WEST POINT

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF VISITORS

Important Changes and Reforms Suggested and Recommended.

WEST POINT, N. Y., June 26, 1865.

SIR: The Board of Visitors invited this year to attend the annual examination of the United States Military Academy, and to inquire generally into the condition of the institution, respectfully submit the following as their report:

The members of the Board being nearly all present on the 2d inst., entered upon the discharge of their duties. Within a few days, others arriving, the whole number was complete with the exception of one gentleman on the list, who has not appeared; and from that time until the termination of their labors to-day they have continued to devote themselves, with more or less constant participation of each, to the business for which they assembled. This somewhat protracted session has been occasioned not merely by the usual great variety of subjects presented for investigation and consideration, but by the size of the graduating class of cadets, more numerous than any heretofore ever sent from the Academy, and the necessarily longer time required for their examination. The Board believe, however, that their time has not been unprofitably employed.

The Board, after organization, and at other times during their stay, have visited and carefully inspected the various buildings, grounds, library, scientific apparatus, and other property attached to and used for the purposes of the Academy; and have, during a considerable portion of each day, attended the examinations of the several classes, and have also witnessed the exhibition of the drill of the cadets in the various branches of military service.

The training, drill and discipline of the cadets in all that relates to the duties of the soldier, appear to the Board to be of the first and highest order, and they doubt if a finer or more creditable exhibition in those particulars can be made by a body of military students at any other institution in the world.

The average proficiency of the young men of the graduating class, as indicated by their answers and performances in the examination room, was only fair, or, at least, not above the ordinary measure of other first-rate educational establishments in this country. This is perhaps principally owing to an attempt to crowd too much into the last year of the academic course—a difficulty which may, in some degree, be remedied by a proposed new arrangement of the subjects taught during the four years given to instruction here. But it was evident that there was more than a proper and allowable difference between the sections of the class in question, and that some of those lowest on the list would hardly be considered as coming up to the standard necessary to secure the honors of a noble, national institution like this.

In one particular especially, the members of the Board could not help but remark a too prevailing deficiency, even in the highest classes. There was an almost general want of distinctness and precision in the language in which the Cadets expressed their answers, when under examination, exhibited even in frequent and inexcusable errors of pronunciation and of grammatical construction. While the Board did not yet expect proof of finished cultivation and scholarship, it is thought that more pains taken on the part both of instructors and pupils might have avoided at least such common and careless inaccuracy, and would have secured a habit of exactness not to be altogether overcome or confused, even under the ordeal of examination.

The subjects of discipline, instruction, police, administration, and fiscal affairs, to which the attention of the Board is by law expressly directed, were referred to standing committees, and the reports of those committees are hereto appended, as part of this report.

As a means of obtaining direct and trustworthy information to guide them in their inquiries and reflections, the Board considered it proper also at at early day after their organization, to apply to those officers immediately connected with the government and instruction of the Academy. Accordingly the following resolution was passed, and a copy thereof communicated to the Superintendent and each member of the Academic staff:

Resolved, That the Superintendent of the Military Academy and the several members of the Academic Staff be invited to communicate to this Board their views and suggestions, in writing, for the future management and requirements of the institution, and what changes, if any, are necessary for its increased usefulness.

And afterward, by further resolution, the same invitation was sent to each member of the military staff of the Academy.

In compliance with this request, answers have been received from the Superintendent and from the majority of the members of the Academic and Military Staff, which, as being of more or less interest, and some of them containing valuable views and statements, are also appended and submitted herewith. Several of the officers have not, however, made any reply, nor thought proper to give the Board the benefit of their suggestions.

In this connection, it is thought proper to record a difference of opinion in relation to their respective powers and duties, which has arisen between the Board and the Superintendent of the Academy, and the disposition made of the question. This record is due to those who may come after us, as serving to define and construe the power and practice of any future Board of Visitors.

Understanding that an order has been issued by the Superintendent to the several members of the Academic and Military Staffs, requiring them to transmit such communications as the Board of Visitors had invited them to make, only through him as "the usual official channel," the Board considered it a just interpretation of the duty in which they were engaged to pass and convey to the Superintendent the following resolutions:

Resolved, That this Board, deriving its existence and authority by appointment of the President, under the provisions of a law of the United States, and by the instructions of the appointing power, to inquire into and report for the information of Congress "the actual state of the discipline, instruction, police, administration, fiscal affairs and other concerns" of the military academy, the information sought for by the Board, in the discharge of their duties, by inquiry and request for written or other communications from the members of the Academic and Military Staffs, or from any other officers or persons within the command at West Point, is of the nature of testimony; and this Board does not recognize the right of the Superintendent of the Academy and Commandant of the Post to supervise the said testimony, whether written or oral, or to require the same to pass through his hands, but denies the propriety of his claim to any such supervision or inspection.

