make an interesting collection, and contain a history of the mercantile progress of this country.

The original charter of the corporation, granted by George III., written on parchment and contained in a mahogany case, inclosed in a tin box, was in good preservation and in possession of the Chamber at the time of the destruction of the Merchants' Exchange by fire, in December, 1835. Since that time every exertion has been made to discover it, but no trace of it has been found.

The seal of the Chamber is a quaint affair, 3 inches in diameter and 1 inch in thickness. It is of pure silver, and weighs about two pounds. It was made in London, and bears date 1770, the year of the incorporation. Around the border of the seal is the name of the institution, in the centre is the god Mercury, surrounded by emblems of commerce, and at the base is the Latin motto, "Non Nobis Nati Solum." The seal has a history of its own. Isaac Low, the last Colonial President of the Chamber and the designated keeper of the seal, took it with him to England on his retirement with the British troops in 1783. There it passed into the miscellaneous collections of a curiosity shop, where it was found some years after the Revolution by a patriotic visitor, who secured the valuable stray and restored it to the Chamber of Commerce. It is still in fine preservation, and is constantly used in the authentication of documents.

IN THE PUBLIC EYE.

—Marian S. Parker of this city is the only practical woman civil engineer in this country. She is a slight young girl, apparently twenty years of age. She began to study engineering in her fifteenth year and was graduated from Ann Arbor in 1895.

—Mrs. Bradley Martin has a curious and expensive collection of watches. Among its gems is a diamond coronet with a watch pendant, which at one time belonged to a member of a royal house. A gold enameled apricot containing a watch is another of her chief treasures.

—William Tell stuffs birds for a living now in Berlin, Tannhäuser is a butler, Goethe a barber, Kant keeps an employment bureau, and Richard Löwenherz (Coeur de Lion) is a chemist. Also, according to the Berlin Directory, there is a Roland, who boils soap; a Capet, who makes tables; a Valois, in the insurance

business; a Guise, who shoes horses; Marius works in brass, Valerius makes dolls, Cocceius is a waiter, and Thersites Augustus is a postman.

—Alfred Barrett, a son of Wilson Barrett, the English actor, who formerly managed his father's Grand Theatre, at Leeds, has left England and will hereafter devote himself to farming in New Zealand.

—Miss Donica, assistant professor in the Iola High School of Kansas, has refused an increase of salary, giving as a reason the remark attributed to Agassiz, that she "couldn't afford to waste time in making money."

—Mr. Oliver H. P. Belmont, who within the last few weeks has become a Mason and taken a number of degrees, has been installed as Junior Warden of St. John's Lodge, No. 1, F. and A. M., at Newport.

—Mrs. Hobbs, who was a friend of the first Duke of Wellington, has just died in Ireland aged 103 years. Her husband was in the British Army and was wounded at Quatre Bras. She had fourteen children, five of whom and six of her forty-four grandchildren are serving in the army. She also had thirty-two great-

grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. She was congratulated on behalf of the army by the Duke of Cambridge on her one hundredth birthday.

—The Duchess of Newcastle, who for several years has owned the best kennel of Russian wolf hounds in England, has been asked by the Barzol Club to judge the Barzol or Russian wolf hounds at its coming show, which will be held at Southport some time in the Spring. Mrs. H. L. Horsfall will be the judge of Great Danes at the forthcoming dog show in Liverpool.

—Alfred F. Calvert, one of London's West Australian millionaires, was reputed to be worth \$2,500,000 in cash a year ago. At that time a British and French syndicate offered him \$5,000,000 for his gold-mine holdings. The offer was refused and a course of reckless extravagance was entered upon. Within the last few days Mr. Calvert has sold for \$325,000 the properties that he refused \$5,000,000 for a year ago.

—William Morris, the English poet and Socialist, left his manuscripts and copyrights to his executors for the purpose of carrying out certain trusts, and it is pos-

sible that the Kelmscott press may not be abandoned. His personal property is valued at \$225,000. Nearly all of his property was left to near relatives.

—Sir Arthur Sullivan, it is said, received \$50,000 from the sale of the music of "The Lost Chord." He can obtain \$3,500 now for a single song.

—The Prince of Wales says Victoria would prefer that the completion of her sixtieth year as Queen be marked by works of mercy among her sick and suffering subjects rather than by pompous and showy demonstrations.

