OUR POLICE.

THE COMMISSIONERS' ANNUAL REPORT.

The License System to be Revoked and the Excise Law Amended.

Carrying Deadly Weapons a Penal Offence.

VIEW OF CHEAP LODGING HOUSES.

THE CONCERT SALOONS.

Twelve Hundred "Pretty Waiter Girls" Employed.

&c. &c. &c.

TO THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK:—

The Board of Metropolitan Police, in accordance with the 39th section of chapter 403 of the laws of 1864, respectfully transmit their annual report for the year 1865, "upon the condition of the Metropolitan Police."

REPORT.

The station houses of the department remain as exhibited in the annual report of 1864, except in the following instances:—

STATION HOUSES.

FIRST PRECINCT.—The lease of the station house of the First precinct being about to expire, an arrangement was made for premises situated on New street, which were leased for a term of ten years, and fitted up with prisons, rooms for lodgers and the usual accommodations, making a well lighted, ventilated and commodious station house, much superior to the old one.

FIFTH PRECINCT.—Serious and well founded complaint is made of the condition of the station house of the Fifth precinct. The building is small and badly constructed, and insufficient. Both the house and prison are of such character as to render good sanitary conditions impossible.

The precinct is compactly built, there being scarcely an unoccupied lot of land in it. The population is as large as it is likely to be, and it is not likely to be divided or its boundaries changed. There seems to be no reason why a sufficient and permanent station house and prison should not be provided.

Provision should be made for raising $30,000; the sale of the present property, the proceeds of which, with the sum above mentioned, would enable the Board to provide a proper and permanent establishment.

SIXTH PRECINCT.—This precinct is situated on Franklin street, in the quarter which was originally "the swamp," and is, of course, upon made land. It was built upon insufficient foundation. The rear portion of the building, consisting of more than half its dimensions, has settled continually from the time it was completed, and the process is still going on. The beams are nearly drawn out of the walls, and the building must ultimately fall. It is even now scarcely safe, and it must be rebuilt or abandoned. Measures ought to be taken at once to rebuild this building or procure another. The location is such as to render it incurably unhealthy. A different and more salubrious position is much to be desired.

It would be judicious to authorize a sale of this property, and with the proceeds, and twenty-five or thirty thousand dollars to be raised for the purpose, secure proper premises in a more healthy and appropriate location.

TENTH PRECINCT.—The station house in this precinct consists of the second and third stories of the Essex Market. The office and some other rooms are situate on the second floor, which is reached by a very long flight of iron stairs. The cells for prisoners and lodging rooms for vagrants are on the third floor. All persons arrested, the drunken and turbulent included, are with no small degree of difficulty to be got up these two staircases for detention in the prison. The building is cold, leaky and unfit for a station house. Notwithstanding large sums are annually expended by this department in repairs, the men are frequently driven from their beds in rainy weather by water that enters through the roof in numerous places, rendering the premises scarcely habitable.

In 1862 the sum of $25,000 was raised and appropriated to procure a lot and build a new station house for this precinct. The price of property, even at that time, was so high that this sum proved insufficient for the purpose. After the burning of the Eighteenth precinct station house by the rioters in 1863, the same sum was appropriated to the rebuilding of the station house in that precinct.

It would require at least $40,000 to purchase a lot and erect a suitable building. This ought to be done without further delay.

ELEVENTH PRECINCT.—The station house in this precinct is situated, like the Tenth, over a market, and its objectionable features are similar to those of the Tenth. New and more appropriate premises ought to be procured.

From $30,000 to $35,000 would be required for this purpose.

EIGHTEENTH PRECINCT.—Since the last annual report a new station house has been completed for the Eighteenth precinct on the site where the station house was burned by the rioters in 1863, at a cost of $25,000.

The adjoining lot is in part occupied by an engine house, which has been turned over to the Comptroller by the Fire Commissioners.

The portion of the premises next to the station house has no building upon it. The station house is lighted by windows on that side, which would be closed if the lot should be covered by buildings.

It is desirable that ten or fifteen feet of that lot be assigned to the station house property to secure the windows on that side from obstruction, and to afford convenient access to the rear of the station house property.

TWENTY-FIRST PRECINCT.—The lease of the premises used as a station house in the Twenty-first precinct expires on the 30th of April next. By reason of the prevailing high rate of rents, the present is a most unfavorable time to make a lease for a term of years. This precinct is compactly built and fully populated. Its form and dimensions are not likely to be changed. For these reasons it is advisable to procure a permanent establishment. It is probable that $35,000 would be sufficient for that purpose.

TWENTY-SEVENTH PRECINCT.—In 1864 an appropriation was made by the Legislature of $35,000 to procure a permanent station house for the Twenty-seventh precinct. That amount proving insufficient, the further sum of $15,000 was provided by the Legislature of 1865, making the sum of $50,000.

