MUSICAL.

ITALIAN OPERA, WINTER GARDEN.

Max Maretzek's company opened on Monday night at Winter Garden, to a crowded, brilliant and fashionable audience. It was pleasant to recognize familiar faces, and to know that the elite of society was once more rallying round the standard of Maretzek. Great alterations have been made in the interior of the house. The Parquette has been carpeted, 150 elegant chairs have been added, the gilding all over the house has been retouched, private boxes have been added round the dress circle, and a hundred new lights have been introduced. The auditorium has indeed been changed in a wonderful manner, and (by-the-way) not only clean, and cheerful but light and bright! It was a just homage to the refined habitues of the Opera, and it was a pleasant sight to see once more the brilliant and exclusive boxes of the ladies.

The house was splendidly gaunt and fashionable, but it was in the best of humors, and greeted the artist in the most cordial manner. Of the performance of this opera by the same artists we spoke in terms of the warmest praise a few weeks since. There is little to be added, excepting that in Rosmond we discover new excellences each time he appears. He enters so thoroughly into the character that there is nothing stereotyped. He acts upon the impulse of the moment, and the result is a veritable piece of nature—of unadulterated humor—of pure, emphatic expression, whether it be of joy or sorrow. We do not desire to take our eyes off him from the moment of his entering on the scene, for every gesture has a meaning, every movement has a point which we would not willingly lose. He is indeed a conscientious artist, whether as an actor or a singer, and he seems to have renewed the vigor of his youth for his voice is better in every particular than it was ten years ago. We confess that our enjoyment of this Crispino, principals, chorus and orchestra, taken in the extreme. Kellogg is so charming, and warbles with such fluent grace; Testa, Bellini and Abbamonte are so thoroughly admirable in all they do, that we doubt if we ever had a more perfect ensemble than this opera presents, and we cannot wonder at the success it meets with wherever it is performed. The individual and collective encouragement, now, was a very great indeed. Several choruses occurred, and the singers were frequently called before the curtain to receive the plaudits of the audience.

ITALIAN OPERA TO-NIGHT.

At Winter Garden, to-night, Max Maretzek's fine operatic company will perform Auber's delightful opera Fra Diavolo, Rosmond taking the character of the quaint English Lord, sustained by Miss Kellogg, Mazzoleni and other artists. It will be a performance of great interest, and will doubtless attract a large and brilliant audience.

SUNDAY EVENING CONCERT.

Messrs. Bateman and Harrison's thirteenth Sunday evening concert took place at Steinway Hall, before an audience of over 2,000 people. It was a success, artistically and pecuniarily. The artists on the occasion were Mme. Gazzaniga, Herr Rosa Fortune, and Mr. S. R. Mills, beside Thomas's fine orchestra.

Mme. Gazzaniga, remembering that the dulcet voice of Pareppa was last heard here, seemed to be upon her metal, for we never heard her more brilliant, even on the operatic stage. Her voice was in fine order, and she threw that dramatic energy into her singing, without exaggeration, which rendered it wonderfully effective. She was applauded to the very echo, and was called affective. She was applauded to the very echo, and was called several times after each aria, although she only acknowledged the encore once.

Signor Fortunio in the bass aria "Proponeste" from Rossini's Stabat Mater, made a good impression. His voice lacks weight for such a song, but he sang it in a smooth, artistic manner, very agreeable to hear. Carl Rosa was very cordially received. This young artist shows an earnest ambition in his profession, and continues to afford evidence of steady improvement. We were better satisfied with his performance on this occasion, on the points of force and breadth of expression, than we have ever been before, and the warm applause he received, showed that he had reached the public sympathy. Mr. S. R. Mills played finely, as usual, as also did Thomas's compact and efficient orchestra. These concerts are now fully and successfully established, and are looked for as regularly as are the Philharmonic and the Symphony Soirees.

MORNING CONCERT AT STEINWAY'S HALL.

Mr. Pease and Signor Severini gave their first matinee at the above hall, on Monday, before a fair audience, composed almost wholly of ladies—a compliment which those artists should appreciate. The procession delayed (Evacuation day) Mr. A. A. Pease for nearly half an hour. Signor Severini, however, apologized in a very easy and pointed manner, and sang his "bird song" very charmingly in his prime. He also sang "Fra poco a me" and the Linda duo with Miss McDonald in a very chaste and expressive manner. He rarely uses his falsetto at all now, reserving it for particular points of effect, when it tells well. He was very warmly applauded, but did not acknowledge the encore.

Miss Kate McDonald sang a very charming song by Abt in a sweet and expressive manner. Her voice sounded singularly beautiful in the small hall, and the song in a subdued style, and well met more expressively and effectively. We never heard Mr. A. H. Pease play so well. He exhibited fancy, delicacy and brilliance; his passages were accurate, and but for the occasional use of too much physical force, his performance deserved nothing but praise. His Crispino duet with Mr. Colby was, as usual, a decided success.

THIRD WEDNESDAY POPULAR CONCERT.