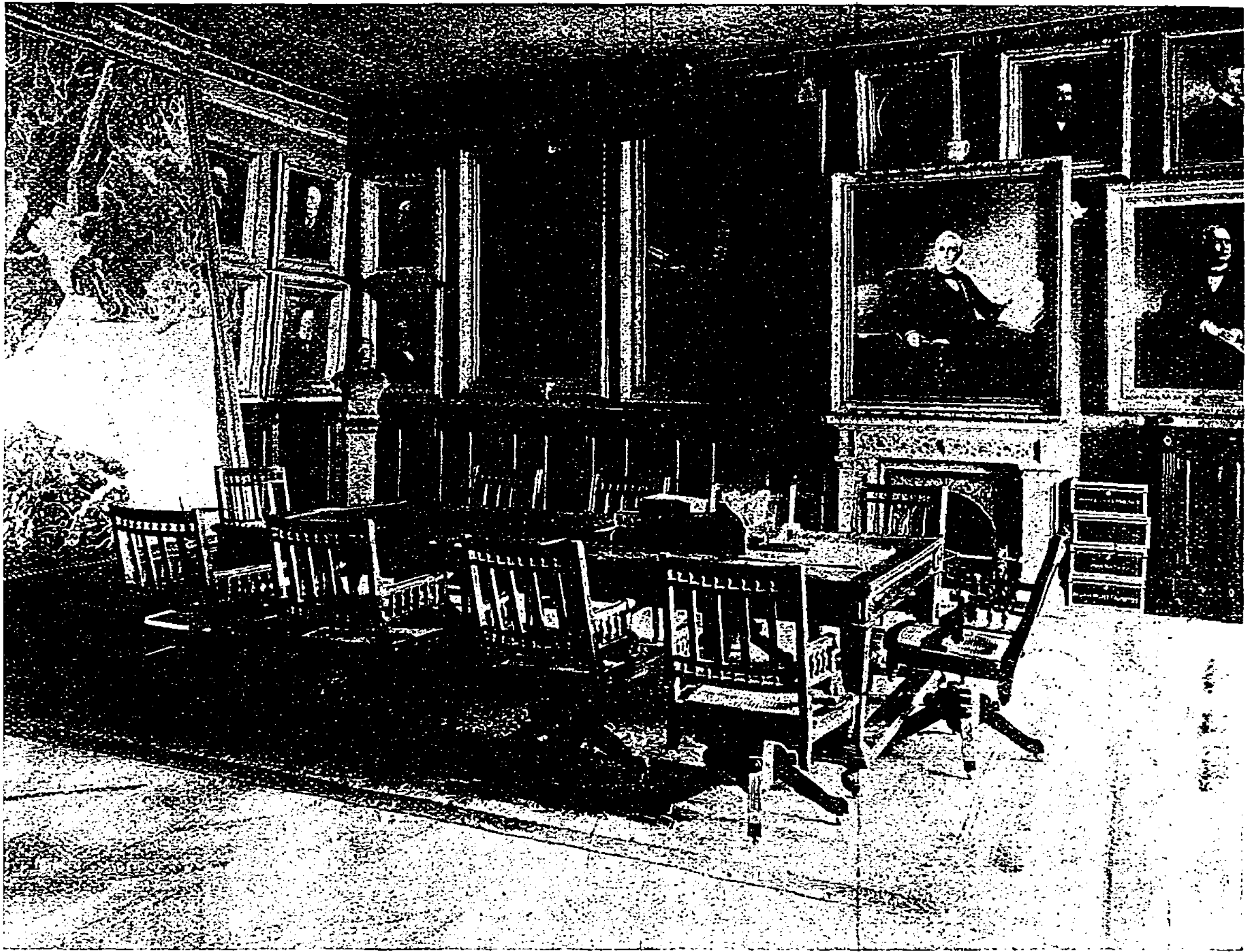
—Sir Robert Biddulph, Governor of Gibraltar, has gone to London to confer with the Commander in Chief and the War Department, as the batteries that the Spanish have recently constructed at Algeiras and other points on the mainland and filled with modern guns may make it necessary to remodel the defenses of the rock that has always been reputed impregnable.

—Gustav Johnson of St. Mary's, Pottawatomie County, Kan., in his will gave his wife an opportunity to choose between one-half of his estate and a future husband. In his will he directed that one-half of his estate should go to her, and in the event that she should promise not to marry again his executors were to give her the remaining half.