The Comptroller purchased a valuable property, No. 99 Liberty street, the lot being twenty-six by one hundred and sixteen feet, with a white marble building thereon, five stories high, well built and finished. This property has been altered and fitted up with prisons, lodging rooms, and all the needed appliances of a station house. The new premises were occupied on the 23d September last, and possession of the old premises surrendered to the Comptroller. This forms in many respects the best station house in the district. The purchase was timely and fortunate; the property is now worth from $15,000 to $20,000 more than it cost.

TWENTY-NINTH AND THIRTY-SECOND PRECINCTS.—The Legislature of 1865 made provision in the city tax levy for raising the sum of fifty thousand dollars to build a station house for the Twenty-ninth precinct, and five thousand dollars to build a prison and lodging house for the Thirty-second precinct. Measures have been taken by the corporative authorities to raise the above amounts, but they are unavailable to the department, for the reason that the Common Council has refused or omitted to make an appropriation of these amounts. It is assumed that the law does not authorize, or does not allow, the Comptroller to pay out moneys raised under the city tax levy without a formal appropriation by the Mayor and Common Council. This is unfortunate, and detrimental to the public service, as well as to the police force. For this reason the Board has been compelled to make a new lease of premises for the Twenty-ninth precinct, under unfavorable circumstances, for two years from May last. For the same reason the Thirty-second precinct remains without a prison, involving the necessity of transporting all persons arrested in that precinct a long distance—to Harlem or Manhattanville—for detention, which is attended with inconvenience to the force and to the parties arrested.

Both in New York and Brooklyn the delays and neglects of the municipal authorities to comply with the requirements of this department indicate the propriety of such legislation as shall enable the Police Department to realize moneys raised for police purposes without such embarrassments.

BROOKLYN STATION HOUSES.

Since our last annual report a new building for a station house for the Forty-ninth precinct has been commenced, and will soon be completed. When this shall be occupied there will remain but one station house (which is in the Fifteenth precinct) hired for police purposes by the city of Brooklyn.

The Metropolitan Police is not a municipal institution. It was designed by the Legislature to be nonpartisan, and independent in every respect of municipal and local boards and officers. This design cannot be fully realized so long as any portion of the funds raised for the use of the Police Department is subject to the control of such boards or officers. Instances abound illustrating the mischievous effect of this arrangement. Thus the money raised in New York, as above mentioned, for the Twenty-ninth and Thirty-second precincts, will remain in bank under the fiscal arrangements of the city drawing (as we understand) no interest, while the city is paying rent for the station house accommodations it was intended to supply, and this department is subjected to the expense of a team and vehicle to transport prisoners to distant prisons for safe keeping.

In the city of Brooklyn the municipal authorities have the control of the funds raised for procuring station houses and for their repairs.

Feeling no responsibility in relation to the police force, the municipal authorities sometimes do not promptly and sometimes do not at all attend to the pressing needs of the police force. When they do act due regard is not always had to economy of expenditure.

Several of the station houses are and have long been out of repair. Alterations and improvements have been often required and solicited by this Board to secure the health and comfort of the force, but without effect; meanwhile the police force and the public suffer serious detriment.

In the city of New York, where this Board have the control of funds for "Supplies of station houses," by a timely contract, coal for the year's consumption (over one thousand tons) was obtained at $7 35 per ton. In Brooklyn, where the municipal authorities have control of the matter, the purchase was delayed until, as we are informed, the price reached $12 per ton.

The "Inspector's office" is in the basement of the City Hall, which is inconvenient, damp and unhealthy. Appropriate premises ought to be provided; but measures for that purpose have been opposed, delayed and defeated.

These and numerous other circumstances show that, in order to secure effective and economical working of the police system, the buildings occupied for police purposes, their purchase, construction and repair, as well as the fitting up, furnishing and supplying them, and the funds raised for these purposes, ought to be paid over to the Treasurer of the State, like other moneys raised for the support and maintenance of the police, and drawn and expended by and on the responsibility of the Board of Police—the titles of real estate acquired for the purpose to be vested in the cities, counties or towns by which the money is raised.

LICENSED OCCUPATIONS.

The safety and good order of society require that certain occupations should be carried on under a system of licenses, granted by legal authority. The system is adopted for the purpose of regulating the acts of those engaged in such occupations, restraining their irregularities and protecting the public from abuses.

In New York, the power to grant and revoke licenses of pawnbrokers, junk shopkeepers, auctioneers, carts and cartmen, hacks and hackmen, omnibuses and omnibus drivers, is vested in the Mayor.

Laws and ordinances provide penalties and punishments for wrongs committed by licensed parties, but they are so rarely enforced that they have ceased to have any salutary effect on the conduct of the offenders.

The whole system needs reform. The Mayor has the power to try and fine offenders, and to revoke their licenses. The police justices also may try and punish criminally in some cases; but all these officers are, unfortunately, dependent in a measure for their places on the very offenders they are called upon to punish.