Resolved, That the Secretary immediately communicate a copy of the foregoing resolution to Brigadier-General Cullum, the Superintendent of the Academy.

These resolutions being forwarded by the Superintendent to the War Department for instruction, the Board are gratified to learn from copies of correspondence communicated to them that the Secretary of War is of opinion that "the Department has no authority over the Board of Visitors to direct its course of procedure for acquiring information upon the points concerning which it is required to make report." If it were otherwise, it must be very obvious that circumstances might some time exist under which a Board of Visitors might be crippled of its usefulness and defeated in the pursuit of the very information it might be most important to obtain.

These remarks, however, and the course of the present Board in this matter are not to be understood as intending any impeachment of the present Superintendent, so far as relates to the general exercise of the duties of his office, or as intimating any disposition manifested on his part to interfere with or limit the general scope of the inquiries instituted by them. On the contrary, the most perfect facility in every other respect for pursuing their investigations has been most courteously and at all times afforded by Gen. Cullum himself, as well as by all others sharing in the government or management of the Academy.

There was only an issue made with him in regard to the proper legal power of the visitors, in which they believed him honestly mistaken in his intervention, and they considered it a duty to themselves and to the Government to maintain and vindicate their right of free investigation. But to their surprise and regret, they find that General Cullum does not understand the letter of the Secretary of War to him as sustaining the position taken by the Board, but still persists in requiring the information given by his officers to come only through him. Several such communications, when the call for them was renewed, have been sent forwarded just as the Board is closing its session. By reference to most of these, it will be seen that the writers are remarkably reticent or unwilling to speak in regard to the Academy in any way, and it is only to be left to conjecture how far such declining to testify may or may not have been affected by the fact that these letters must pass under the examination of their commanding officer.

Referring to the accompanying reports of the several committees charged with the consideration of special subjects, and to the suggestions furnished by officers of the Academy, it is not deemed necessary to repeat the details contained therein, nor to enlarge the views and reasonings of the different points presented. The members of the Board are agreed in the following general conclusions and recommendations, which they propose as embodying all that they think most important now to be urged for the future increased usefulness of the institution.

First: We are of opinion that the law should be so changed as that the Superintendency of the Academy may be thrown open to the whole army, instead of confining the selection, as now, to an officer of the Engineer Corps. The institution having ceased to be only, or mainly, a school for engineers, as first established, and having become the great National Military and Polytechnic Institute of our country, the reason for such exclusiveness no longer exists; and it is recommended that the appointment be free hereafter to every arm of the service.

Second: Looking to the probable reorganization and increase of the Army of the United States, and finding that with the present accommodations and at a comparatively small increased expense, a greater number can be educated than are now admitted to the Academy, we recommend that the Corps of Cadets be increased to four hundred. But this increase should of course be made gradually, and in successive years, so as to keep up a due proportion and equality of number in the different classes. We desire, however, not to be understood in this recommendation as proposing to interfere with a system which we trust will be adopted for commissioning a large proportion of army officers from the ranks or from civil life, on proper examination. The demand will be ample enough to require both sources of supply; and we are clearly satisfied that, in justice to many meritorious officers and soldiers of volunteers who have shown their patriotic devotion to the country in its late hour of trial and need, selections should be made and commissions given to all those who can establish claims to appointment by reasonable proof of capacity and acquirements, taken in connection with actual service in the field. On this point, too, we beg leave to suggest that it might be a wise and just act of legislation for Congress to extend the age of admission to the Academy to 22 years for the benefit of those young men who have been not less than two years in the military service of the United States, during the late war of Rebellion, thus making their cases exceptional to the general rule.

Third: Since the act of 1812 the standard of admission to the Academy has been limited to reading, writing, the four ground rules of arithmetic, proportion, and vulgar and decimal fractions. We adopt the recommendation contained in the report of the Committee on Instruction, that the standard of admission be raised by the addition of English grammar, descriptive geography, particularly of our own country, and the history of the United States. With the standard thus raised, not only a better class of students would enter the Academy, but a great and very much needed relief to the crowded courses of the first and second class would be obtained by the transfer of studies proposed by the Committee, which could be effected in consequence of the time saved by the previous acquirement of the branches recommended.

Fourth: As connected with this raising of the standard of qualification for admission to the Academy, we recommend such changes of the law as will require appointments of cadets to be made, under proper conditions and restrictions, one year in advance of the date when they are to enter the institution. This will secure readiness for examination, and many of the advantages that would be derived from the establishment of a preparatory school.

Fifth: We repeat the recommendation, made so often by former Boards of Visitors, that some legislative provision be made for competitive examinations of candidates for cadet-ships. Such examinations, for convenience and economy, ought to be held in the States or districts from which the appointments are to be made, under the supervision of the members of Congress, who, by usage, have the nominations, and at the expense of the Government, which expense need be but trifling in amount as compared with the great advantages to be derived from the selection of the most promising aspirants.

