# NEW YORK CITY.

## THE COURTS.

### UNITED STATES CIRCUIT COURT.

**An Old Revenue Case.**

Before Judge Benedict.

*The United States vs. John W. George et al.*—The defendants were some time ago proceeded against in a civil suit for defrauding the revenue. A compromise was effected directly with the Secretary of the Treasury, by which the defendants were to pay a certain sum in currency as penalties and another sum in gold as duties. The money was paid into court, and the government now brings suit to recover the amount fixed upon for duties. The Customs officers and the informers on the original case oppose the claim on the ground that the whole sum is to be deemed as law penalties to be distributed among them; that the Secretary of the Treasury could not, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, ascertain the true amount of duties, and could not by law designate the money paid as duties. There are several persons claiming as informers, among whom a controversy also exists as to their respective shares.

The case now comes into court for a settlement of the rights of all parties. S. G. Courtney and Simon Towle, special counsel of the Treasury Department of the United States; Messrs. Seward, Fine & Tenney for other contestants. Decision reserved.

**Another Whiskey Case.**

*The United States vs. Bernard Kupper.*—The defendant in this case was arrested Friday last on two bench warrants for unlawfully removing spirits from a distillery to a compounding or rectifying house. This is the second case under the new law. There are two indictments against the accused and the District Attorney fixed the bail on each indictment at $5,000. Mr. Courtney is anxious to try this case during the present term if a judge can be found to hold Circuit Court here after Judge Benedict returns to his own district, which he will be obliged to do on the 17th inst.

**The Whiskey Cases.**

The trials of the whiskey cases set down for to-day go over till Monday on account of motions being preferred, to-day (Saturday) being regular motion day.

**The Dupuy Case—Motion for a New Trial.**

A motion for a new trial in this case was argued yesterday. H. A. Cram for the motion, District Attorney Courtney and Assistant District Attorney Phelps opposing. Decision deferred.

### UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT—IN BANKRUPTCY.

**Discharges.**

During the past week each of the following named persons received a discharge in bankruptcy:—Thomas E. Jones, William Steele, Ira Smith, Jr.; William A. Smith, James Dreyfuss, Samuel Haskell, Edward Behrend, Jacques Goldsmith, Marcus Kronfeld, Joseph D. Crockett, Christian F. Schramme, William Ulmer and Andrew Wesson.

### UNITED STATES COMMISSIONER'S COURT.

**A Counterfeit Case.**

Before Commissioner Osborn.

*United States vs. Bernard Connolly.*—The defendant was arrested by Deputy Marshal H. A. Betts for an alleged attempt to pass a counterfeit five dollar note on a Washington Market dealer. He was held in default of $5,000 bail for an examination on the 8th inst.

### SUPREME COURT—CHAMBERS.

**Decisions Rendered.**

By Judge Cardozo.

*Pierson vs. Volk.*—Motion for receiver denied. No costs.

*Merwin et al. vs. John Evans.*—Motion denied, with ten dollars costs.

*People, &c., Clerk, &c., vs. Boardmans et al.*—Motion denied, without costs and without prejudice.

*Germeroth vs. Lersing.*—Answer may be served on payment of five dollars costs.

*Weber et al. vs. Schaefer.*—Cause restored to calendar on payment of ten dollars costs.

*Norris vs. Le Baron.*—Cause sent to calendar for next Friday upon payment of trial fee, ten dollars, cost of motion, &c.

*Dunlop et al. vs. Benning et al.*—Receiver appointed; twenty dollars costs allowed.

*Reeder vs. Loughlin.*—Motion for receiver, &c., denied.

*Isidor, &c., vs. Burnstine.*—Motion denied.

*Osgood et al. vs. Pray.*—Motion granted on payment of ten dollars costs.

*Girven vs. Girven.*—Reference ordered.

*Brown et al. vs. Carpenter.*—Default opened on payment of ten dollars costs, &c.

*Lee vs. Lee.*—Motion granted.

*Strauss et al. vs. Perlmutter*—Motion denied, without costs.

*Hawley, &c., vs. Tice et al.*—Motion granted. Defendant may answer in five days, &c.

*Long vs. Bailly et al.*—Motion denied. Five dollars costs to abide event.

*Pratt vs. Barnes et al.*—Motion denied.

*Murray vs. Seighortner, &c.*—Defendant may answer in five days on payment of ten dollars costs. Judgment and levy to stand, &c.

*Von Bernuth vs. Strachan.*—Questions are overruled.

*Hawley, &c., vs. Tice et al.*—Same decision as in other case of this title.

*Traphagen vs. Woodgate et al.*—Judgment granted.

*Brown vs. Dalton.*—Amended decree settled.

