

Many improvements have been made in the rules and methods of operating the road since he has been at the helm. Trains have been multiplied, the time shortened, new cars and engines provided, new and handsome stations built, large and commodious ferry-boats built, a new ferry-house in New York, and the foundations laid for a handsome new ferry-house at St. George. The track has been doubled to New Dorp, and arrangements are being made to complete the double track to Tottenville and build several more new stations.

Mr. Gannon has also abolished the old system of giving passes to favored patrons and compelling all others to pay transient fares and has adopted a system of commutation, half fare and family tickets which has proved a great advantage to permanent residents of the Island.

Personally, Mr. Gannon is one of the most genial of men and has the confidence and esteem alike of the public and the large force of employes under his control.

B. KREISCHER & SONS.

THE business of B. Kreischer & Sons was established at Kreischerville in 1852, by Balthasar Kreischer. Mr. Kreischer was born in Germany in 1813, where he learned the business of stone-cutter and sculptor. He came to America soon after the fire of 1835, which destroyed a great portion of New York city. For a while he carried on the trade of master builder, and erected many buildings in the burned district. Soon afterward, having discovered large deposits of fire clay in New Jersey, he began the manufacture of fire-brick at 58 Goerck street, New York; his business increased rapidly, and in about the year 1852 he discovered the extensive clay deposits in the vicinity of the present village of Kreischerville.

With a keen foresight, he bought up large quantities of land including nearly all of the best clay banks in the vicinity, and set to work to build one of the largest fire-brick factories to be found in this country, where the industry was then in its infancy.

Mr. Kreischer then gathered around him men skilled in the manufacture of fire-brick, and was able from the first to turn out an article superior to the best imported bricks. The works have been twice completely destroyed by fire, once in 1867 and again in 1892, and each time they have been rebuilt, more complete than before.

PROMINENT MEN OF STATEN ISLAND, 1893.



THE LATE B. KREISCHER.

In all its machinery and methods, the factory has kept pace with the latest improvements of the times, and its brand of goods has always commanded the highest prices; and while other factories have closed up or curtailed their production, this factory has always pressed forward with a steady growth of capacity and output.

The large and thriving village which has grown up and around this single industry shows how important a part it has paid in the prosperity of this end of Staten Island. One important branch of this industry, aside from fire-brick, is the manufacture of gas retorts, an invention especially due Mr. Kreischer. These retorts are in use in nearly every city in the Union.

Mr. Kreischer was also one of the originators of the Staten Island Railroad Company, and was for a time president, and during his term, he instituted many improvements, which were of lasting benefit to the road.

When the Staten Island factory was built the manufacture of fire-brick in New York was abandoned, but the New York office was retained, at which nearly all of the business was transacted. In 1871, George F. Kreischer, the eldest son, was taken into partnership by his father, and he assumed charge of the New York office.

In 1878, Charles C. and Edward B., the two younger sons, were taken into the co-partnership, and the firm assumed the style and title of B. Kreischer & Sons, as it exists to-day.

Mr. Kreischer was a type of man too rarely seen in this country, where there is little sympathy or mutual interest between employer and employe.

He always took a lively interest in all that pertained to the personal welfare of his employes, and considered it both a duty and a pleasure to advise and help them, and two of the latest acts of his life were to build a handsome church and school-house and to establish a mutual benefit society for the relief of the sick and injured. Both Mr. Kreischer and his sons contributed liberally to the funds of this society and took a personal interest in its success, and thus enabled their men to be self-supporting in time of sickness, instead of being obliged to depend on charity. In a thousand ways Mr. Kreischer showed an interest in the welfare of his employes that went beyond the question of mere work and wages, and seldom has an employer been more sincerely mourned by all classes than Mr. Kreischer, whose death occurred in 1886 at his home in Kreischerville.