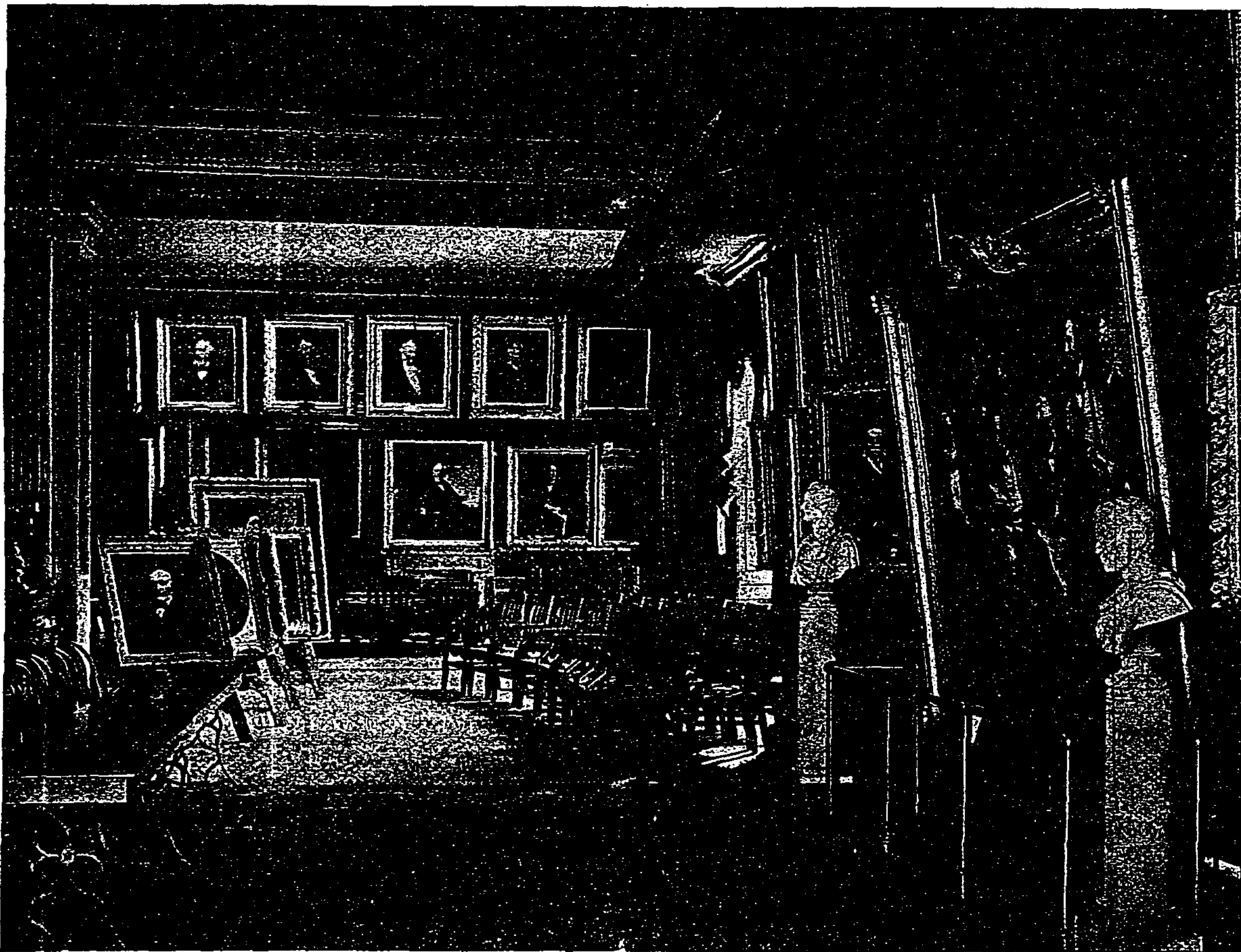
—The Empress of Germany last year purchased at Lyons white silk, with flowers, birds, and foliage in relief, at \$120 a yard, five-sixths of the price being the actual value of the raw silk. She intended to have a dress made of it, but it was so beautiful that she used it for a curtain. This is believed to be the highest priced silk goods ever made. Louis XIV. paid \$83 a meter for the cloth of gold material of which his dressing gown was made.

—The German Emperor's wardrobe is valued at £100,000, every uniform bearing precious decorations. He has twelve valets who devote their entire attention to its care. In the wardrobe are uniforms of all the regiments of the German Army and of the Imperial German Navy. Austrian, Russian, Swedish, English, Italian, and other uniforms that are worn by the Emperor on his journeys and on the occasion of princely visits, also form a part of his wardrobe.

—Capt. Elizabeth M. Clark of the Salvation Army is probably one of the best educated women in the organization. She has studied at Wellesley, Bryn Mawr, Zurich, and Leipzig. She is a daughter of William W. Clark, a Dutch Reformed minister, and a great-niece of Bishop Clark of Rhode Island. She went abroad to study Teutonic philology and in Zurich met Gen. Booth, became interested in his work, and afterward, upon going to London, met Major Susie Swift, a Vassar graduate, and joined the army. She has worked with the army in Cardiff, London, Glasgow, and this city. She has been a member of the Salvation Army three years, and now edits its child's paper, *The Young Soldiers*, and its illustrated magazine, *The Conqueror*.



COMMITTEE ROOM, NEW YORK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.



INTERIOR OF THE NEW YORK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.