The hackmen and carmen, for instance, are a powerful body of men. In some districts no police justice could be elected against their combined opposition. Under such circumstances it is not to be expected that such elective officers will venture to alienate their constituents by a firm administration of justice. So entirely conscious are some of them of their dependence upon the good will of the hackmen, that they are reluctant to have such offenders brought before them for punishment. All Mayors holding office at the sufferance of the voting constituency are indisposed to apply serious discipline to this class of offenders. True, a Mayor has power to impose upon hackmen small fines, but hackmen can impose upon him political defeat. The soundness of the principle that Judges of the criminal courts, in order to be just to the public, must be independent of the criminal classes, is illustrated by the insufficient administration of criminal justice in the city of New York. As rapidly as possible, and by every means within reach of the Legislature, this great and growing evil ought to be combated and remedied.

If the power to grant licenses in the cases mentioned, and to abrogate them for violations of laws and ordinances, were conferred upon the Board of Police, who are independent of all offenders, the firm and prompt exercise of those powers would in a little time relieve the community from many of the impositions and outrages to which they have long been subjected. Such impositions are numerous and constant; many of them exhibit the moral obliquity of felonious offences. The following recent instance is quoted from a public journal, as a sample of acts that are by no means uncommon:—

AN ACCURATE CARTMAN.—EXTORTION.—About six o'clock Saturday morning, Andrew Jackson, Samuel Williams and Wm. Brown, colored soldiers, members of the Thirty-first United States colored infantry, arrived at the New Haven depot from Hartford, where they had been mustered out, en route for their homes in St. Mary's county. They were induced to go in back No. 448, by Patrick Gleason, the driver, who was to stop with Brown at the Washington depot, and drive the remainder to a house in Mulberry street. After driving around for half an hour the coach stopped, and Gleason told Brown that he was at the Washington depot, and demanded ten dollars fare. Brown took out a roll of bills, which Gleason snatched out of his hands, jumped on the box and drove off. He stopped the coach at the foot of Hubert street and informed Jackson and Williams they were where they wished to alight, and demanded ten dollars for their fare. They refused to pay so much. He threatened them and refused to give them their luggage. A crowd soon collected, which attracted the attention of officers Gardner and Kennelly, of the City Hall police, who arrested them all and brought them to the City Hall. There they were detained until the arrival of the Marshal. The facts were proven to the Marshal's satisfaction, and he reprimanded Gleason for his attempt to swindle the soldiers, threatening, if he was brought again for such an offence, he would revoke his license.

Notwithstanding the untiring efforts of Captain Brackett for the last eight months to break up the system of extortion practised by hack-drivers, cases of this sort are of frequent occurrence, and all are likely to continue until the power of granting and revoking licenses is placed in the hands of the Police Commissioners.

It will be observed that the license of this offender was not revoked. He still has leave to plunder the stranger, the poor and unwary, under the protection of a license from his Honor the Mayor. Equally weighty reasons exist for amendment of the license system in relation to pawnbrokers, auctioneers and venders.

SANITARY MEASURES.

Attention is called to the report of Captain Lord, of the Sanitary Company. This company consists of a captain, a sergeant and thirty-three patrolmen.

It will be seen that they have rendered valuable services during the year. By their means 24,067 nuisances have been abated, many of them of a formidable character. The certainty of the interposition of the police has, without doubt, induced large numbers to adopt measures of cleanliness which would otherwise have been omitted. The public safety demands that the city should be kept clean. It seems just that the cost of keeping private premises clean should be defrayed by the owners or occupants of the premises. This principle was intended to be applied by the sections of the Police law on this subject. It is, however, defeated in numerous instances, because non-resident owners and executors of estates cannot be reached with process to compel payment of the cost of cleaning their property.

In this and some other features those sections of the Police law require amendment.

The processes which render a city filthy, noisome and unhealthy are in constant operation; it is, therefore, proper that the processes of cleansing should be equally increasing. There will be great exigencies, such as the advent of the cholera or other epidemic, calling for extraordinary remedies. Sound policy, however, demands that the ordinary system of cleansing be so continuous and complete that serious exposures of health from filthy accumulations in private premises or public streets shall not occur.

SURGEONS' REPORT.

The report of the Board of Police Surgeons hereto annexed contains the well considered views and suggestions of educated medical gentlemen who have enjoyed extraordinary opportunities of observation and inquiry into the causes which produce and propagate the diseases to which the people of the city are exposed.

Their exposition of the evils arising from over crowded tenement houses, badly constructed and managed slaughter houses, noxious fat boiling concerns, disorganizing tallow houses and poisonous generating sewers ought to startle the people and the Legislature into earnest efforts to protect public health.

ARRESTS FOR OFFENCES.