Sixth: Candidates may now be admitted between the ages of 16 and 21. We recommend that in future no one be received who is under 17 or more than 22 years of age. The severity of the physical training and discipline is such that youths of 16 often do not possess the requisite strength and power of endurance. A greater maturity of mind and body of those entering seems desirable.

Seventh: Our attention has been attracted to the fact that under existing regulations the cadets are forbidden to wear whiskers and mustaches. This may seem to be a matter of small consideration; but we are of opinion that while the present close-shaven faces detract from the manly and soldierly appearance of the corps, nothing is gained by this rule, but on the contrary, perhaps, something is lost, in point of health. We recommend that the regulation be so amended as to allow the entire beard and whiskers to be worn, only requiring that they be kept closely and neatly trimmed, and with as much regard as possible to uniformity of style.

Eighth: In view of the fact that a very large proportion of the cadets, who are returned to the Academy after having been found deficient and dismissed by the Academic Board, fail in their subsequent examinations and are again dismissed, we are decidedly of opinion that the best interests of the institution require that great caution and discrimination should be used in returning those who have thus failed.

Ninth: In accordance with the report of the Committee on Administration, we desire to record our strong disapprobation of the too prevalent habit of profane swearing, as existing among the cadets, and earnestly to recommend that every proper expedient be used to check and suppress a practice so unbecoming and pernicious. And we also advise the establishment of public daily prayers for the cadets, at such hours as may not conflict with other exercises in the Academy, and in accordance with the practice of other colleges in the country.

Tenth: It will be observed that the Committee on Administration have in their report animadverted with severity on the practice of "hazing," consisting in the gross imposition by the cadets of the classes above on those newly arrived, or of the fourth class, as well as their forced exaction of these neophytes of the performance of the most menial offices. The Committee on Discipline have commented on the same subject, and urged the continuance of measures for its effectual suppression. It is, in fact, the English system of "fagging," carried here sometimes to barbarous extremes. No good, but much harm, can come of such a selfish and oppressive custom, and we trust that the Secretary of War will continue to sustain the authorities of the Academy in their efforts, by abridgment of furloughs and other fitting punishment, to entirely break it up.

Eleventh: We concur with the views taken by the Committee on Discipline of the propriety of introducing into the system of punishment of cadets a more marked distinction between grave offenses, or such as involve moral turpitude, and such as are more strictly convential, and in violation only of necessary regulations. Many delinquencies of the latter class, which are now punished by demerit marks, and which marks accumulate against the offender, who may be only careless and mischievous, but not bad or unpromising, and go to affect his class standing, it appears to us might better be followed by some fitting penalty on the spot, and so done with. For such comparatively trivial offenses, a prompt and certain punishment would be better, without reserving the added chances of degradation or dismissal, except in cases of repeated petty misdoing, when the penalty might still be a loss of future standing, not for the original breach of rules, but for the spirit of incorrigibility manifested by perseverance in such behavior.

Twelfth: We recommend that a First Assistant Professor of the Spanish Language be provided for, to be put on the same footing as first assistant professors in the other branches of study.

The Board are gratified to learn, from the clear and full statement reported by the Committee on Fiscal Affairs, that the accounts of the Academy and Post have been kept during the past year in the most accurate and satisfactory manner.

Among the objects of proper expenditure to be brought to the attention of Congress, the Board of Visitors especially urge for favorable consideration the great necessity for an improved system of ventilation and heating of the barracks and other Academic buildings; an improvement in the apparatus for cooking for the Cadets; repairs of the hospital buildings, including the introduction of baths for the sick; the construction of water-closets in the library building, and a supply of new furniture for the recitation rooms, much of that now in use having become dilapidated and worthless. The need of appropriations for these several purposes is set forth fully in the report of the Committee on Police, and the Board concur in their recommendations. The Secretary of War can cause exact estimates of the cost of these several proposed supplies and improvements to be furnished to him, if he should prefer not to depend on those submitted by that committee.

The Board concur also in the recommendations made by the Committee on Financial Affairs, that sufficient appropriations be made for the removal and enlargement of the gas-house and works, which are now inadequate to the wants of the Academy and Post; for the removal and reconstruction of the magazine, which is now in strange and dangerous proximity to the engineers' barracks and other buildings, and for a thorough repair of the officers' quarters.

Another improvement proposed by the Committee on Administration has been thought by the Board worthy of special mention and recommendation. It is an extension of the cemetery. If the argument for enlargement of that most interesting and sacred spot should not prevail over the objection of economy, it is hoped that a sum may be obtained at least sufficient to repair the present dilapidated inclosure and clear up the neglected paths, so as to show decent respect for the last resting-place of the honored brave and the smitten hopes of our country whose graves occupy that beautiful plateau.