Messrs. Bateman and Harrison will give their third Wednesday Popular Concert this evening at Steinway Hall, on which occasion, in addition to Theodore Thomas's orchestra, the following artists will appear: Miss Lizzie Allen, soprano, Mr. B. Boeckelmann, pianist, and Mr. G. W. Colby, accompanist. The Monday concert at the Brooklyn Academy of Music attracted a crowded and brilliant audience. The concert to-night will doubtless meet with the same flattering recognition.

J. B. POZNANSKI'S QUARTETTE SOIREES.

Mr. J. B. Poznanski, the well-known violinist, will give his first Quartette Soiree at Streck's Music Hall, Anschutz's Musical Institute, to-morrow evening, Thursday. The other gentlemen forming the quartette are Mr. J. Bernstein, Mr. A. Nuendorf and Mr. A. Lissagaig. We were present at the last rehearsal of these excellent artists and are satisfied that their performances will be admirable in all respects. Mr. Poznanski's pure and finished school, his fine artistic instinct, his devotion to the higher attributes of art, his faultless intonation, and his delicate and refined execution, point him out as specially fitted for the leading violin in a quartette party. We consider him the best quartette player to-day in America. We hope to see this quartette party well patronized. Those who go will hear these charming works of the great masters introduced with wonderful delicacy, emphasis, fancy and passion, and will discover the charm which renders those compositions so sought for in all refined circles of society.

MR. JEROME HOPKINS'S AFTERNOON CONCERT.

Mr. Jerome Hopkins will give his second afternoon concert at Steinway's Hall, on Thursday next, at ½ o'clock. The following excellent artists will appear: Miss Antonia Sterne, Mr. J. S. Cooper, Mr. Henry Schmitz and Mr. Dressler. Mr. Hopkins will perform two piano solos. The programme is a very pleasant one.

CONCERT OF THE CECILIAN CHOIR.

This most interesting society repeated Handel's Oratorio of Samson at Steinway Hall last evening to an audience of nearly 2,000 people. Its performance was in every way superior to its first rendering. The choruses were more compact and more spirited; the little singers were more assured, and their voices rang out in the finely sounding hall with splendid effect. The recitatives were considerably cut down, which was an improvement at the most practical kind, rendering the work clearer and more interesting. The artists assisting, Messrs. Simpson, Thomas and Frost, acquitted themselves well. The performance was a marked success. Dr. H. S. Cutler presided at the organ, and Mr. G. W. Morgan directed.

THE DRAMA.

EDWIN BOOTH AT THE WINTER GARDEN.

Mr. Booth's acting offers the loftiest form of intellectual pleasure that is possible to votaries of the stage. The characters that he assumes are the highest in the drama; and he brings to their interpretation positive genius and ripe experience. Among persons of culture and taste he is accounted the best of American tragedians. Certain of his professional compeers may chance to surpass him in specialties of art or in versatility of talent, but no American tragic actor possesses genius in so high a degree or a personality so winning. Hence it comes that he has attracted to an almost unprecedented extent, the sympathy and admiration of contemporary intellect. The admiration is not, indeed, untempered by consciousness of the actor's defects; but the sympathy is deep and real, and unbounded—resting not alone upon appreciation of Mr. Booth's genius and artistic triumphs, but upon a consciousness of his auspicious position. Like all men who work with high motives, as well as great ability, Mr. Booth has won not merely momentary success, but the power to accomplish still better and nobler work in the future. This is understood; and so the promise, as well as the performance of his career, underlies and stimulate the sympathy with which he is regarded. There is no need to be reluctant in doing justice. Mr. Booth's magnificent production of "Hamlet" and "Richelieu" is a guarantee of what he will yet accomplish. Five years hence we are to witness the production of "The Merchant of Venice," in a style of commensurate magnificence. These, moreover, are but the first steps in an upward path; and, looking along that path, as it winds through a vista of years, it is but fair to anticipate and just to say that the future of dramatic art in America will owe more to Edwin Booth than to any other one person.

