

# Unique Building to Join Queensboro Bridge

Will Serve Both as Patients' Entrance to Blackwell's Island and Storage Warehouse for Many City Institutions Located There

**T**HE City of New York is about to erect a unique building on Blackwell's Island, connecting with the Queensboro Bridge, and expects thereby to effect a saving of nearly \$1,000 a day of public money in the administration of the Charities Department.

For years the handling of patients, visitors, and the enormous quantity of supplies has been a great problem in the various public institutions on Blackwell's Island. Early in the present administration it became manifest that the storehouse facilities of the institutions under the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Charities were inadequate to handle the necessary supplies. Indeed, the conditions at Blackwell's Island and the General Drug Department located on Bellevue Hospital grounds are serious both in the need for enlargement in capacity and the improvement of existing methods of storage and distribution.

Lack of sufficient storage and manufacturing room has resulted in an inability to purchase materials and supplies to advantage, and at the same time has made it impossible, due to improper refrigeration and the lack of other necessary accommodations, to handle food and other things in the most economical manner.

Transportation to Blackwell's Island for many years past has been by means of boats from Twenty-sixth Street, Fifty-third Street, and Seventieth Street, Manhattan. This method has meant considerable inconvenience to doctors and visitors, and more especially to hospital patients who are subject to three or four transfers from ambulance to boat and boat to ambulance.

Several elevator schemes have been put forward from time to time with the idea of connecting the Queensboro Bridge with Blackwell's Island proper, but all have been abandoned because they threatened to block the bridge traffic, and also because of the high cost. The disadvantages of the schemes previously put forth, however, have been eliminated in the storehouse elevator idea which the Commissioner of Charities, John A. Kingsbury, has worked out with the aid of Architect Benjamin W. Levitan.

The Board of Estimate and Apportionment has approved the plans and appropriated \$366,000 to cover the cost of a ten-story building, which will be placed adjacent to the Queensboro Bridge in the centre of Blackwell's Island, its roof being on a level with the floor of the bridge.

The top of the building will be made into a concourse and a connection effected between bridge and building by means of a runway. The building will be provided with a number of elevators, both freight and passenger. It is the design of the builders to provide freight elevators capable of carrying from the roof to any floor of the building, or to the ground below, all kinds of vehicles, including five-ton automobile trucks loaded with merchandise, ambulances with patients, fire apparatus, ordinary wagons, and passenger automobiles.

The building will also be provided with rapidly moving passenger elevators of sufficient capacity to take care of the thousands of visitors to the institutions on Blackwell's Island.

The present boat service costs the city something like \$120,000 per annum for operation, so there will be a considerable degree of economy effected by substituting elevators. The new building, besides constituting a means of transportation to and from the island, will be large enough to take care of the stores of the Department of Charities, which cover a large assortment of food and miscellaneous supplies, and also medical and surgical supplies.

It is proposed also to install a bakery to provide bread and rolls for the many thousands of poor and sick poor located on Blackwell's Island, and also for the large force of employees.