Among many improvements made during the administration of the present Superintendent is one of peculiar and touching interest; it is the device of placing on the walls of the chapel neat marble tablets or mural monuments inscribed with the names of those dead army officers who have in the past been made illustrious by rank or gallant deeds of arms, or have fallen in battle. It was a happy thought to be executed at this particular place. It is most fitting that the United States Military Academy, the nation's great school of arms, should be made to perpetuate such names and histories; thus keeping before the eyes and present in the memories of the young men here educated the noble example of faithful service and devotion to our common country.

The Board recommend that the tasteful and enduring record thus begun shall be continued, and that means be furnished to extend the same mark of respect to all the officers of our army, regulars and volunteers alike, who have suffered and fallen in the war just closed in a glorious and successful struggle to vindicate the honor and maintain the life of the nation.

Happy for the recreants who fought to destroy their Government, if, in the light shed from such a brilliant roll of the faithful, their names and treasonable career should be thrown into deeper shadow of oblivion!

For continuing the erection of these memorial tablets, including a mural monument to Washington, for which an appropriate design has been made, the Board earnestly recommend an appropriation by Congress of $5,000.

Such a sum will also enable the Superintendent to finish a now incomplete arrangement for the preservation of many of the most interesting trophies of war which have accumulated here, and especially to inscribe suitably with the names of the battles in which they were taken, some of the finer pieces of ordnance that have been captured during the Rebellion and sent here for keeping. Let these lasting lessons, engraved on stone and bronze and iron, fill and stimulate the hearts and minds of those whose special task it must be hereafter to aid in upholding and defending our flag and all that it represents. Let those who may come here in the future to prepare for such duty, from States once in insurrection, hail the sight of those proofs that the parricidal attempt of their fathers was a failure. And let all unite in cultivating, by every help and influence, that which now, more than ever before, seems to be a growing and strengthening sentiment at this National school of military and general science, that the truest and most precious interests, duties and inheritance of the soldier and the citizen are one, the same, and can never be separated.

ROBERT C. SCHENCK of Ohio, President of the Board.
F. A. CONKLING of New-York, Secretary of the Board.
JOHN M. FESSENDEN, Massachusetts.
ALBERT P. ROCKWELL, Connecticut.
J. F. BRIGGS, Michigan.
THOMAS COTTMAN, Louisiana.
D. H. BINGHAM, Alabama.
MORTON S. WILKINSON, Minnesota.
J. D. LYMAN, New-Hampshire.
CHRIS. C. COX, Maryland.
A. G. MACKEY, South Carolina.
J. B. THOMAS, California.
A. P. KELSEY, Maine.
J. W. NYE, Nevada.
HENRY W. LEE, Iowa.
DAVID L. SWAIN, North Carolina.
WYLLY WOODBRIDGE, Georgia.

THE BEAVER-ST. TRAGEDY.

Investigation by Coroner Collin—Several Witnesses Examined—The Case Adjourned until To-day.

Yesterday, at the First Precinct Station-House, Coroner Collin commenced an inquest on the body of Joseph Van Doren, who was shot at his office, No. 40 Beaver-st., on Saturday, by John Oram, as already reported in THE TRIBUNE. The following is the testimony:

William H. Kirby of No. 141 East Twenty-sixth-st. testified: I was sitting in the door of the store No. 64 Stone-st.; saw the prisoner running through Mill lane without a hat on; he turned into Stone-st. and ran into No. 57; he turned round to see if anybody was after him; two or three young men came running after him, hallooing "stop him;" I supposed he would run through the store and come out into South William-st.; I then went up stairs, and seeing him about the center of the stairs, coming down, I said, "You are my prisoner;" he replied, "Very well, I will go with you;" when we got out on the street he said, "This is the way to the Station-House," pointing toward Broad-st.; Officer Riley then came up and took charge of the prisoner; when I saw him running I thought he had done wrong, and I thought I would head him off; he was nervous and excited.

Alfred Negro, residing at No. 11 North Moore-st., and who does business at No. 40 Beaver-st. (through an interpreter), testified: I saw the prisoner standing at the door of the premises between 11 and 12 o'clock on Saturday morning, at No. 40 Beaver-st.; he was standing alone, on the stoop in front of the store; I don't know how long he stood there; I saw him again when the policemen had him in charge, as they passed the office; I was acquainted with deceased; he occupied an office on the first floor of the premises; I did not hear any altercation in the store, but heard two explosions, as though the reports of a pistol; I was in the rear of the store, on the second floor; they were in rapid succession; this might have been about ½ o'clock, but I am not certain; I went to see the cause of the noise; I came down and saw Mr. Van Doren, deceased, lying in the hallway, with his head on the last step and his feet toward the street door; he was still breathing when I saw him; I went up stairs immediately; some one told me that he was dead; I did not see any more of the occurrence; I did not see any pistol on the premises.