Arrests for offences of all grades have during the year reached the number of 68,873, against 54,751 for the preceding year. Crimes of violence too and the person have increased in even greater ratio, as will appear from the following comparative statement:—

	1864.	1865.
For felonious assault	462	798
For assault on policemen	35	36
For rape	34	38
For attempt at rape	29	40
For manslaughter and murder	58	—
For homicides of all degrees	—	69
For malm (mayhem)	6	14
Total	624	995

The measure of success in punishing the higher grades of offences appears from the following figures:—There were in New York and Brooklyn during the year seventy-five arrests for homicides of all degrees and for attempts to kill; of this number thirty-two were discharged without trial, two tried and acquitted, eight tried and convicted, thirty one held for trial, but not yet disposed of; one committed suicide before trial. In forty-six of these cases persons appear to have been killed by the hands of some other person.

CARRYING DEADLY WEAPONS.

Continued observation confirms the opinion expressed in the last annual report that affrays which, if the parties were armed, would end in mere assaults and batteries, are likely to result in homicides when deadly weapons are present. It would unquestionably conduce to the safety of human life, and to the peace and good order of society, if the practice of carrying deadly weapons on the person should be restrained by penal statutes. In relation to the class of weapons known as slung shot, bandy billys, sand bags and metallic knuckles, no sound reason can be urged against providing that their manufacture or sale, and carrying them with intent to use them upon the person of another, should be made a felony. Their use always endangers and is often fatal to human life, and the carrying with a design to use them indicates a felonious intention.

OFFENCES AGAINST PROPERTY

continue to prevail, carried on under all the customary forms of robbery from the person, larceny, burglary, forgery and arson; but the year's record shows no extraordinary feature. With the increased discipline and efficiency of the police force there occurs a sensible diminution of burglaries. In this connection it is proper to observe that in regard to burglaries and sneak thief robberies, the citizens are themselves not entirely blameless. By reference to the annexed table of incidental duties it will appear that during the year four thousand two hundred and eighty-five stores and six hundred and sixty-eight houses were discovered open, and secured by the police. This exhibits a surprising degree of carelessness on the part of proprietors. If the police should be guilty of an equal degree of inattention they would justly merit no small share of censure.

It is feared that merchants are quite too much accustomed to intrust the final closing and custody of their places of business to underpaid employes, and that good character and fidelity in mercantile employes are not appreciated, and do not command just compensation.

The facilities offered to the depredations upon property by the careless habits of our people are so great that the complete prevention of this class of crimes cannot be expected. The best measures of prevention would be such as should render difficult and dangerous the conversion of stolen property into money. In rare instances can the thief make personal use of the stolen property. If he could not readily and safely convert it, the chief motive for stealing would not exist. Even when arrests are made for robberies of money or property, conviction is embarrassed and often defeated in perfectly clear cases, by the indisposition of the parties robbed to appear as prosecutors or witnesses. In such cases the recovery of the property seems to be the sole motive of action on their part. That secured, the duty of vindication of the law by the punishment of the guilty is too often forgotten or neglected.

For these and other reasons, we repeat the suggestion contained in our report of last year, recommending that adequate motives be held out, in the character of rewards, to induce such information from all classes of persons as should lead to the conviction of persons guilty of arson, homicide, passing counterfeit money or receiving stolen property.

A fund for the purpose indicated could be accumulated by investing from the sums deducted from the pay of policemen on account of lost time, say at the rate of fifty cents per month to each member of the force, to which should be added all voluntary contributions from fire insurance companies and from citizens. Such a measure would directly produce a fund the income of which would suffice to pay all required rewards for the conviction of receivers or stolen property and other offenders referred to.

The proposal of such rewards would, it is believed, set on foot an interested activity hostile to the great depredators upon the public, which could not fail to produce valuable results.

The association of banks for the suppression of counterfeiting, operating by means of rewards, has realized great benefits not only to banks but to the public.

POLICE LIFE INSURANCE FUND.

One hundred and fifty dollars per year is a small sum to be awarded to a meritorious officer in retiring from the service on account of disability, or to the widows and children of policemen dying in the service. The fund is sufficient to sustain and increase, and the law ought to be amended so as to allow pensions to be granted not exceeding two hundred and fifty dollars per year.

MILITARY BRIGADE.

The city or municipality is secure against the occurrences or circumstances requiring a resort to the military power to suppress violent proceedings. The law recognizes and provides for such exigencies even in the rural districts of the State. In the metropolitan district there are likely to be frequent occasions for resort to the military force. The process of notifying and mustering the militia is quite too slow for such exigencies, and is calculated to increase the excitement and panic incident to such occasions, and to aggravate the danger of collisions. Calling out the militia is attended with great expense. It is a serious interruption of the business avocations of the members of the corps. The citizen soldier ought to be relieved, as far as is consistent with the public welfare, from the hard duty of using firearms upon a citizen mob.

These and other considerations combine in support of the suggestion that a brigade of the police force—say five hundred in number (of the existing force)—be organized in military form, and instructed in the manual of arms, and in evolutions adapted to service in cities. This brigade to be used as a military force only under such grave circumstances as now authorize the Board of Police to call out the military of the district in aid of the civil authority. Such a force, well drilled, accustomed to act together, at all times ready for duty, capable of being called out without adding to the public excitement, and without the knowledge of the hostile parties, would, it is believed, be able to defeat, or arrest in their inception, violent attempts to disturb the peace of the city.