There will be a central butcher shop to take the place of numerous small shops

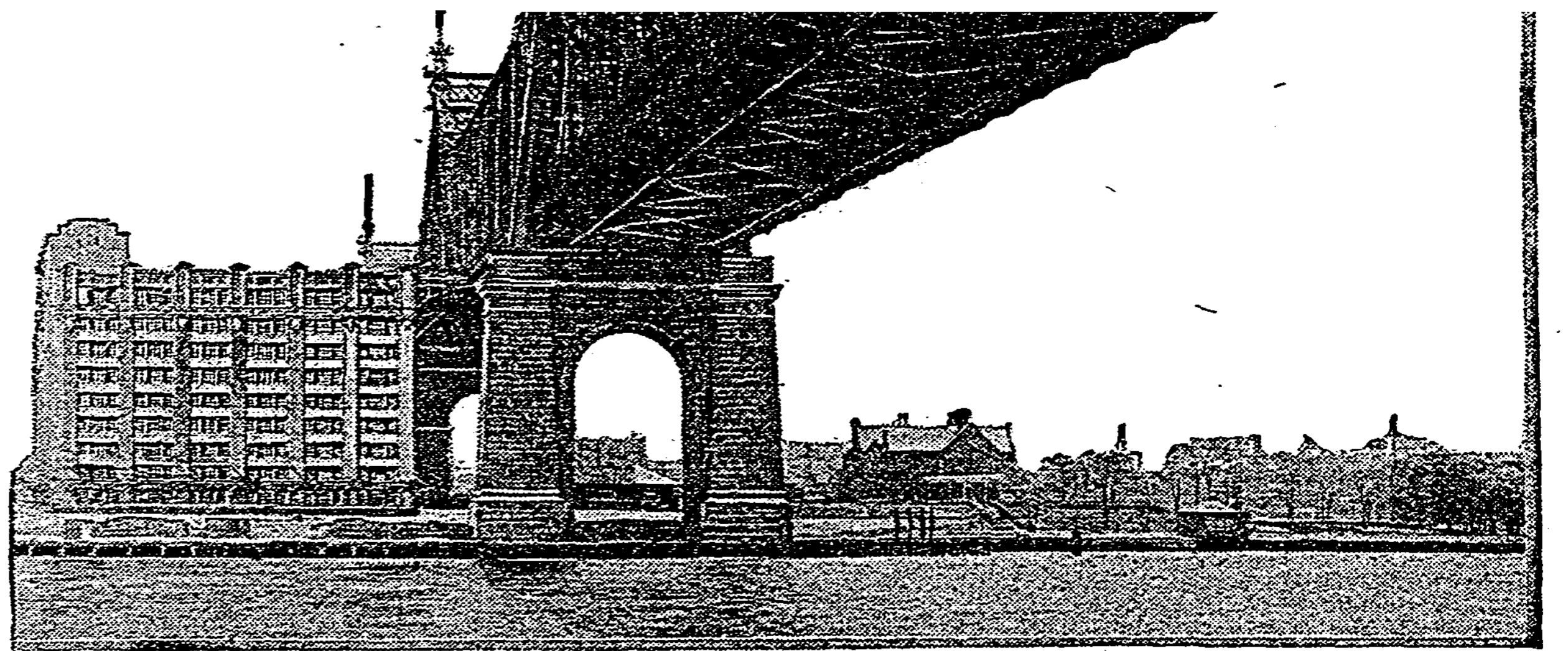
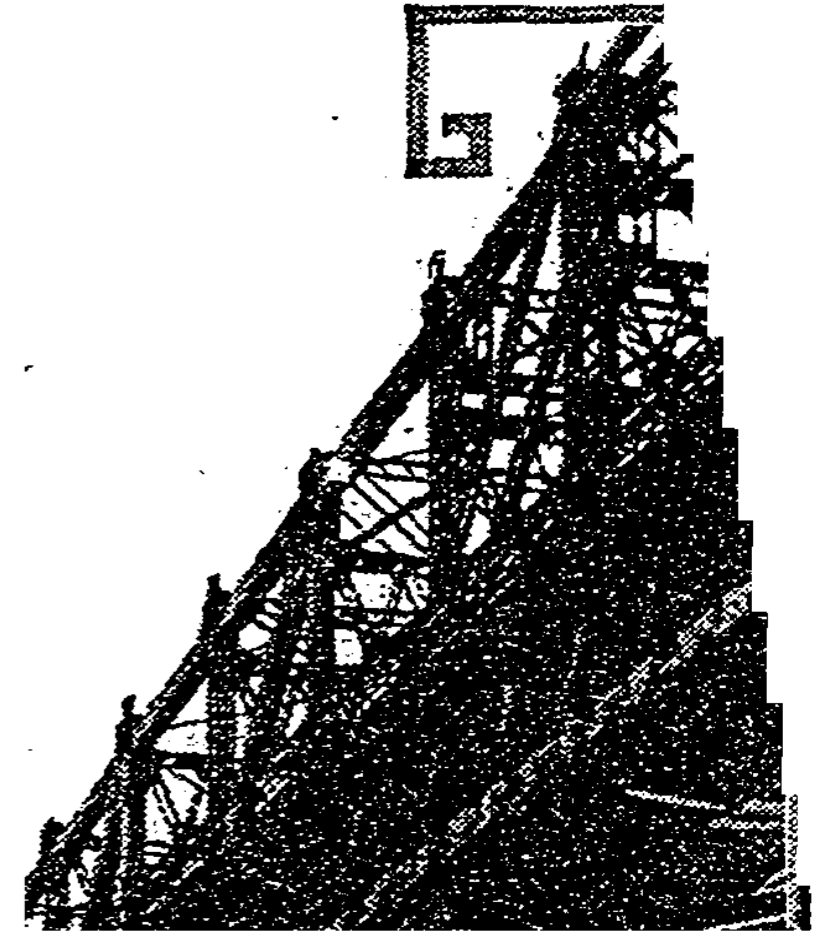
in the different institutions. This shop will undertake to cut all meats into what are known as commercial cuts, such as steaks, chops, roasts, stew meat—then the requisitions from the institutions will be filled by so many pounds of these commercial cuts rather than by sending whole carcasses or quarters of meat, according to the present practice.