*Meyer vs. New York Oil Company.*—See memorandum of decisions.

*Condon vs. McGill et al.*—Defendants discharged on stipulating not to sue.

*Pratt vs. Barnes et al.*—Motion denied.

### COURT OF GENERAL SESSIONS.

**Arson in the Third Degree—Roll and Baden Convicted and Sent to the State Prison for Ten Years.**

Before Recorder Hackett.

The trial of Frederick Baden, charged with arson in the third degree, was resumed yesterday. He was charged with conspiring to burn his liquor store, corner of Fiftieth street and Ninth avenue, on the evening of November 25, Joseph Roll having been convicted in December of perpetrating that offence. The testimony adduced by the prosecution, together with the prisoner's own statement, went to show that Baden was an accessory before the fact. The counsel called a number of witnesses to show that the accused had a good character, but their testimony did not contradict the evidence of the witnesses for the people.

Assistant District Attorney Hutchings, in summing up the case, carefully reviewed the testimony, and dwelt particularly upon the extraordinary confession which the prisoner made to Fire Marshal Brackett, showing that it was corroborated by the testimony in the case.

Recorder Hackett stated the law and reviewed the testimony, paying a special compliment to Fire Marshal Brackett for the efficient and conscientious discharge of his duty in this case. His Honor instructed the jury that if they convicted the prisoner the verdict should be "guilty as an accessory before the fact of arson in the third degree."

After a few moments' deliberation the jury rendered the above verdict. Counsel for the prisoner moved an arrest of judgment, which was denied.

Roll, who was remanded for sentence, was placed at the bar.

The Recorder, in passing sentence, said that but for a legal technicality the prisoners, Roll and Baden, would have been convicted of arson in the first degree. The case against them was so clear that he did not feel justified in mitigating the punishment. He sentenced each of them to the State Prison for the term of ten years.

### COURT OF SPECIAL SESSIONS.

**Sanguinary Drama at the Grand Opera House—A Soldier in Trouble.**

Before Justices Kelly and Dowling.

The calendar was not very heavy yesterday, but the court was very crowded and the atmosphere was not improved by the heat from a glowing stove. When there was added to this the fairly insufferable impertinence of the clerk, who, from his lack of courtesy, succeeded in proving himself unworthy of his position, the members of the press found themselves undergoing during the session tortures closely resembling those of the lower regions, with a first class imp detailed, in the shape of a clerk, to do the torturing. Why is he tolerated?

SANGUINARY DRAMA AT THE GRAND OPERA HOUSE.—Mr. Adolph Bergfeld, director of the Grand Opera House, appeared against Mr. Francis Tholer, an actor, whom he charged with assault and battery. The circumstances of the case, as shown by the evidence of Mr. Bergfeld, were these:—Mr. Tholer had been discharged by the director on the complaint of the stage manager for refusing to act when called upon, and in an interview with Mr. Bergfeld acknowledged the justice of the dismissal. Subsequently, however, he was instructed by some French friends that the law of this country would not sustain the director's action, and he accordingly visited him in his office on Tuesday last, while a rehearsal was in progress. He appeared to be greatly excited, charged Mr. Bergfeld with want of heart, complained that injustice was done him, and stated that he hated this country and was tired of it and wished to get back to France. It should have been stated that at the first interview he made an engagement for his daughter at $140 per month to play at the Opera House. When Mr. Bergfeld was explaining matters to him Tholer suddenly put his arms round the director's neck, and, getting his head "in chancery," commenced a vigorous attack on his face and head, all the while dancing and capering like a madman, and French at that. Mr. Bergfeld's face was greatly bruised, some of his teeth were broken, and he was soon insensible. Tholer continued to pummel the director until Mr. McIntyre entered the office and took him away.

Mr. Harold Bateman, being called, testified that Mr. Tholer was one of the quietest and most gentlemanly actors in the whole opera troupe.

Justice Dowling, commenting on the case, said that he could not let such a violent act go unpunished, although he would take into consideration when passing sentence the previous good character of the prisoner. If he was wrongfully dismissed from his position he had his remedy in law, and there was, therefore, no necessity for such a violent act as that proved to have been committed; and if he hated the country and wished to leave it he should have gone away quietly.

The Judge then sentenced Mr. Tholer to one month's imprisonment in the Penitentiary and to pay a fine of fifty dollars.

A SOLDIER IN TROUBLE.—Charles Clifford, a United States cavalry soldier, appeared against Edward O'Toole, a young man apparently of no vicious disposition, whom he charged with having decoyed him into a cellar in the Bowery and there robbing him of twenty-three dollars. The prisoner was remanded to enable him to bring witnesses to prove his innocence.