In these reflections we suggest the reasons for that "tumult of acclaim" which always greets Mr. Booth on his opening nights in this city—a tumult which resounded joyously, last evening, at the Winter Garden. The audience was large, and the welcome accorded to Mr. Booth was most enthusiastic. He deserved it. His personation of *Hamlet* was vital with all the old fire, and beautiful with new beauties of elaboration. Scenic the stage, at least in our time, has never offered a more impressive and affecting combination than is Mr. Booth's *Hamlet* of princely dignity, natural sweetness, tenderness and delicacy of sentiment, filial affection, intellectual alertness, glowing imagination, fine sensitiveness to all things most moved in human life and all that is most thrilling and subtle in the weird atmosphere of "supernatural soliciting" which surrounds the highest moods of the man of genius! In being all this—in being the prince, the mourning son, the wounded lover, the outraged gentleman, the betrayed friend, the haunted, crazed, heart-broken poet—Mr. Booth is astrue to Shakespeare as the spectator to the pole. Almost every mind, it is true, interprets certain portions of the character differently. The writer of these words for example, inclines to believe that Shakespeare designed, in *Hamlet*, to depict the madness of a most noble, pure, delicate, poetic nature, and that Hamlet's assumption of lunacy is but part of the lunacy itself. Whether Mr. Booth adopts this theory—and thousands of Shakespeare students, it would be somewhat difficult to determine certainly—he gave unusual stress and prominence, last night, to the element of madness in *Hamlet*, and went so far as to restore several essential passages—wholly omitted—which throw that element in a vivid light. But, all argument aside, Mr. Booth's *Hamlet* is one, and the only one, upon which all patients can almost entirely agree. His performance of the first act of the tragedy, which is perhaps, the most perfect piece of writing in the English language, was exquisitely beautiful. No school-bred man of taste is insensible to the contest—going through an intellectual gymnastic exercise before your eyes, but a high and ardent soul, full of fire, living and suffering under experiences the most terrible and harrowing! There is not exaggeration, neither in the after-delirium of personation. The burden of the great third act, which Barrett trim both the body and heart of the actor is borne with an energy and a pathos which, in the opinion of the writer, no man at any time in the history of the stage has ever surpassed. The scene with the Queen, the interview with Ophelia, the soliloquy, the interview with the Ghost, the scene with the Players, the closing scene with Laertes, are all of the highest order of dramatic art. The business of revealing *Polonius* and the *King* in their hiding place. In the grave-yard scene, in the most sacred 5th, Mr. Booth finds a most congenial opportunity for the utterance of his sympathy with the defeated temperament, and gentle, sombre, philosophy of *Hamlet*. One cannot help seeing, herein, the secret of his success in this character, a correspondence, most complete and striking, between the temperament of the character and that of the actor.

But we linger too long upon the central point in the beautiful stage picture. "Hamlet" was produced, last night, with a cast that there is great reason to commend. *Ophelia* was played by Madame Methua Scheller, who perfectly filled a true ideal of the part, in appearance and manner, missing neither its exquisite grace nor its mournful tenderness. We think, though, that she does not depict with sufficient thoroughness *Ophelia's* gradual decline into that madness which ends her sad life, and which is originally occasioned by the shock that she suffers in seeing the madness of her lover. The *Queen* was acted by Miss Ida Vernon, who, though manifestly too young for the part, filled it with much dignity and natural feeling. Mr. Davidge appeared as *Polonius*, and reproduced the wise, kind, garrulous statesman, in the very form and color of life itself. His quaintness, his indication of long experience, his kind, fatherly heart, his humor, his senility—all were true, and all delightful. Mr. Barton Hill did justice to the fiery *Laertes*. Mr. Leffingwell was correct, and unusually pleasing as *King Claudius*—a noble part, that is generally murdered upon the stage more effectively than even the personages really slain. Mr. Donaldson, in the little part of the *First Actor*, showed how well a man of talent can do even a trifling bit of professional work. For the scenery wherewith the tragedy was produced, we need only say that it is the same that was used last season. Many new costumes were employed in the evening; and, altogether, the piece was excellently mounted. The entire aspect of both stage and theater was brilliant—both having been, to a considerable extent, refitted and redecorated under the tasteful care of Mr. Frederick Disper. "Hamlet" will be given at a matinee to-day.

EDWIN BOOTH IN BROOKLYN.

On Friday evening next, Mr. Edwin Booth makes his long-desired appearance in Brooklyn, and will, doubtless receive a reception similar to that given him last season in New-York. Last Spring, though most anxious to appear in Brooklyn, he feared, in the absence of proper scenery and appliances, to risk the high reputation to which the reputation presented to him by the leading citizens of Brooklyn gave such enthusiastic expression. But the performances of the Italian Opera at the Winter Garden, alternating with his offer him now the opportunity of gratifying his own wishes and those of his many admirers, without any sacrifice of what is due to art. Hamlet will be presented on Friday with all the appliances, costumes and appointments which have marked its production at the Winter Garden as an epoch in art. The company too, including Madam Scheller, Miss Vernon, Mr. Barton Hill, Gotthold, and the full strength of the Winter Garden, will offer an array of attraction which Brooklyn has rarely seen.

BROADWAY THEATER.