Ferdinand B. Crassons testified: I live at Yonkers; my place of business is at No. 43 Beaver-st.; at about ½ o'clock I was sitting in front of my store, when I heard two reports of a pistol; I immediately looked out and saw the prisoner and deceased; deceased was in the passage way at the door, and the prisoner was in front of him; the report of the pistol attracted my attention; my place is exactly opposite Mr. Van Doren's office; the deceased clapped his hands to his breast as though in intense pain, and swayed backward; the prisoner immediately ran toward Delmonico's, at the corner of South William-st. and Beaver; the deceased did not have anything in his hands at the time; I immediately started in pursuit of the prisoner, and followed him till near South William-st.; I was told that he had run up into a store a few doors below; after the prisoner was arrested he started off toward Broad-st.; after he was taken in charge of the officer the prisoner said that he was the man, he had shot him; I went in to see Mr. Van Doren; he was lying on his back with his head on the stairs; he was apparently dying; there was quite a crowd around there; the officer and prisoner went back to the place where Van Doren was lying, and got the pistol, which was still lying there.

Duncan R. Norvell of No. 1 South William-st. testified: I reside at Staten Island; between 1 and 2 p. m. on Saturday, I was standing in the door of my office, when I saw a great crowd coming from Broad-st. through Beaver-st.; I followed the crowd down South William-st. and I saw a man run up the steps of No. 11 or No. 13 South William-st.; I rushed after him with the crowd; I then saw Kirby come down with the prisoner; a police officer came and took charge of the man; I then went around into Beaver-st. toward Broad-st.; I met Dr. Gunn, and told him a man had been shot, and we both went into the place; I ripped the shirt of deceased open, and the Doctor remarked, "It's all up, poor fellow—it's his heart;" he died while the Doctor was there; there was a little blood on the outside of the shirt; the deceased was lying as previously described.

John A. Rielly, roundsman of the First Precinct police, testified: I left the Station-House at about 1:15 p. m., to visit the men; when I got within about 100 yards of Broadway I saw the prisoner running, and a crowd gathered around No. 40 Beaver-st.; I started and ran toward the place; when I got in front of the store I was told that a man had shot himself, but another man told me that the man running had shot him; the prisoner was then about the west end of Delmonico's place; I saw the deceased lying in the passage-way of the store; I saw a revolver lying about three feet from the body; I pursued the prisoner to South William-st., and saw Mr. Norvell there; I thought Norvell was the prisoner, and I struck at him with my club; Norvell said, "Don't hit me, I am not the man;" the prisoner was just then emerging from the store, No. 13, in charge of Mr. Kirby, and they were going toward Broad-st.; I rushed through the crowd and caught the prisoner by the arm and said, "I want you;" I said, "What did you shoot that man for?" he replied, "I shot him in self-defense; he called me a son of a b—, and scratched my face; there's the marks on my forehead;" I said, "I can't see anything to justify a man in killing another;" he replied, "I hope he's not dead;" I rejoined, "You've done a bad day's work for yourself;" I walked with the prisoner down to No. 40 Beaver-st.; as we neared the place he said, "My hat is there, I wish you'd get it for me;" when I came down in front of the place I told some one to hand me the pistol, and it was brought out to me; I said, "Is that your pistol, is that the pistol you shot him with?" and he replied, "Yes" (the pistol produced, a five-barreled revolver, was the one claimed by the prisoner); he stated that two barrels had been discharged; when I brought him to the station-house the Sergeant asked if it was loaded, and the prisoner replied that there were three barrels loaded; I then searched him and found a $5 bill and some stamps and a bunch of keys, and then from the skirt pocket of his coat he pulled out a Derringer pistol; the Sergeant asked him if it was loaded, and he replied "Yes, and newly capped;" he was then locked up; I went back to No. 40 Beaver-st., and ordered the men to bring the body to the station-house; when I arrested the prisoner he appeared to be nervous and excited.

Augustus T. Fairbanks of No. 44 Gregory-st., Jersey City, testified that he was employed by deceased at No. 40 Beaver-st.; at about 1 p. m. on Saturday I left the the office at No. 40 Beaver-st. to gauge two packages of lime; I was gone about 15 minutes, and when I returned the deceased and prisoner were in Mr. Van Doren's office; Mr. Van Doren was sitting at his desk and Oram was sitting with his back toward me as I came in; Mr. Van Doren told me to go round to Marketfield-st. to weigh some tierces, and told me he would be around there in a few minutes after me; when I got there the tierces were not ready to be weighed, and I immediately returned; as I was turning round into Beaver-st. I saw the prisoner and two officers coming round toward Broad-st.; when I got to the office Van Doren was lying with his head on the steps and his feet toward the street; there was quite a crowd around; I did not hear any conversation between the prisoner and deceased; neither of the parties appeared to be excited; I don't think they were on very friendly terms; the prisoner told me that the deceased had gone round to his customers and lied about him, and, I suppose, this gave rise to the ill feeling; this was about two months ago; the prisoner had been in the employ of deceased previous to my coming there; the prisoner had started business for himself about the 8th of May; deceased told me that he did not think the prisoner had treated him right when he left him; the deceased told me of a circumstance about a month ago about Mr. Oram and his partner, Thomas, that their porter had sold a quantity of cotton which they had weighed; I was then in the employ of the deceased, who was a United States gauger in the employ of the Internal Revenue Collector in Jersey City; Mr. Fassin told Mr. Van Doren that the prisoner had stolen that cotton, which belonged to him; never spoke to Oram about the cotton; don't think the deceased had seen the prisoner to speak to him since he left his employ until Saturday; I know of a note made by Mr. Oram in favor of the deceased; I collected $24 on account of this note; the deceased told me that Oram had appropriated some of his money to speculate with, and when he left he inclosed the note, which was for $77, and he left it on the desk for Mr. Van Doren; Oram agreed to pay $12 per month on account of this note, and two installments of $12 each had been paid on it; the first installment was paid at Oram's office, and the second at No. 40 Beaver-st.; that was the first time I had ever seen him in the office since he had left.