The important reform in the Fire Department, authorized by the last Legislature, is vindicated by the year's experience. The new system will, as it grows perfect in organization and discipline, secure more and more the confidence of the people.

The disbanding of the old department has left a large number of members who continue their organizations in the form of military companies, carrying arms. The military form and drill are kept up, and target excursions are resorted to for exercise in firing. These target excursions call but the dangerous tendency of the organizations and the turbulent character of the persons comprising them. They are not so much under the restraints of discipline and law now as they were while acting as fire companies. On a recent occasion, at the Hell Gate ferry, they commenced a system of robbery and outrage which it required the interposition of a force of police to arrest. Such irresponsible armed military bodies, accustomed to drill, and acting under command of desperate men, are a perpetual menace to the legal authorities and a formidable source of danger to society. They could not be controlled by the police unless they, also, were armed and drilled. There are numerous organizations in the city composed of quiet and well disposed persons to which these suggestions do not apply; but it is scarcely compatible with the public safety in a city filled with a powerful, dangerous class, and subject to sudden excitements, to allow armed military organizations to meet, drill and attain the discipline of regular troops, unless they are organized under and by virtue of law, and subjected to proper and responsible command.

HEALTH OF THE FORCE.

The sick time of 1864-'65 will appear by the following comparative statement:—

	No. of days.	No. paid.	Paid.
1865	20,546	12,309¼	17,676
1864	24,311½	10,261¾	14,050
Increase	6,234½	2,648	3,586½

There is a constant increase in the number of members, who from increase of years and exposures, are occasionally sick. Each year increases the number of the permanently disabled. This is an inevitable tendency which will go on to a disastrous result, unless some preventive measures are adopted. The cost of the lost time by sickness paid for during the year was $48,322 64. This amount is liable to increase to twice or three times that amount in the course of a few years. The Metropolitan Police Department and the Supreme Court of the United States present the only instances remembered of appointments to office for life. The system has its advantages and disadvantages. In the case of the police force time will probably show such an accumulation of disabled and useless members as will compel the Board to exercise the power of dismissal for physical disability occurring after appointment, to save the department from becoming a charitable institution. An amendment to the pension law, as above suggested, will enable the Board to relieve the department of a portion of the members who are unfortunately a burden to it.

It will be observed that the loss of time by sickness is more than equal to the full time of eighty three men, or almost four per cent of the whole force. The cost in money is more than the full pay of forty-eight men.

The Board repeat the suggestion made in former reports, that it is desirable to avoid, as far as possible, conferring on the Board of Police powers and duties which are merely political. They would much prefer, and they deem it sound policy, to avoid all relations to the actions of political parties, in order that this department may command the respect and support of all parties. It is suggested that it would be well to devise some other method of appointing inspectors of regular and elections, canvassers and poll clerks, and relieve the Board of Police from the onerous duty. In this connection, it is proper to say that the election law of last winter is a great improvement on the former law. Being a recent enactment, in some respects imperfect and not well understood, the appointments were not in all cases such as could be desired. The board are of the opinion that, notwithstanding these difficulties, an improvement in the election has been the result, and an advance made toward securing the purity of the ballot box.

Whether this Board shall be relieved of the duty of making these appointments or not, the law should be amended in several particulars. It provides that no person shall be appointed an inspector or canvasser unless he resides in the Assembly district within which he is appointed. In some districts it was difficult to find resident persons competent and reliable to hold the office.

It provides that no person shall be appointed unless he is liable to do jury duty in courts of record. This rendered ineligible persons exempt from jury duty, who are in numerous instances best fitted for the office. It raised so many questions as to exemption from jury duty, and furnished reluctant citizens excuses in so many cases as to seriously embarrass the process of appointment.

Conferring the power to fill vacancies on election day upon the Board of Supervisors, or rather continuing it there, was the occasion of difficulties and misunderstandings.

The intention of the law in relation to the proof of naturalization required of persons not born in the United States was not clearly understood. On these points the law should be revised and amended.

CHEAP LODGING.

The surgeons' report, heretofore referred to, exhibits a fearful condition of the population which inhabit the tenement houses of the city.

Bad and dangerous as these habitations are, there are unfortunately others which are worse. Extracts from the reports of Captains Thorne, of the Fourth, and Jourdan, of the Sixth precincts, will illustrate the fearful degradation and misery of a class yet lower and more depraved than the occupants of tenement houses. Captain Thorne, of the Fourth precinct, says:—"There are in this precinct sixty places, or dens, where the wretched poor, the criminals and the depraved, resort to lodge, paying from ten to fifteen cents per night for the miserable accommodations.

