

# TO RUIN BROADWAY HOTELS

## DISASTER INVOLVED IN AN ELEVATED ROAD.

### PROPRIETORS SHOWING HOW IT WOULD DRIVE AWAY PATRONAGE, BESIDES BEING UNNECESSARY.

The Broadway hotel people went to Albany last week to do what they could in the way of preventing the passage of the Broadway Elevated Railroad bill and, before starting for home, they left behind them, in the hands of Senator Lowe, a petition which they think will open the eyes of such legislators as take the trouble to peruse it.

In their opinion, practically a unanimous one, the threatened elevated road in Broadway, while disastrous to the city at large, would be simply ruinous to their interests. It would strike them in their first and second stories, which are the hotels' vital centres, and the blow would not fail to prove fatal. It is upon the revenue of this part of the hotel that the proprietors rely for their profits, which would vanish entirely if one story were darkened by a hideous iron structure, beyond all power of salvation by electric or gas light, and the other deprived of privacy and quiet by trains passing under a headway of 30 seconds, which those experienced in the matter say would be the case.

"I am directly opposed to the Broadway elevated road," said James H. Breslin, proprietor of the Gilsey House. "It would do us infinite harm and no good. Broadway has all the means of transportation it requires at present, and the scheme to seize upon it for the purpose of building another line to take people to and from their homes in the northern part of the city is an outrage. The surface road supplies the wants of people who have business on Broadway. It enables shoppers to move up and down the thoroughfare with comfort. The Sixth-avenue line brings them here from distant parts of the city. In this part of Broadway, which would suffer peculiarly from the proposed railroad, our facilities are being increased in all the ways that we desire. The Sixth-avenue line is putting up a new station at Twenty-eighth-street, and a new surface line is being built in Twenty-eighth and Twenty-ninth streets. What more do we want?"

"Now, an elevated road would kill our first and second stories—the ones we make our money out of. The smoke and the smell and the noise of the trains and the darkening of our best rooms would inflict a blow upon us from which there would be no recovery. No first class house could sustain its reputation as such under such circumstances. That is the kind of hotel we have here now and we could not keep it here. Our patrons would not stay with us. They would go elsewhere in search of pure air and quiet. Here's my friend Mr. Dunlap; just ask him what he thinks of it. His opinion is my opinion."

Mr. Dunlap, the Broadway hatter, said that the proposed railroad would ruin every first class hotel on Broadway, "and there are a dozen of them," he added, "between Twenty-third and Forty-second streets. The object of the proposed railroad is not to supply the Broadway travel, which is already provided for, but to add another to the lines carrying people up and down the length of this narrow island. This is a worthy object and it should not be treated unworthily. The demand for this transportation is growing enormously, and were Broadway sacrificed—which it is not going to be if we can help it—the gain in that respect would be as nothing compared to the city's loss in the destruction of its historic thoroughfare. There is no necessity for the sacrifice when the underground railway project is appealing to the common sense of every man who cares to bring his to bear upon the problem. Let us have an underground railway—I don't care what kind as long as it is a good one—and then we shall be able to handle for all time the crowds of people traveling daily north and south in this city. I am ready, and so are the large majority of Broadway business men and property holders, to put my money into such an enterprise, not with a view to making money solely, but to help on the only practicable solution of our great transportation problem."

"That elevated railroad on Broadway would injure me \$1,000,000," said Edward S. Stokes, of the Hoffman House. "It would kill every first-class hotel on Broadway. It would strike at our hotel system in a way that would seriously affect the whole city's welfare. It is the money-spending class of people who patronize the hotels between Twenty-third and Forty-second streets. They come from different parts of the country, and, living in our hotels, find themselves just where they want to be and just where New-York wants them—in the centre of the city's most attractive shopping district. Do you suppose that these people are going to live in hotels by whose windows the smoky elevated trains are running all day and all night long? Not a bit of it. But I can give you my sentiments on the subject in a nutshell."

Mr. Stokes turned to Mr. Wall, the Hoffman House clerk, and said: "Show the gentleman that resolution." Mr. Wall explained that he was going to attend the meeting of the Young Men's Democratic Club during the evening, and that he intended to offer the following:

*Resolved*, That the efforts now being made at Albany by certain mercenary and unscrupulous parties to disfigure and destroy Broadway by the introduction thereon of an elevated railroad should be indignantly deprecated and objected to as an outrage upon the citizens of this city, and we hereby respectfully appeal to the members of the Legislature, without regard to party, to stand by and save the city from an act of greed and vandalism that is condemned, not only by the public at large, but by more than nine-tenths of the property holders on Broadway.