### SIXTH DISTRICT POLICE COURT.

**A Novel Case—The Right of Assessment by Private Associations.**

Before Judge T. R. Lane.

*The Athenæum Association vs. Matthew Chalmers.*—This was an action brought by the plaintiff, known as the Athenæum Club, to recover of the defendant the sum of sixty dollars, being the amount of an assessment duly imposed in pursuance of its constitution by the plaintiff upon all resident members. The defendant, a member of the association, by his answer denied that the association had the right to impose such assessment; also that the amount had been demanded from him, and that he was liable to pay the same.

The plaintiff proved by Mr. Smith E. Lane, its former Secretary, that the assessment had been regularly imposed by a vote of the association; that the defendant was at that time a resident member, and by another witness that payment had been demanded of the defendant. The issue was practically a question of law as to the right of the plaintiff to make an assessment and the liability of the defendant to pay the same. The case was, after argument by respective counsel for the parties, decided in favor of the plaintiff for the full amount claimed.

## CITY INTELLIGENCE.

THE WEATHER YESTERDAY.—The following record will show the changes in the temperature for the past twenty-four hours, as indicated by the thermometer at Hudnut's pharmacy, HERALD Building, Broadway, corner of Ann street:—

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| 3 A. M. | 27 | 3 P. M. | 44 |
| 6 A. M. | 26 | 6 P. M. | 40 |
| 9 A. M. | 32 | 9 P. M. | 39 |
| 12 M. | 40 | 12 P. M. | 30 |

Average temperature ..... 35⅞
Average temperature on Friday ..... 25½
Average temperature for the week ..... 34 4-5

SUDDEN DEATH.—Yesterday morning a man named Hermanns applied for admission to Bellevue Hospital, and, while being registered, was taken suddenly ill, and, falling to the floor, expired in a few moments afterwards. An inquest will be held on the body by Coroner Schirmer, who was notified.

DEATH FROM INJURIES.—Coroner Schirmer was yesterday notified to hold an inquest at Bellevue Hospital on the body of Christopher Nelson, who died from the effects of injuries received nearly a month since by an embankment falling upon him while at work on one of the New Jersey railroads.

THE MAYOR'S OFFICE.—Marshal Tooker reports that during the past week he has issued 135 licenses, receiving therefor $281 75. Of these 1 was to an intelligence office, 5 to boarding houses, 36 to vendors, 36 to public carts, 51 to drivers, 5 to public porters and 1 to a junk shop. On account of fines he received $17, making a total of $298 75.

ST. VINCENT'S HOSPITAL.—In aid of this charitable institution Mr. Richard O'Gorman will lecture tomorrow evening at the Cooper Institute, the subject selected by him being "Liberty Boys of New York." The previous lecture of this gentleman, given a few nights ago, at Steinway Hall, also in the cause of charity, was listened to by a numerous audience, and it is hoped, on this occasion, the response will be the attendance of a numerous audience to enjoy the rich, intellectual treat that will be offered them.

DARING HIGHWAY ROBBERY.—Three thieves made a bold stroke for the possession of money on Friday night at six o'clock. Simon Loncke, a clerk in the employ of the Lackawanna Coal Company, corner of Nineteenth street and avenue B, on leaving the office took with him the receipts of the day, $133, for the purpose of conveying it to the upper office, in East Thirty-fourth street. When near avenue B three persons suddenly jumped upon him, two of whom held him while the third relieved him of the funds. The thieves then made their escape.

THE PARK BANK ROBBERY.—The man who was arrested and subsequently tried and convicted for the late robbery at the Park Bank went under various aliases, and it is thought did not give his right name in any case. When he was first arrested he gave the name of Francis E. Pintg, the name of a general in the late war and now a merchant of this city. He subsequently gave the name of Anthony Martin, a respectable citizen of Brooklyn, and which is also the name of a respectable citizen of New York. These gentlemen have been subjected to a great deal of annoyance by the assumption of the robber in using their names, and it is due to them to make this explanation.