The bright breezes of comedy have suddenly chased away the clouds of tragedy at this theater. That sparkling and delicious old play, "Wonder, or a Woman Keeps a Secret," was produced on Monday evening. Mr. Dillon played *Don Felix*, and Miss Kate Reignolds appeared as *Donna Violante*—thus enterprisingly bringing upon what we trust will be a brilliant engagement. Miss Reignolds always comes hither like a sunbeam. Grace, elegance, vivacity, the true spirit of laughing mischief, and without a vein of earnest and tender sentiment, underlying archness and glittering sport, and blend in her temperament and manner—as revealed upon the stage. These columns have often testified to her merit. She has the rare faculty of fully yielding herself to that brilliant, reckless spirit of innocent devilry, so to speak, which is the life of much of the old English comedy. Hence she finds a sympathetic character in *Donna Violante*. Hence she finds a sympathetic character in *Donna Violante*—the young, gay, fascinating, witty, coquettish Spanish lady, who leads her lover through every mood of true and false doubt, and joy, and despondency, whose invention never fails; whose constancy and kindness of heart are as bewitching as her mischief, and whose intense pride and dignity show the more lovely through an atmosphere of exuberant mirthfulness. Her personation of this difficult character was marked by its wonted beauties, and was greeted with frequent and cordial applause. She appeared, also, in the old farce of "Antony and Cleopatra," winning the tribute of laughter, on a much lower plane of art. There is a taint of coarseness about this style of French farce, which, now and then, offends a fastidious taste. The piece is full of fun, though, and Miss Reignolds does full justice to its demands. We have spoken of her as a sunbeam. On the occasion named, she seemed a sunbeam in a very shady place. Mr. Dillon is not a good *Don Felix*. Nature meant him for the "King Cambyses's vein," and not for the mood of airy buoyancy—the Spring morning sunshine and bird-music phase of human character, *Don Felix*, it is true, looks black, once in a while, but his natural temperament blends the glitter and fragrance of the purest champagne—if we may descend to so material a simile. Mr. Dillon is correct in details; and is sometimes agreeably sentimental and even aptly humorous, but his *Don Felix*, altogether, falls heavily upon the mind, and dints it. For the rest of the players, we can but say that they trampled upon the characterization, the fancy, the sentiment, the wit, and even the language of a beautiful comedy, like a drove of wild asses in a flower-garden. It is the misfortune of the workers in this world that they must often be aided by incompetence. The logic for aught else is to anticipate the Millerisms. "Wonder" and "Antony and Cleopatra" were again played at the Broadway Theater, last night; but to-night these pieces will give place to "Much Ado About Nothing."

MISCELLANEOUS.

Mr. Fox, at the Old Bowery Theater, continues to present to an admiring multitude the comic pantomime of "Jack and Gill," often praised by this pen, and never praised unfairly.

The reader is once more reminded that the last opportunities of seeing "The Long Strike" are now offered at the Olympic. Let them be improved. The piece will be taken off, presently, to make way for "The Master of Ravenswood" and Mr. George Jordan.

In Ethiopian Minstrelsy we have to note that Messrs. Kelly & Leon announce a new and miscellaneous programme, while Messrs. Bodworth's Minstrels urge onward the car of progress in "A Trip to the Moon." These two establishments thoroughly represent and uphold a form of amusement that naturally finds great favor in this community. They are true to their province; they are successful, and they could not well be spared.

DANGERS OF OUR FERRY-BOATS.

THE WARNING OF THE IDAHO—SHAMEFUL RECKLESSNESS ON THE PART OF THE FERRY COMPANIES—NO LIFE PRESERVERS ON BOARD—TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND PERSONS ENDANGERED EVERY DAY.

The ferry-boat disaster of Monday evening, which only a merciful Providence prevented from being an appalling catastrophe exceeding in horror the loss of the Central America, the Arctic or the Evening Star, has shown to the hundreds of thousands who daily cross the rivers surrounding New-York, the imminent danger which they are continually running, through the criminality of the officials controlling our ferries. More than a quarter of a million persons pass and repass every day (excepting Sundays) upon the boats which connect New-York with its suburban neighbors. From 6 to 10 o'clock a. m. nearly every boat to this city is crowded to its utmost capacity by mechanics and business men thronging to the workshop or the office. From 4 to 8 o'clock p. m. the returning tide crams the boats almost to suffocation. To provide for the safe transit of these multitudes of men and women, should be the constant aim of the carrying corporations, which hold so vast a responsibility. How recklessly the reputation, which prudence would dictate, are disregarded by nearly all of these companies, will be found detailed below. The assertions there made are the result of careful inspection and search by a reporter of THE TRIBUNE during the past three weeks, the burning of the Idaho serving to give additional point to what would in any case be a sufficiently startling state of affairs to call for instant and decisive remedy.

The United States Treasury Department has issued regulations to be observed by all vessels in passing one another, and requires two copies of their rules to be kept posted in a conspicuous place on every steamer, which regulation is rarely complied with. Another regulation requires the boats to be supplied with steam fire pumps, 200 feet of hose, two good boats, a sufficient number of buckets and axes, *and a life-preserver for each and every passenger*, which shall be kept in convenient and accessible places ready for use in any emergency. How completely this last requirement is disregarded will be seen below.