These places are chiefly in cellars, with naked stone or brick walls, damp and decayed floors, without beds or bedding fit for human beings. They are mainly unventilated or lighted, except through the entrance door. In condition they are filthy and disgusting beyond description, overflowing with vermin and infected by rats.

In these hideous places are packed nightly, an average of ten persons to each place, or six hundred in the aggregate.

In violation of the laws of decency and morality, men, women and children, white and black, with no regard to the family relation, sleep promiscuously together, exhibiting less of the impulses of decency than the brute creation.

From the character of these apartments, their owners and occupants, and the manner of their use, cleanliness is impossible, and hideous diseases of various classes and types are engendered and propagated.

While thus occupied they cannot be made decent or healthy, and those who frequent them are beyond the reach of reform, except through the strong arm of the law."

Captain Jourdan, of the Sixth precinct, presents pictures of several similar loding places in his precinct, as follows:—

No. 25 Baxter street, two rooms, each ten by six, full ten feet below the street; no windows or other ventilation; bare stone walls; no furniture; a dirty, disgusting cave; twelve to fourteen lodgers nightly, at ten cents per night.

First floor of same premises, a drinking place, the resort of thieves, beggars and prostitutes of the lowest class. The Captain says:—"I have seen as lodgers eighteen of both sexes asleep in the place during the night."

No. 15 Baxter street, a cellar, fourteen by eighteen; five beds; naked stone walls; no window, light or ventilation; fourteen persons are accommodated, at eight cents per night.

No. 16 Mulberry street, one room, fourteen by ten, with nine beds and two beds in adjoining kitchen; twenty persons, male and female, are lodged at six cents per night. The building is the property of an officer of one of our city banks; rents for six dollars per month.

No. 51 Baxter street, second floor, one room, eight by five, contains three beds, kitchen adjoining, several beds on the floor; eighteen persons lodge here at six to eight cents per night; rent seven dollars per month; owned by a well known citizen in Twenty-third street.

No. 141 Leonard street, second floor; two rooms, one eight by ten, and kitchen adjoining; eight to ten lodgers, at eight cents per night.

A large additional number of similar places are described by Captain Jourdan. The occupants of these cheap lodgings consist of drunken wretches, male and female beggars, nightcokers of the poorer sort, sneak thieves, juvenile pimps, rugged and drunken prostitutes, men, women and children, black and white, herding indiscriminately together. They come out of these dens in the daytime to prey upon exposed property.

From these filthy prisons continually arises malaria, poisoning the atmosphere that honest and decent people are compelled to breathe. With our laws and our tribunals, so constituted, this mischief seems to be without remedy.

PRETTY WAITER GIRL SALOONS.

Numerous places of resort were established in this city a few years since, called "concert saloons." Their attractions were music, abandoned women and intoxicating drinks. They were very attractive to certain classes of men, who were not yet totally ruined, and were resorted to by many who were just entering upon a course of fatal dissipation. The public mind was aroused, and a law passed to suppress them. The effect of the law was evaded by discontinuing the musical entertainment. The continued success of the saloons after the concerts were discontinued proved that intoxicating drink and lewd women were a sufficient attraction without the aid of music. After this modification, not being amenable to the "Concert Saloon Law," they have multiplied and flourished, while their influence and tendency promise to be more and more deplorable.

The following table shows the number of drinking places where young and comely prostitutes are employed, nominally as waiters, the estimated number of visitors each twenty-four hours, and the amount of receipts for each week:—

Precinct.	No. of Places.	No. of Girls.	Visitors per Day.	Receipts per Week.
4	95	488	17,812	$8,951
5	1	8	20	150
6	7	35	725	1,525
8	5	78	1,270	2,700
10	18	118	2,045	4,605
14	23	173	2,180	4,862
15	6	66	755	1,820
16	1	2	200	350
17	3	9	65	450
20	7	16	100	209
21	49	157	878	3,025
29	8	41	1,600	2,915
Total	223	1,191	29,950	$31,662

Here are nearly 1,200 daughters of perdition, and their numbers rapidly increasing. Their dupes and victims are counted by thousands. The philanthropist and Christian would be pained, and even men of the world would be astonished, at learning the class and character of the customers of these designated places. What seems the best, most cultivated and highest circle of society has more than its share of representatives among the frequenters of these shameless haunts of dissipation and debauchery.

Some law ought to be framed at once and vigorously executed to break up and utterly suppress these attractive schools of vice and immorality.

EXCISE LAW.

The excessive use of intoxicating drink is the greatest evil to which communities are exposed. To it may be traced much the largest share of poverty, disease and crime, public disorder and the moral degradation which so much afflict society. All laws, organizations and efforts suggested by Christian philanthropy for the suppression of intemperate drinking have failed to produce the desired result. No sad minds are convinced that the appetite for intoxicating drink cannot be effectually restrained by penal laws. The Maine Liquor law, which was prohibitory, failed utterly even in New England. All modified systems of restraint have fallen short in their effects of the hopes and expectations of the humane.