As the Department of Public Charities is obliged to furnish wearing apparel to practically all of the patients and inmates in the hospitals and almshouses, the question of procuring clothing became a serious one. Commissioner Kingsbury is going to use a complete floor of the new building for a central sewing room and tailor shop. In this room will be made nearly all of the wearing apparel used throughout the entire department, as well as much of the household linen. Many other economies will be effected.

At present all of the patients entering the three hospitals on Blackwell's Island reach there on one of the boats operated by the Department of Charities. In the cases of patients who cannot walk several transfers are necessary before they finally get to the hospital ward. Under the new scheme a patient will be taken directly from home over the Queensboro Bridge to the building, then down the elevator and to the hospital without a single transfer. From a humane viewpoint this system will prove beneficial.

Commissioner Kingsbury hopes that many eminent men of both the medical and surgical professions will be attracted to the island by reason of the easy method of reaching the hospitals and the consequent reduction in the time required. Many of these busy men now find it practically impossible to visit these hospitals because of the long time required in making the trip.

Plans for the new building have been filed and ground will be broken at once. Deputy Commissioner of Charities George G. Thomson said yesterday that it would be hard to estimate the advantages and economies effected by the new building, work on which will be rushed with all possible speed. Within a year the handicaps under which the department is working with respect to its transportation, storage, and manufacturing facilities should be eliminated.



How New Building on Blackwell's Island Will Look When Completed.

## Interesting Facts from Many Lands

**D**ETAILS of the regulations fixing the prices of flour and bread in the principal cities of Australia are given in an article in *The Melbourne Age*. The price of flour is fixed at \$54.75 per ton, except in Western Australia, where it is \$55.48. The price of bread in States other than Western Australia is fixed at 13.2 cents for a four-pound loaf sold over the counter, and 14.2 cents in Western Australia. Where a fraction of four pounds is purchased a proportionate price is to be charged.

In spite of additional expenses due to the war, the street railways of Vienna, owned by the city, paid into the Vienna treasury during the first year of the war the sum of \$466,900. The report for the fiscal year in question shows that, whereas the city-owned street railways employed in normal peace times 12,368 persons, they lost 5,700 immediately to the army and 1,706 later, and were obliged to fill the vacancies largely with women. Not only did the service continue, however, without interruption, but new work was undertaken, such as the transportation of wounded soldiers by special street trains and the forwarding of all sorts of freight.

For the first time in the history of the Hongkong rice trade a shipment of polished rice has been made to the United States. This first shipment consisted of 100 tons, consigned to San Francisco.

A rice-polishing machine of American make was recently installed at Hongkong, which is said to be the first ever taken to the Far East. Previous to the war rice was exported from China to Germany and there polished for the American market. A greatly increased direct trade in polished rice between the Orient and the United States is anticipated.

Japanese manufacturers have many agents traveling in the Central American republics seeking to extend the sale of Japanese goods there, according to information received by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce in

Washington. One of the lines being pushed is Japanese matches.

The American Consul at Breslau, Germany, reports that a Breslau tinfoil factory has succeeded in providing a substitute for tinfoil, called "zincfoil." The new product, it is said, cannot be distinguished from tinfoil and renders the same services.

Argentina imported 1,000 thrashing machines during the year ended March 31, 1916, a record importation. The 1915 statistics showed a total importation of 627 thrashers, which was 546 more than in 1914.