



SUPT. OF THE POOR BOWEN.

WILLIAM BOWEN was born in Boston in 1840 and was educated in the grammar schools of that city. The family moved to New York when William was fifteen years of age. When he became of age he embarked in the liquor business and, previous to his removal to Staten Island in 1868, was owner of a wholesale liquor store at 31 Broadway. He was proprietor of the New York hotel at Vanderbilt Landing from 1868 to 1889, when he retired from business and removed to his present residence, the Leaycraft homestead, on Simonson avenue.

In 1873, Mr. Bowen was appointed superintendent of the poor of the town of Southfield, for one year, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Capt. Coppers. At the expiration of his term he was re-elected on the Democratic ticket and has held the office continuously since except one term when the Democratic ticket known as the "3-B" ticket, (Brown for sheriff, Brick for member of assembly and Bowen for superintendent of the poor), was defeated.

Mr. Bowen's term of office is noted in the annals of Richmond county politics for the vigorous fight which he and Mr. Clark made against the "poor-house combine," which resulted in securing an act of the legislature abolishing the office of superintendent of the poor and reviving the office of poor-master, and making the poor-master and the keeper of the alms-house responsible to the board of supervisors.

One of the results of Mr. Bowen's fight against the "poor-house combine" was the capture of the Democratic convention in 1889 by the ring politicians and the defeat of Mr. Bowen for the nomination. He, however, received the unanimous nomination on the Republican ticket and the individual endorsement of the better class of Democrats. At the election he ran over 1,600 ahead of his ticket and was elected by a handsome majority.

A desperate effort was made to count him out by forged election returns, but the work was so bunglingly done that the fraud was discovered and defeated.