The investigation was then adjourned until 2 o'clock, p. m., to-day.

THE NEW COURT-HOUSE.

Trouble About its Origin—Its Singular Antecedents—Plan of the Building—Its Exterior and Interior—Probable Cost of Its Completion $3,500,000.

Many people have wondered for the last few years and endeavored to satisfy their curiosity as to the movements and operations going on inside a mysteriously boarded inclosure at the north end of the City Hall Park. They were informed at divers periods that the New Court-House was being erected there, but many a year rolled by before the walls of the long-promised building appeared above the play-bill-adorned scantlings. Some years ago while the Empire City was yet in swathing bands there was an unpretentious looking building in the Park which served all the purposes of a temple of justice. But as the city grew apace its judicial wisdom grew too and there was a general demand for further accommodations. Shortly after, owing to the destruction by fire of the edifice to which we have alluded, it became incumbent on the authorities to erect a new structure. Accordingly the Legislature granted power to the Supervisors to appoint Commissioners to purchase ground for the site. The railed—or rather boarded-off—portion of the City Hall Park, where the building is being erected, was bought for this purpose in 1861, at a cost of $450,000. But immediately there was a storm. Lawsuits and newspaper articles fell hot and fast around, and political capital was for a long time made out of this bone of contention. At length, in opposition to the wishes of Mayor Opdyke, a special commission was appointed by the Board of Supervisors to carry on the work. In the present state of affairs no one appears to be responsible for anything. Workmen are employed, and large appropriations voted at each meeting of the Board to defray the expenses. There is no time specified in which the work shall be completed, no fixed sum mentioned beyond which there is no advance. The building will, it is true, when finished be of very great advantage and promises to be an ornament to our city, and will be (so the architect, Mr. Kellum, says), one of the grandest structures of the kind in this or in any other country. It is not at all surprising that it should be so when we take the fact into consideration that the resources are limitless, and that all that is asked will be cheerfully paid by a generous public. The entire amount appropriated up to this time is $2,400,000.

PLAN OF THE BUILDING.

The building is 250 feet long by 150 wide, and comprises three stories; the basement 22 feet high, the second story 29 feet 11 inches, and the third story 26 feet, besides a fourth story, nine feet high, which will be used for the purposes of storage. The County officials will have their offices on the first floor, while the various courts will be located on the second.

The style is Corinthian—every side being a finished front. From the first floor to the summit of the dome which will crown the building, will be 170 feet high, octagonal on the inside, and 50 feet in diameter, and will contain corridors projecting on each story.

THE EXTERIOR OF THE EDIFICE.

The principal entrance of the edifice is on the west side, the facade of which is 170 feet long by about 80 feet high, with Corinthian columns at intervals, crowned by highly-wrought entablatures, elegantly curved. The windows, 12 and 15 feet in hight alternatively, by about six in width, are placed between these columns, and rise unbroken from the basement story to the cornice, being adorned in pure Corinthian and surmounted in the first story with projecting and elegantly wrought segments. In the second story the heavy cornice dispenses with their use. There are six windows on each side of the entrance, to which you ascend by a flight of 29 steps, while massive blocks of granite line either way, and when on a level with the basement story you stand between two large columns, 40 feet high and four feet in diameter, and which, with two others, serve as supports for a heavy, protruding portico. The width of the entrance is about 40 feet, and the hight 12 feet. The style of ornamentation is all Corinthian.

Above the three doors about 25 feet in hight are three windows finished in accordance with the other ornamentation. In the eastern side of the building the same general features will be preserved. The Dome will rise 50 feet above the roof and the view from the basement in the interior to the summit, in all 170 feet will be something more than half that of the hight of the Dome of the Capitol at Washington.

THE INTERIOR OF THE BUILDING—ITS VENTILATION.