The style in which the passengers enter and leave the boats upon most of the ferry routes is dangerous and outrageous. As the boat nears her dock the passengers crowd to the bow, even to the very edge, that they may leap to the bridge as soon as the boat reaches jumping distance. Upon the bridge they encounter another eager crowd, as anxious to get on the boat as the others are to get off, and the wonder is that there are not half a dozen deaths each day as a result of this frantic transit. Aside from the danger to life and limb in this crush, it is the most fruitful field for the "working" of the pickpockets, scores of whom assist in gathering the harvest of watches and purses which the intricate jam prevents the owners from guarding. All of this danger and annoyance might easily be avoided by having a paling or wire fence across the bow of the boat, which should be kept closed until the boat was fast to the dock. Then let there be one passageway for exit from the boat, and another for the use of on-going passengers, the latter of which should only be opened after the boat is cleared. Some years since a bridge at the Quarantine landing of one of the Staten Island boats gave way, precipitating a large number of persons into the water, some of whom were drowned. The Company ever since have kept the persons who wish to board the boats locked up until the passengers and teams have landed. This plan has been adopted by the Erie Railroad, the Hoboken and the Jersey City Ferries, which prevents confusion and greatly diminishes the danger.

The principal danger to the ferry passengers (except by fire) exists on the East River. The Sound steamers, before reaching their docks upon the North River, cross the routes of no less than 20 different ferries. The tide in this river runs very strongly, and there is constant danger of collisions. About two years ago, the Williamsburgh ferry boat Nebraska was run into by a Sound steamer, and a hole large enough to admit a horse and wagon knocked in her hull. The Nebraska had nearly 1,000 passengers on board at the time, and the situation was fearful in the extreme. The boat settled to her guards, and was only kept afloat by the overhanging guards acting as a raft. She was towed to her slip and sunk soon after the passengers had been got off.

In 1852 Congress passed a law to provide for the better security of the lives of passengers on board of steamboats. This law created a Board of Inspectors for every port, who were to examine the hull, boilers and engine of every steamboat, and to see that suitable and safe provisions are made throughout every steamer to guard against loss or danger from fire. It also obliged the owners of steamboats to provide a sufficient number of good life boats (one of metal and one of wood), supplied with oars, in good condition at all times for service; also life preservers made of suitable material, or a float well adapted to the purpose, for each and every passenger, which should always be kept in convenient and accessible places in case of emergency. It also required that pilots and engineers should be licensed, and any one employing an unlicensed pilot or engineer should pay a fine of $100 for each offense.

Strange to say, section 42 of the act exempted from the provisions of this act certain steamers, such as ferry boats, tug boats and towing boats. Several accidents having happened, attended with loss of life, Congress passed another act, in June, 1864, which only partly remedied the evil. It will be seen by the following letter that this act is only applicable to boats running to Jersey City and Hoboken, and not to those running to Brooklyn or Staten Island, those locations being within our own State. The Board of Inspectors, Messrs. Weeks and Crawford, being in doubt as to the application of the law, Mr. Stillman, Supervising Inspector, wrote to Secretary Fessenden for instructions, and received the following reply:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, June 1, 1864.

SIR: I have received your letter of the 31st ult., inclosing a copy of the act of June 4, last, concerning the inspection of steamboats, and requesting my opinion of Messrs. Weeks and Crawford, inspectors, touching certain doubts entertained by them as to the application of that law to certain boats plying between the ports of New-York and Brooklyn.

It is the opinion of the Department that those boats have a right to ply between New-York and Brooklyn, and are exempt from the provisions of the act referred to, while the boats plying between New-York and Jersey City are not exempt from the provisions of the act referred to.

Very respectfully, etc., W. P. FESSENDEN, Secretary of the Treasury.

T. A. STILLMAN, Supervising Inspector, etc., etc.

WASH. GOLDSBOROUGH, Chief Clerk.

Hence the boats running to Jersey City and Hoboken are compelled by law to have their boats in good condition, and to have life preservers on board, while the boats running to Brooklyn and Staten Island are not required to do so. In the summer of 1864 the Board of Inspectors issued a circular to the effect that they would not grant certificates to any boats which did not have life preservers on board, but this was soon rescinded, and the boats which had been refused certificates for want of life preservers received them. This boat is rather the worse for wear, a few pounds of paint would cover a good many defects.

Sixty-first st. Ferry to Astoria—The number of boats, 1; number of passengers carried, about 800. There is a strong resemblance between this craft and the old Fairy Queen, the pioneer boat of the Hoboken line.

New York, Harlem and Flushing Line—Number of boats, 2; number of passengers carried, 2,000. These boats are swift and well constructed, being nicely fitted up for the accommodation of their passengers. They are a great accommodation to people living in Harlem and Westchester County.

Staten Island Ferry (west side) foot of Whitehall st.; number of boats, 3; number of passengers carried 5,000. This line is a huge monopoly. Their certificates of inspection state that they are supplied with 150 life preservers. A passenger some time since, thinking of the Evening Star disaster, asked one of the dock hands where the life preservers were kept. He informed him that they were nailed down in the stores. On looking into the box some days afterward it was found to contain a pair of old boots and a coal shovel. During a portion of last Winter the bay was one mass of floating ice, the boats making their trips with considerable difficulty. One morning the fog was so dense that one could not see the length of the boat; and yet in this condition of affairs these boats should be run through by the *one* only protection for the passengers are two small boats. The dock hands are most careful. In case a man with his team does not move quick enough to suit them, they carry him to the next loading and consider it quite a joke. The boats are strong and substantial, and leave on the minute.