William M. Conner, of the St. James Hotel, said that he had not given the subject very much consideration, but that he thought an underground railway would more than serve all the purposes of an elevated one, and would have none of its objectionable features.

William Taylor, proprietor of the St. Denis Hotel, said: "There is no necessity whatever for this Broadway elevated road, and on that ground alone it ought to be bitterly opposed. There are many other ways of providing for the transportation required, and it should never be lost sight of that a road running so that it will catch the Broadway travel is going to be enormously and permanently profitable, and that therefore its builders should not object to investing a large sum of money in the enterprise. The underground railway is the means of relief which seems to be most feasible, but I do not see why a road running through one of our blocks would not be far better than destroying Broadway, which ought not to be permitted on any account. That elevated road would do us a maximum of injury and a minimum of benefit. Its patrons—the bulk of them I mean—would simply pass us by twice a day, going to and from their places of business down town. I am in favor of anything that will insure the defeat of the measure."

E. D. Saxton, of the New-York Hotel, said: "The proposed elevated road would be simply one more added to the unsightly structures employed in the daily transportation of people between the northern and southern extremities of the island. This is a work which has to be done, and it can be done, and far better than at present, without the destruction of Broadway, or even the sacrifice of any other additional public thoroughfare. The hotel business on Broadway would suffer enormously if the monstrous scheme were carried through. There is a very widespread fear that it will go through, and if it should do so, the hideous structure upon our grand old street will be a monument to the apathy of the people to the appeals which have been over and over again made on behalf of the one means of rapid transit which can be relied upon for relief. I mean, of course, the underground railway. For 20 years this idea has been before the public, and it seems a wonder to me, with the practical proof supplied in London of the excellence of the system, that the underground idea has not even yet revealed itself as a matter of necessity to the New-York people. It was in Boss Tweed's time that the plan was first broached. I was greatly interested in it then, and I know that it would have been built with English capital if it were not for a fear that Tweed's interest in his viaduct road project would result disastrously to the enterprise."

"The feasibility of the Broadway underground road has been declared over and over again by the ablest engineers. It would involve a large outlay at the beginning, but the traffic would be so enormous that even on an immense capital the profit would not fail to be satisfactory to the investors. This road would forever be a safe one. Built upon the solid ground there would be no fears regarding the solidity of the structure, as will unavoidably be the case with the elevated roads some years from now. The underground railroad provides the only real solution of the New-York transportation problem. All the other measures are only makeshift, and the idea of wiping Broadway out of existence to provide a temporary relief to the wants of our growing population is not worthy of serious consideration by honest, patriotic citizens."

At the Metropolitan it was stated that the elevated road would prove a serious injury to the hotel's business.

Following are the names of Broadway property owners additional to those published in yesterday's TIMES who have signed remonstrances against an elevated railway in that street. They make a total of 400 buildings:

Silas C. Judd, 1,722.  
George A. Schastey & Co., 1,681, 1,683.  
C. E. Detmold, 557, 559.  
E. M. Knox, 212.  
Lord & Taylor, 895, 897, 899, 901.  
Samuel Lord, 463, 465, 467, 469.  
John Duncan & Sons, 405, 407, 37, 39 Union-square.  
Leaher & Whitman, 502, 504.  
Henry Weil, 561, 563.  
James A. Roosevelt, personally and as Trustee, 645, 647, 815, 836, 837, 838, 839, 841, 843, 845, 847, 849.  
R. T. Wilson, 34, 384, 386, 923, 930.  
James Beckman, 865, 867, 869.  
James L. Barclay, 297, 297<sup>1/2</sup>, 299, 299<sup>1/2</sup>, 301, 303, 306, 321, 323, 327, 329, 331.  
David W. Bishop, 745.  
George Bruce Brown, 74.  
Catharine W. Bruce, 743.  
W. F. Whitehouse, 285.  
James F. Kernochan, Trustee, 663, 665, 691, 822, 824, 829, 831.  
James M. Jackson, attorney for Lorillard Spencer, 391, 393, 446, 448, 452, 525.  
David W. Bishop, Trustee and Executor of Catharine L. Wolfe, 360, 362, 368, 495, 527, 606, 608, 740, 742, 744, 779, 781, 1,591, 1,593, 1,595, 1,597.  
Alfred R. Conkling, Trustee of P. L. Ronalds, 450, 523.  
Pierre Lorillard, Trustee, 402, 404, 406, 787, 789, 791, 793, 795, 827.  
Louis L. Lorillard, Trustee, 451, 453, 521.  
Benjamin D. Sullivan, 83.