The existing system is practically inoperative. Any person can obtain a license, and any person can sell without a license with impunity. Such is the condition of our courts and juries, and such the state of public opinion in the city, that convictions for violation of the excise law cannot be had without such an accumulation of positive evidence as is difficult to produce. The members of the police force cannot be used to detect and prove the offences without allowing them to enter dram shops and drink at pleasure, which would be destructive of the discipline and efficiency of the force. The police force cannot arrest on view without warrant for this class of offences, and applications to police magistrates for warrants would be addressed to unsympathetic ears.

The present excise law seems to have been framed with a view of subjecting the traffic to the supervision of the authorities and honoring it as a source of municipal revenue. It has substantially failed. The traffic is unrestrained and very nearly untaxed. The number of licenses granted and the amount received for excise fees have already diminished.

In 1860 the amount received by the Comptroller on account of excise fees was $51,580. In 1864 it was $12,450.

The example set by the administration of the Internal Revenue law of the United States indicates that it is wise to enforce a well considered excise law for purpose of the revenue.

The number of licenses granted in the city of New York under the Internal Revenue law is reported at 7,250. No reason occurs to us why an equal number cannot be issued under a State law. That number, at the average of $50 each, would produce a revenue of $217,500.

An inquiry lately set by this department in May last showed that in New York and Brooklyn there were 9,220 places where intoxicating drinks were sold. Of this number but 754 claimed to be doing business under license, showing that 8,516 were violators of the law.

The following suggestions are submitted as furnishing reasonable promise of beneficial results:

Provide that it be unlawful for any duly licensed persons to sell or keep a place for selling intoxicating liquors, or to give out or pretend to sell, or to have such liquors for sale, or to have, allow or continue on or about his premises any sign or notice of any description that such liquors are kept there for sale, or to give notice or in any manner advertise that he sells or has such liquors for sale.

Provide that the license be posted and continually displayed in a conspicuous place in the room where liquors are sold, and that the absence of the license so displayed shall be conclusive evidence that none has been granted.

Provide that any violation of these provisions shall be a misdemeanor, to be punished criminally by fine, imprisonment, or both, and authorize the arrest of offending parties on view without warrant.

Confer the power and duty of granting licenses and abrogating them, and of fixing and graduating the fees, at not less than $50 nor over $500 from year to year, upon some board composed of men of integrity and firmness, who are independent of the liquor selling interest.

Provide that licensed drinking places be kept at all times orderly and quiet, and require them to be kept closed from twelve at night until sunrise, and during the whole Sabbath day, and that licenses shall be abrogated whenever it shall appear to the board that the party has violated the provisions of law, and also upon his having been convicted of any criminal offence.

Provide that courts imposing fines report monthly, and pay over the amounts received to the Board of Excise and prohibit the courts from remitting any fine imposed.

Such a system properly administered would, it is believed, bring the business under the observation of the law and the police, and tend to diminish the mischiefs of intemperance. The finances of the city would be benefited, perhaps, to the extent of a quarter of a million of dollars per annum.

A material reduction in the consumption of intoxicating drink among persons who frequent drinking places would, by decreasing the expense of our prisons and pauper establishments, save to the city a much larger sum. The greater benefits, however, would accrue to the unfortunate persons who frequent dram shops, wasting time, health, character and money in dissipation.

The supervision of the police would restrain excesses, diminish the hours spent in dram shops, and deter some from entering them at all. This license system would increase the cost of dram drinking, and the increased cost would diminish consumption. If drinks cost a dollar there would be less taken than when they cost a dime. Persons who spend all their earnings in dram shops will drink but half the quantity when the price is doubled.

These and other considerations justify the belief that a license system, with substantially the features above indicated thoroughly enforced, would essentially benefit the municipal revenue and materially aid the cause of humanity and public order.

THOMAS C. ACTON, President.

S. C. HAWLEY, Chief Clerk.

Amusements.

MISS LUCY RUSHTON'S THEATRE.

The change of programme at Miss Rushton's pleasant place of amusement last evening, as had been anticipated, brought out a very large and fashionable audience, notwithstanding the advent of superlatively cold weather, which had not been expected. Tobin's comedy of the Honeymoon, preceded by the laughable farce A Man Without a Head, comprised the entertainment, with several selections from the music of Bellini and Flotow by the orchestra, and the pieces and the music were warmly received. As Juliana, the wayward wife, finally turned into the most amiable and obedient of spouses by the most gallant and manly of husbands, Miss Lucy Rushton fully sustained the opinion she had already formed in the public estimation by previous delineations. She was natural, lively and spirited throughout, and, in her more impetuous scenes, was genuinely artistic. She was well seconded by Mr. Mortimer. His Duke Aranza wanted some of the roughness other actors are prone to throw into the part, but was firm and consistent, and, perhaps, the better that those corners were in a measure pressed away and softened down. The parts of Volante and Zamora, by Mrs. Mark Smith and Mrs. A. W. Young, were noticeable for careful study. Mr. T. Placide, however, as Jacques, the Duke's Duke, carried away many of the honors. Mr. C. W. Clarke made his first appearance in the woman-hating, but easily captivated Captain Rolando, and produced a favorable impression, showing culture and an acquaintance with the boards. The Honeymoon is, without doubt, fated to have a successful run, having been placed upon the stage with a due regard to the location of the scene and the general fitness of things, and will certainly attract to Miss Rushton's handsome theatre all those who prefer a light, genteel comedy over the yellow covered, sanguinary productions of competing managements. After four years of real tragedy the American public can well afford a season devoted to something laughable and enjoyable.