Staten Island Ferry (north side)—Number of boats, 2; number of passengers carried, 1,500. The boats of this line are very slow and much dilapidated.

New Jersey Central Railroad Ferry—Number of boats, 2. The boats are model in every way. They are the largest ferry-boats in the harbor. They are well supplied with all the modern appliances for the saving of life in case of accident.

New Jersey Ferry Company, consisting of Cortlandt and Desbrosses sts. Block. Number of boats, 9; number of passengers carried, 20,000.

These boats compare favorably with those of the last-named Company. They have a certificate stating that the boats carry 200 life preservers. These cannot be discovered with the naked eye. The inner gates connecting with the boat bridge are kept locked until the passengers coming ashore have landed. This Company has also an active Superintendent, who is always at his post. When a boat leaves the slip a man stationed at the end of the bridge prevents people from jumping over the gates.

Hoboken Ferry Company—Foot of Hoboken and Christopher st. lines. Number of boats, 8; number of passengers carried, 20,000.

These boats are run at a higher speed than any other in the harbor. Mr. Stevens, the proprietor, has supplied them with everything the law calls for. The life preservers are placed in a box on the deck, and can be very easily reached. They have the full complement of life boats, which are in very good condition.

Weehawken Ferry, foot of Forty-second st.—Number of boats, 1; number of passengers carried, 1,000. A great many cattle are transported over this ferry which are driven to Bull's Head. During the Winter there is very little passenger traffic.

FIRE ON THE WILLIAMSBURGH FERRY.

The destruction of the New-York and Williamsburgh Ferry-boat Idaho, on Monday evening, by fire, and the miraculous escape of the passengers from a horrid death, will, it is hoped, for the sake of humanity, call the attention of the proper authorities to the criminal manner in which the business of this line is carried on by the necessary and soulless corporations who own the boats. The Idaho was a fine vessel; she had been out of New-York, and are compelled to reside over the river on account of the exorbitant rents on the island, and are therefore, at the mercy of the owners of this line, who seem to be utterly reckless in regard to the lives of the multitude who are compelled to travel on their boats.

Had the fire broken out in another manner, on the previous trip of the boat to New-York, the loss of life would have been fearful, as at that time the boats are crammed to their utmost capacity—men, women and children being packed indiscriminately on every part of the boat, many being obliged to stand in among the horses and carts in order to gain a passage over the river. No visible means of rescue in case of accident are at hand, save a couple of life preservers at each end of the boat (and those only within reach of the pilot and engineer) and a brace of small boats on the upper deck, which, although probably easily launched in the hour of danger, contain half a dozen persons each. The slips and bridges on both sides of the river are in a dangerous condition, miserably lighted, and the general arrangements for the accommodation of passengers of the very worst description.

A short time since a poor woman who cleans the boats was lost overboard in broad daylight, and no means were taken to rescue her from her fate, and less night, several of the passengers who were left to be born to death were obliged to jump overboard and swim for their lives.

The title of the Company running these boats is "The New-York and Brooklyn Ferry Company." Their capital is stated at $1,200,000. Their office is situated at No. 73 Williams-st., New-York, office, no doubt, Mr. James Murphy, President, and Mr. John Berry, Secretary will be ready to answer the authorities when proper action is taken in the matter. T. C. FAULKNER, No. 46 Pine st., N. Y.

MUNICIPAL CORRUPTION.

THE CHARGES AGAINST MATTHEW T. BRENNAN.

At 10 o'clock yesterday the investigation in the case of Matthew T. Brennan, late Controller, was resumed at Police Headquarters before Commissioner John Sedgwick. Mr. Noyes conducted the examination for the State and Mr. Lawrence for the defense. James T. Brady being absent, ex Mayor Gunther and Orison Blunt were present at his examination. The first witness called was Carlton Herrick, who testified that he was editor and proprietor of *The New York Atlas* and had been printing and advertising for the city since 1862, but had nothing to do with the collection of bills.

C. Godfrey Gunther was sworn, and testified that he was Mayor of New-York in 1864 and 1865, and was also a member of the Committee of the Board of Supervisors, which consisted of himself, Controller Brennan, Supervisors Tweed, Purdy and Blunt; was not sure that the Committee's duties were to expend moneys of the county in procuring recruits for the army; Mr. Cornelius Cornson was Secretary of that Committee; heard of a resolution to present a testimonial to Mr. Supervisor Blunt; Mr. Blunt was present at the time; the meeting was held in the Controller's office; I think it was held in June or July; Brennan, Tweed, Purdy and myself were present; there was no Secretary or Chairman; I received an invitation to attend the meeting, and wondered at it, as I was opposed to the war and volunteering, and did not wish to participate in the proceedings; the object of the meeting was to present a service of plate, or something of the kind, to Mr. Blunt; they said they wanted to give Mr. Blunt $50,000. Mr. Brennan said "Mr. Blunt don't want the money, and will probably return it to the City Treasury if you vote it for him." I asked if that was all they wanted me for, and they answered yes. I then told them if they were all unanimous I would. I will throw no objections in your way; the next day I was called upon to sign the warrant of $50,000 to be presented to Mr. Blunt, and I signed it. I did not refuse to sign it, because I told them I would do it; I understood the warrant was to be a present to Mr. Blunt; Mr. Brennan's signature was on the warrant before I signed it. [The witness here identified the warrant which was shown him as the one which he had signed for $50,000. It read "The City and County of New-York—to Orison Blunt, in consideration of services rendered in raising and recruiting volunteers, $50,000, dated September 22, 1864. T. C. T." The signatures certifying to the warrant were read, consisting of Messrs. Gunther, Brennan, Tweed and Purdy; there was also a check for a service of plate at $6,000, signed by me a few days before; could not tell for whom it was drawn; it might have been blank; never saw the service of plate, certified to the warrant because it was in the usual routine manner.