To properly ventilate our private dwellings as well as public buildings, is a matter to which architects appear to pay very little attention, or of the necessity of which they have very little conception. The dome of the New Court-House will be provided with four large flues each about four feet square, and connecting with enormous fans driven by steam. Warm air will be introduced into the several rooms in Winter by flues from the basement. In the construction of the interior, iron is the principal material used, thus rendering the building almost proof against the destroying demon of Fire.

PROBABLE COST OF COMPLETION.

As we have stated in the preceding part of this article, $2,400,000 has been already expended on the building, and it is yet far from being finished. Inside the recess is indeed busy. Some hundreds of workmen are there, dusty and begrimed, but they all appear to study "how not to do it." Large masses of marble lie about. The workmen are engaged in sawing, polishing, carving some pieces, while others, fresh from the chisel, with all their fine and elaborate decoration, lie scattered around, or are being slowly but surely lifted to their places by cranes and derricks of enormous size. Huge masses of iron run along ceilings and leap across archways, now form a support for the base of an immense column, and again, in another place, is wreathed into the most delicate foliage. It is thought that the roof will be put on before the next Winter, and then the interior decoration of the building will be commenced. This of course will be as elaborate as the ornamentation of the exterior. Considering the present aspect of affairs and calculating the future by the past, we will not be so sanguine as to look for the completion of the building before two years, or to estimate its cost at less than another $1,000,000, making altogether about $3,400,000.

The Furman-street Disaster, Brooklyn—Investigation before Coroner Lynch and a Jury.

Coroner Lynch commenced an investigation yesterday into the causes of the late disaster in Furman-st., whereby three men lost their lives. As five men were previously buried beneath the ruins of a store-house on the same site on the 4th of April, 1865, there is considerable interest in regard to the matter. The following is the testimony:

Charles J. Bunting sworn: I reside at No. 116 East Twelfth-st., N. Y.; am a builder by profession, since 1825; I erected buildings known as Nos. 93 and 95 Furman-st., for Mr. John J. Merritt, by day's work; I commenced the buildings in the first part of April, 1865; the last day the masons worked there was on the 29th inst.; the two inside walls were about ten feet thick; on the northerly side we sprung one of the main arches from this wall; on the southerly side wall I put up a 12-inch brick wall; I put up a 12-inch brick wall against the old wall; the two center walls were 18 inches thick and connected with the old wall; the walls were finished some time before the arches were sprung; think the arches had been sprung about three days; I employed about eight or nine men on an average working on the walls; two of the men were named Wallace, and one was named Wright; another, Patrick Deana, who resided in Second-ave., near Seventeenth-st.; hard bricks and the best quality of cement were used in the construction of the walls of the building.

[The witness was here asked by the Coroner if he could tell what brand was on the cement used, as he (the mason) had bought it. This the witness knew nothing about. He replied that he was not restricted as to price, but he could not tell what was the best quality of cement in use, and did not know what brand of cement was used.]

Resumed—I think the plans were made by David Board of Clifton, near Beekman-st., New-York; the design was made by the owner, Mr. Merritt, and the plans, I think, were furnished by the owner of the building; the men engaged in putting the earth on the roof of the building were employed by me; five men were employed in filling in the yard on the roof of the building; the man commenced to put earth on the roof about three weeks ago.

By the Coroner—Q. You say that five men were engaged for three weeks in wheeling dirt on the roof of the building. How much dirt do you suppose each man could put on the roof each day? A. One man can wheel seven cart-loads of earth each day; the dirt was not all paid for, one party came and offered 200 loads gratis, which was accepted.

Coroner—Did you tell Mr. Merritt that you thought the arches which supported the roof were strong enough? A. I told Mr. Merritt that the center arch was not strong enough—that it should be thicker; he replied that he would put another arch in to strengthen the building, which would require less earth to fill up the chasms between the arches; I did not see anything give way during the completion of the work, except a small crack in the base of the old wall; I considered the walls of sufficient strength to bear the arches and weight of earth upon them; nothing but the walls supported the arches; the bricks were well wet before being used, and were laid in the best manner; I pulled down all of the old walls that I thought was necessary; about 5 or 10 feet of the old wall on the north side fell down with the new walls; there was more dirt on the southerly side of the building than on the other; there were about 24 inches of dirt on the top of the crown of the arches; in the valleys between the arches there were about from 4 to 6 feet of dirt; can't tell where the building first gave way; think the arches must have given way first; think the 16-inch walls were capable of sustaining double the pressure that was placed upon them; I think the extra arch that was put in at the suggestion of Mr. Merritt had a tendency to weaken the others; I think if I had said to Mr. Merrit that the work was not strong enough he would have coincided with my views; I was in New-York when the building fell; I called to see Mr. Merritt; we had some conversation in regard to the weak point of the building; I do not know anything else of a definite nature that took place between us at that time.

Coroner—How was the building supported inside? A. There was one iron column in each building on the first floor, about nine feet from the front wall; on the second floor it was supported by locust posts.