News from the Plains.

SAN FRANCISCO, Jan. 4, 1866.

Advices from Fort Yuma, Arizona, state that large numbers of Mexican refugees were accumulating in that Territory preparatory to marching into Sonora.

Reinforced by the Gila Indians, nearly two hundred Apaches had entered the Mexican town of Sonorita, and plundered the inhabitants in a most merciless manner.

The food at Fort Yuma was insufficient for the garrison. Snow storms had rendered the roads impassable. Prescott City was blockaded by the snow, and the inhabitants were threatened with starvation.

A grand council of the Maricopa, Pima, Mohave and Yuma Indians had been held for the purpose of forming an expedition against the Apaches.

FATAL ACCIDENT ON THE SIXTH AVENUE RAILROAD—THE CONDUCTOR ARRESTED.—On the evening of the 27th ultimo Thomas Brady, a man fifty-three years of age, while much intoxicated, stepped aboard a car of the Sixth Avenue Railroad Company, at the lower terminus, for the purpose of proceeding to his place of residence, No. 112 West Forty-fourth street. When asked for his fare by the conductor Mr. Brady replied that he would pay it presently, but not complying with a second request for the fare, Mr. Coffey, the conductor, ejected Brady near the corner of West Broadway and Worth street. Mr. Brady stumbled and fell before the car wheel, which passed over one of his arms, causing a compound fracture and other severe injuries. Mr. Brady was conveyed to the New York Hospital, where he died two or three days since. Coroner Gamble held an inquest on the body, and the jury rendered a verdict as follows:—That Thomas Brady, the deceased, came to his death by injuries received by being run over by car No. 25 of the Sixth Avenue Railroad Company, on the evening of the 27th of December, 1865, and that we exonerate Mr. Coffey, the conductor, for putting the deceased off, and recommend the company to give full instructions to conductors in regard to their duties of ejecting passengers from their cars." Deceased was a native of Ireland.

FENIANISM.

Third Day's Proceedings of the Convention.

President O'Mahony Reads His Message and Important Letters.

HE CHARGES THE SENATE WITH TREACHERY

Refusal of President Roberts to Report in Person to the House.

Secretary B. D. Killian's Report on the Finances.

&c. &c. &c.

The proceedings of the Convention yesterday were characterized by some able debates on the different resolutions brought before the house, still the proceedings were marked by the utmost propriety. This was in a great measure owing to the able Chairman, who discharged his duties promptly and impartially. On the opening of the Convention the minutes of last day's proceedings were read and approved.

The report of the committee to wait on the Senate was read. The Senate could not be found as a body. Mr. Roberts' reply was very indefinite, and admitted the construction that he did not recognize the Convention as a legally constituted body, and stated that he would give his consideration to any communications received at 734 Broadway. This reply was received with marked disapprobation by the house.

A long discussion ensued as to the propriety of admitting Mr. ——, a Senator, it being stated that he would appear and explain his position, and was ready to give some important information. The motion was negatived. The Rev. Mr. Cudy was admitted to a seat. The reverend gentleman rose and in a solemn manner prayed that their deliberations would be marked by harmony and concord, and that Heaven would vouchsafe to bless their undertaking.

ANOTHER COMMITTEE TO WAIT ON THE SENATE.

A resolution was carried that a committee of five wait on the Senate, or, in its absence as a body, on the President of the Senate, to request their attendance, and in case they refuse to do so that the committee demand their books and accounts in order to investigate their stewardship. The committee reported that Mr. Roberts would make a written report, but would not appear in person.

About ten o'clock President O'Mahony entered the House and was warmly greeted.

O'MAHONY SPEAKS.

He addressed the house, stating that no man deplored the present discussion in the ranks of the Fenian Brotherhood more than he. He was there to give a full and clear explanation of his stewardship. He requested neither favor nor partiality for past services from the house; he required a full, searching investigation, and if the Convention found that he had abused the high position they had intrusted to him, condemn him accordingly.

Mr. O'Mahony's speech was listened to with great attention and frequent marks of approbation. His manner and bearing were those of an honest man, who courted the most searching investigation.

A resolution was adopted that the President's message be read at two o'clock.

After recess the Speaker appointed committees on ways and means, on fo