By Mr. Noyes—Well, then, was that certificate an absolute falsehood, as it was signed by yourself, the Controller, and the rest of you?

Mr. Lawrence objected to the question as a leading one, and it was allowed and sustained by Mr. Sedgwick.

Witness—I signed it because the rest signed it, and I supposed they knew all about it; it was not customary to make similar presentations during the term of my Mayoralty; I was not approached with an offer that if I would sign the Brennan testimonial I would be presented with a similar one; I would have signed it, but I was fearful that it would convey a sum of money to Mr. Brennan; I know Mr. Watson, and had interviews with him in regard to the Brennan testimonial; do not know how many.

Mr. Sedgwick—Give the substance of the interview.

Witness—I was solicited to sign the testimonial; do not know what occurred at his interview with Mr. Watson.

By Mr. Lawrence—Never had an interview with Mr. Brennan or with his chief clerk in which I was solicited to sign a testimonial; do not know that Mr. Brennan asked Mr. Watson to have me sign it; Mr. Brennan never had a dollar of the city funds in his possession; he had to draw warrants on the City Chamberlain, who held the moneys raised for the city.

Orison Herrick, jr., sworn. I am financial manager of *The Atlas*. I presented certain bills at the Controller's office for payment. I took the bills (bills shown) to the Controller's office, and they were not paid; they were then put in the hands of a lawyer for collection.

Joseph B. Young sworn. The witness read the preamble and resolutions of the Board of Supervisors passed Nov. 29, 1864, from the journal of the Board; testimonial bills were presented to the Committees of the Board of Supervisors who examined the accounts; the person present at the bill said it certified and a majority of the committee actually passed on the bill; generally it was sent to the Comptroller for payment; do not remember the bill for $50,000 to Orison Blunt; did not refuse to bill on the services of Orison Blunt; it was certainly right for a Comptroller Voucher Committee to certify to the amount if it was expended; I made records of 21st as I did of others; Mr. Blunt worked night and day to fill the quotas of the city; the Committee had full confidence in Mr. Blunt; his office was located in the Park; I never knew of the $50,000 service of plate; it is customary for the Board to pass resolutions and tender testimonials to each other at the end of the year.

Stephen C. Lynes testified that he was book-keeper to the county; made an entry on the audit book about October 1, 1864, by instruction of Mr. Watson, in account with his vouchers, for $50,000; his entry was made an interlineation with red ink; was frequently called upon to make corrections by Mr. Watson.

James Watson was sworn and entered into a long explanation of the nature of his clerical management of the office of the Controller.

The case was adjourned until Saturday morning at 10 o'clock.

THE WHISKY FRAUDS.

IMMENSE PROFITS—ARRESTS—TWENTY-FIVE DISTILLERIES SEIZED.

Congress imposed a tax of $2 a gallon on whisky, deeming it wise to provide that the burden of debt caused by the Rebellion should be removed by a light tax on the necessities of life, and a heavy tax on its luxuries and superfluities. From this legislation a large revenue has resulted, but the tax on the article of whisky has been so enormous as to be a constant temptation to illicit distilling. Ever since the Spring of '64 Whisky has been restive under this indignity enforced by the Collector; for it has always been accustomed to regard taxation as robbery and restraint as persecution.

Some weeks ago it became evident to the Revenue Officers in this city and Brooklyn that frauds were being perpetrated through which large quantities of whisky were being manufactured and put upon the market without paying the prescribed tax. Vigilance on the part of Col. Wood, Collector of the Second Collection District, Brooklyn, and others, revealed the fact that these evasions were numerous, and that they had in some instances reached stupendous proportions. The means by which the frauds were accomplished varied with the character of the managers and the circumstances of the case. The more pretentious of the plans involved the distillation of whisky, during the regular, working hours of daylight, under the suitable but somewhat ambiguous name of "burning fluid." Burning fluid is one of the articles which, when the tax law was framed, were "exempted" from taxation, by connivance of a cunning and far-sighted Member of Congress, it is hinted—so that the successful manufacture of whisky under that euphonious appellation assured a clear extra profit of $2 on every gallon. In large establishments like the Greenpoint distillery, capable of turning 4,000 gallons daily, or the Busted distillery capable of producing 3,000 gallons daily, the profits of such swindling would be immense. The mode generally adopted by the lesser offenders is to put up a still in some rather secluded house, running it only by night and carrying the whisky off and concealing it before morning. In the day-time these places are made to assume an unfinished appearance and the artful dodgers are busy with saw and hammer constructing partitions, etc. If visited by an officer he will be informed that they are erecting a distillery, and have applied for a license and an inspector, will open in a week or two. But the wholesale robberies are achieved by the "burning fluid" men, who comply with the law quite ostentatiously up to a certain point, and then rely upon crowd disguises and elaborate concealments.