Coroner—What were the dimensions of these locust posts? A. They varied from six to nine inches in diameter; there were no iron columns on any of the upper floors; there was no girder on the top floor; the building was under my supervision.

One of the jurors asked to put a few questions to witness, which was granted.

Q. Have you ever built, or seen built, an arch with its foundations resting upon the hips of two other arches? A. I have never seen an arch so constructed.

Q. What did you turn these arches on? A. Wooden centers; these centers were not removed before the buildings fell.

Q. Don't you think that the green center walls settled some? A. No; I think any wall laid in cement will not settle; I am not sure that these walls did not settle; if the walls settled it would break the arches.

Coroner—If there has been nothing wrong about the construction of these buildings, will you be kind enough to tell me how they came to fall? A. Well, I would like to know myself the cause of this sad calamity; but I think the arches were the first to give way.

The investigatigation was here adjourned until Wednesday morning.

THE FIELD.

Base-Ball.

MUTUAL OF NEW-YORK VS. EUREKA OF NEWARK.

These noted associations played a game at Newark yesterday afternoon, the result being a decided victory for the Mutuals, the score standing at the close 27 to 12 in favor of the Mutuals. After a well-contested game, the final score announced as follows:

Mutual.	O.	R.	*Eureka.*	O.	R.
Brown, 2d b	3	3	Thomas, s. s.	2	3
Duffy, 3d b	5	1	Northrup, 3d b	3	1
Goldie, 1st b	2	5	Littlewood, c. f	4	1
Devyr, s. s	2	4	Callaway, l. f	3	2
Zeller, l. f	5	1	Collins, r. f	4	1
McMahon, r. f	2	3	Faitoute, p	3	2
Wamsley, c	3	3	Brentnal, c	3	1
Pattison, c. f	3	2	Somelsder, 2d b	1	1
Thorn, p	2	4	Mills, 1st b	4	0
Total	27	27	Total	27	12

INNINGS.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9.—Total.
Mutual	2	2	2	1	2	1	13	0	4—27.
Eureka	5	0	1	1	2	1	0	1	2—12.

Umpire—Mr. Gunn of the Eckford Club.
Scorers—Messrs. Dougan and Holden.
Time of game—2 hours and 35 minutes.
Fly Catches—Mutual, 10; Eureka, 9.

There was loud talk on the ground about the match with the Atlantic and Mutual, which takes place next Thursday at Hoboken.

Cricket.

SATELLITE OF BROOKLYN VS. UNION OF NEWARK.

These Clubs played a match yesterday at the Union Ball-Grounds, Brooklyn, E. D., which resulted in a victory for the Newarkers by the following score:

SATELLITE CLUB.

First Innings.	Runs.	*Second Innings.*	Runs.
Tilly, b. Hallis	12	b. Hallis	2
Walton, b. Hallis	0	st. Armstrong, b. Elphick	0
Pink, b. Hallis	0	b. Elphick	0
Wilson, b. Hallis	3	run out	0
Hamer, c. Hallis, b. Elphick	18	st. Elphick, b. Hallis	0
Farrell, b. Elphick	0	b. Hallis	1
Walker, b. Elphick	0	c. Petty, b. Hallis	0
James, not out	10	not out	13
Watson, b. Elpick	0	c. Petty, b. Elphick	3
Bridge, st. Armitage, b. Elphick	3	b. Elphick	1
Plain, b. Hallis	6	run out	1
Byes 7, l. byes 5, wides 7	19	byes 11, l. bye 1	12
Total	71	Total	33

UNION CLUB.

First Innings.	Runs.	*Second Innings.*	Runs.
Petty, run out	31	b. Pink	4
Hunter, l. b. w., b. Tilly	1		
McClarren, b. Walton	18	b. Pink	0
Elsum, b. Pink	1	not out	9
Armstrong, b. Walton	8		
Hallis, c. Walton, b. Pink	34	b. Pink	0
Elphick, b. Wilson	3		
Reynolds, b. Wilson	0		
Sharp, b. Wilson	1		
Bellamy, b. Wilson	0		
Bidet, not out	0	c. Sammons, b. Pink	2
Byes 3, l. bye 1	4		
Total	91	Total	15

The Unions thus winning, with six wickets to fall.

BROOKLYN NEWS.

ACCIDENTALLY DROWNED.—A man whose name is not known, last evening, attempted to jump off the ferry-boat Arizona, when entering the South Seventh-st. dock, missed his footing, and was drowned. His hat was recovered and taken to the Forty-fifth Precinct Station-House. He is represented to be about 25 years of age, with dark side whiskers.

GRAND LARCENY.—A horse and wagon belonging to Hayden & Lynch, Hunter's Point, was stolen last week by some unknown thief, and was yesterday recovered by Officer Brennan of the Forty-seventh Precinct and restored to the owners. It