

# A GALA DAY.

## Slatington Hose Company Tests Its New Silsby Engine.

### HANDSOME NEW FIRE APPARATUS.

The Company Has Reorganized—The New Officers—History of the Organization—What the People Say.

Saturday, November 4, was a gala day in Slatington. A week previously the handsome new steam fire engine recently purchased by Council had arrived, and, it having been made known that Saturday was the day set for testing the new machine, the town-folk were on the qui vive for some time before the hour came round.

The day was an auspicious one—bright, and clear, and cool. Everybody, and his sister, and his cousin, and his aunt, turned out, and visitors came as well from Leighton, Catasaqua, and other near-by points.

The new steamer is a Silsby, built by the Silsby Manufacturing Company, of Seneca Falls, N. Y. She is fourth in size, and has a capacity of discharging 500 gallons of water per minute, and weighs only 4,800 pounds. She is a remarkably light-running machine, and her get-up is simplicity itself. She has no valves either in the engine or in the pump; lifts the water instantly; starts a fire stream quickly; throws a steady stream; and may be fired with either wood or coal. A distinguishing feature is that both the engine and pump are of the rotary type, instead of being on the reciprocating or piston principle, as in other makes of engines. The action is perfect and continuous, and the machine stands perfectly still even while running at its greatest speed.

At the trial on Saturday steam was raised and water thrown in 6 minutes and 10 seconds, and threw a 2-inch stream 288 feet.

The new steamer is a handsome and ornamental piece of machinery, as well as being practical and useful. She is mounted on Archibald patent wheels, painted in carmine and gold. All the exposed metal parts are highly finished and heavily nickel-plated. She is also guaranteed to be made of the best material throughout.

The genial and gentlemanly Bernard Bosch, the agent who sold the machine to the city, was on hand to superintend things, and James Teller, a practical and experienced engineer in the employ of the Silsby Company, was in charge of the operations.

The first or suction test was made at the disused quarry at the foot of Church street. This proved to be entirely satisfactory.

Tests were also made on Dowell street, East Washington street, Main and Washington streets, Main and Church streets, and down town on Lower Main Street, near the railroad depots.

At each of these tests the machine gave the fullest satisfaction.

On East Washington street, the highest point in the city, water was thrown to an estimated height of 200 feet.

At Main and Church, with four streams playing, the machine sent the water at least 150 feet higher than the Fritzinger building.

And so it went all the afternoon, the engine working like a piece of clock-work, and the hundreds of interested onlookers following the firemen about, only to admire, and to congratulate themselves and the community on the splendid performances of the new accession.

#### What the People Say.

Following are opinions which THE NEWS has heard expressed since the trial:

Burgess Peters: The engine is all right. She is doing what she came here for. I am very much pleased, and I feel sure that no one in the city feels otherwise than glad that we have secured this additional protection against fire.

Mr. R. H. Dalby: Satisfied? Everybody is satisfied. If any one isn't, I'd like to know what's the matter with him.

David McKenna: A fine piece of machinery, which does its work elegantly.

John R. Roberts: She is a splendid machine; everybody says that. The Council couldn't have done better.

Fire Chief John H. Lloyd: The machine is a daisy, and everybody knows it—especially the fire laddies, who are very proud of it.

R. W. Mosteller: The Council is like everybody else—thoroughly pleased, and, personally, I think the money could not have been expended to better advantage.

John Lentz: I don't know how true it is, but I did hear that the people in Leighton saw the stream when the machine was being tested at Main and Church streets.

#### In The Beginning.

Although Slatington's first dwelling-house was erected forty years ago, and although for many years all the buildings in the city were constructed of wood, and in spite of the fact that fires of greater or lesser magnitude periodically visited the environment of this once plodding village, though now thriving, pushing city, it was not until some six years ago, in the year 1885, we are informed, that anything like a noteworthy opposition, in the shape of a fire company, was organized to dispute the right of the Fire King to revel and riot at will and lay waste the works that man had huddled here.

In the year mentioned, however the citizens, warned and awakened to a realizing sense of their duties in this direction, decided that no longer should this destroying dragon have things his own way.

On Wednesday evening, August 12, 1885, a meeting was held and the question of organizing a fire company was fully discussed. The sentiment was altogether favorable, and, an informal organization having been effected, a committee was appointed to draft a constitution and by-laws. This committee was to report one week later. This it failed to do; and whether it ever did report, a diligent search through the files of the local paper has failed to discover.

On Saturday, September 5, 1885, a somewhat disastrous fire occurred in the United States Hotel. THE NEWS of the following week, September 9, denounced the action of the alleged volunteer firemen in unmeasured terms, saying that they seemed to have gathered more for the purpose of getting free liquor than to save property.

It is noted that no mention is made of a fire company, and even material for one seems to have been scarce thereabouts on that occasion.

On September 30, the paper asks: "Where are the fire companies?" and goes on to deplore the fact that their organization is being delayed.

Finally, however, much delay after and discussion the Slatington Hose Company was organized. The company was incorporated on December 3, 1886. Its first officers were: President, F. J. Stettler; Secretary, Charles L. Berkemeyer; Chief, John H. Lloyd; First Assistant, Charles Yanser; Pipeman, Samuel W. Marshall.

In January, 1886, the City Council presented the company with a hose-carriage and hose.

In May, 1889, the company connected itself with the State Firemen's Association.

In the first four years the company lost, by death, but one member, Penrose E. Schlauch, who, the old records of the company say, was one of its most valued members. But one other death has been recorded among the members of the company—that of First Assistant Thomas J. Roberts, whose recent death, but a few weeks ago, is still fresh in the minds of his friends, who are many.

Considerable company property had accumulated, and the want of an engine house was a serious drawback, during the year 1886, the question of how to secure one being much discussed. In spite of all efforts, however, the project languished.

The City Council was always found a ready helper, but the citizens individually were slow to lend the helping hand.

Finally, in 1889, the Council provided the long-needed building, which was dedicated, with appropriate ceremonies, on Thanks giving Day, November 28, 1889.

Since then, through the unflagging efforts of Chief John H. Lloyd, John C. Lentz, and others, ably seconded by the members of Council, the company has steadily advanced in efficiency, and, encouraged by the liberal policy of the city in furnishing this splendid new apparatus, will, no doubt, continue to progress.

A new hook and ladder truck has been ordered, and when this arrives Slatington will be as well protected in case of fire as any city in the State.

The officers at present are: President, E. J. Thomas; Secretary, A. E. Leibfried; Chief, John H. Lloyd; First Assistant, H. A. Schertzinger; Second Assistant, John Norton.

The men who will manipulate the new machine are: Chief Engineer, Jackson Utt; First Assistant, John W. Evans; Second Assistant, Samuel Peters; Foreman, Evans Vliet; First Assistant, George Nisnet; Second Assistant, John M. Williams; Driver, Howard Neff.