In the examination of one of the cases before Commissioner Newton, Mr. Glass, foreman of a distillery which is involved, testified to the method of manufacture. He said in each instance they put turpentine in the mash when it went down, at the time of adding the yeast. They afterward put in more. The object of this was to get as much as the alcohol would hold and not burn. The liquor, after distillation was put in casks, marked "burning fluid," and put on board a lighter. Witness counted 156 barrels one day.

Of course the opportunity to realize such immense profits has been accompanied by the usual number of bribes, and the usual amount, or, perhaps, an unusual amount, of consequent official corruption. It is deemed quite improbable, by the United States prosecuting officers, that the "burning-fluid" confidence game could be practiced many days successfully in any district where the inspectors were faithful to their trust. And it is already known that several officers have connected to become partners in the business of the midnight manufacturers, which is, of course, the violation of a law in consideration of a thousandfold small receipt of greenbacks. Among the parties alleged to have been tampered with are Inspector Frederic Cochen, Deputy Collector Tappan, and Gangers P. B. Tilton and A. F. Phillips. The last three cases have not been thoroughly investigated yet; but some startling revelations are promised. It is said that Tilton each morning inspected some 200 or 300 barrels of fraudulently manufactured whisky, and certified that it was made before Sept. 2 (when the present law went into effect), whereby the dealer has made $240,000. In the case of Inspector Cochen, Mr. John M. Wilson, an implicated distiller, made affidavit, that on the 24th of July last he bribed Cochen, by the payment of $50, not to make any inspection of his distillery. The trial coming on immediately, and Wilson being also held for punishment for having offered the bribe, the latter now comes forward and desires to withdraw the affidavit, alleging that he signed it without having obtained any knowledge of its contents! Upon which District Attorney Tracey consents that Cochen be discharged from custody, and Commissioner Newton dismissed the case! It is of course not impossible that Mr. Wilson was under the influence of his burning fluid at the moment of signing and swearing to the affidavit, but the circumstances surrounding the case are very singular. Moreover, Mr. McDonald stated to the Court that he had drawn up the affidavit and would assume the responsibility of it, and it assured that they would not be arrested, the "would bring parties into Court to prove that Mr. Cochen had repeatedly accepted bribes." No notice was taken of this except to threaten him with arrest for contempt of Court.

Up to the present time, there have been some 25 distilleries seized, many of them in the IIId District. This vigorous raid on potents has had the effect to increase consignments, and the owners of whisky on which no tax has been paid, are exerting themselves to the utmost to keep it from detection and the resultant confiscation. The business is carried on with as much desperation as secrecy, and it is positively dangerous for officers to seize the establishments unless protected by adequate force. The following is the

STATEMENT OF INSPECTOR DAYTON.

I am a United States revenue inspector, named James L. Dayton; I made a seizure on Friday afternoon at No. 5 Flushing-ave., Brooklyn, owned by a man by the name of John Slavin, by direction of Collector Pratt, in whose district the distillery is located. I found some 70 gallons of which I seized; saw persons in process of manufacture. I was surrounded by a body of men who ejected me from the premises and threatened to wipe me out, and if I had not got out of the way as soon as I did I have no doubt but I should have been killed. They said that I had no right to come there, and if I did not get out of there quick they would kick me out. Before this, however, one of these men offered to sell me whisky at $1.50 a gallon. I find that there are a dozen or more distilleries in that neighborhood carried on like this one, which are not stopped by United States revenue officers. I then went to the nearest police station, and the captain sent a detective with me and a policeman. I do not know whether they were afraid or not, but they went into the porter-house of this distillery, and the men says to me: "What is your business?" I said: "I am a revenue officer." He said: "What do you want, any way?" The captain got out of here the better for you." He was going to take hold of me, and I left. I afterward received power from Mr. Pratt to make the seizure.

An Assistant Assessor in Brooklyn, having obtained information that one of the midnight distilleries was running near by, went and picketed the premises at 2 o'clock in the morning, approached, looked through the windows, and saw the fire burning under the still and the spirits running from it. Satisfied with the developments, he made complaint to the Collector and had the case brought before the proper authorities. Upon an examination the proprietor swore that he was simply *boiling water*. His premises were released, and the happy, innocent man returned to his boiling.

Seizures of dist