PHILADELPHIANS AND THE ARION BALL.—A very amusing incident occurred in connection with the Arion *bal masqué* of last Thursday, which became known yesterday. A "quartet," members of the Philadelphia Maennerchor, arrived in this city on Wednesday, purchased their tickets and made all necessary preparations to visit the Academy on the Arion night to take a good look in order to give the Philadelphians a good round of lessons how to arrange a mask ball. For weeks the prominent costumers of the City of Brotherly Love were employed to prepare at great expense the fancy dresses for the four gentlemen, and a few friends were invited to the hotel to inspect the splendid array of silks, laces and velvet, hats and plumes, swords and boots, and spangles of all metals and varied brilliancy. Of course a bottle of wine was ordered to drink the health of the Maennerchor and of the Arion; then another, and again another, and a few more, and many more thereafter, and the young Philadelphians began to doze, to snooze, to sleep, to snore, and they kept at it till the early hours of Friday morning, just about the time when the lights were extinguished at the Academy and the servants began to sweep. Thus they came to New York to see the Arion ball and saw none of it after all. But they committed to memory the description of the ball which appeared in the HERALD, paid a fee to have the doors of the Academy opened for them in order to have a view of the interior, and departed to the city of the Quakers to tell of the beauties of the Arion ball which they didn't see, their dresses crumpled up by artifical force—wiser, but not merrier men.

THE ASSEMBLY CONTESTED SEATS.—The Committee on Assembly Contested Seats continued its session yesterday at the Metropolitan Hotel. The committee decided, one-half hearing the case of McKiever vs. Whalen, and the other half the case of Hawkins vs. Decker. In the former James McKiever is contestant, and Charles H. Whalen incumbent. The contested seat is that of the Fourteenth district of this city. Mr. Henry Smith appeared for the contestant, and Messrs. A. H. Wagner and Eugene Durnin for the incumbent. The contestant's case was that frauds were committed in the Thirty-fourth and Fourteenth election districts of sufficient amount to alter the aggregate vote (which in the official canvass stood:—Whalen, 2,505; McKiever, 2,204) from a majority for Whalen to a majority for McKiever. The official canvass showed the vote in the Fourteenth election district to be:—Whalen, 184; McKiever, 109; in the Thirty-fourth, Whalen, 267; McKiever, 93. The first witness called by the contestant was Louis B. Latten, of 71 St. Mark's place, the republican inspector in the Thirty-fourth district of the Seventeenth ward. He testified that he saw democratic inspector McQuade drop on the ground some of the Assembly tickets handed him by voters and substitute for them and put in the ballot box others which he drew from his pocket, and which witness presumed were for Whalen, of whom McQuade was a supporter. Witness said that that would not do, to which McQuade responded, "If you don't shut up I will punch your head," and he did shut up. Robert J. Black, the republican poll clerk in the same district, a bookkeeper, residing at 333 East Twenty-third street, gave somewhat similar testimony. Michael T. Kelly, of 88 avenue A, was next examined. The other half of the committee took up the hearing of the Staten Island contested seat. Patrick Martin, of the Seventh district of Middletown, and Abraham Kreuzer and A. D. Post, of the Third district of Northfield, were examined and testified that they were not registered, but voted on affidavit for Decker.

## POLICE INTELLIGENCE.

ROBBERY ON SHIPBOARD.—James Haley, a passenger on board the Rising Star, which arrived in this city on Friday from Liverpool, appeared before Justice Dodge yesterday and preferred a complaint against a fellow passenger named Michael Mulligan, charging him with stealing $280 in gold from him while on the voyage to this country. The parties occupied the same bunk in the steerage, and Haley alleges that while asleep the money was stolen from him by the prisoner who returned thirty-seven dollars of it to him. Mulligan pleaded guilty to the charge and was committed to answer in default of bail.

ALLEGED BURGLARY IN DUANE STREET.—Michael Gannon, a bar-tender, was arrested by Captain Jourdan, of the Sixth precinct, and detective Dunn, of the same force, on the charge of having forced an entrance to the dwelling-house of William Riley, No. 7 Duane street, on the 26th ult., and stealing a shawl valued at $50. For the purpose of breaking in the door of William's residence Gannon borrowed a smoothing iron from Mary Craig, living in the same house. Upon returning the burglarious implement the accused told Mary that he got what he wanted from the room, at the same time exhibiting a watch, which he held in his hand. Michael had nothing to say in his own defence and Justice Dowling committed him to the Tombs for trial in default of bail.

STABBING AFFRAY.—On Saturday afternoon a serious affray occurred in front of the store No. 80 Bowery, between Joseph Goldwater and Lewis McManus. Both parties were arrested and on being taken before Justice Ledwith, at Essex Market Police Court, the following particulars were elicited. Goldwater, who is a cigar maker by trade, was standing in front of the store in company with some fellow workmen, when McManus, who was considerably under the influence of liquor, came up and demanded what they were laughing at. Goldwater informed McManus that it was none of his business. Remarks altogether unfit for ears polite were exchanged and finally McManus announced his belief that he could whip Goldwater. Goldwater accepted the challenge on the condition that the fight should come off up stairs, *i. e.* in the store in which he was employed. To this McManus objected and waiting his opportunity he squared up to Goldwater as the latter was about moving off. Goldwater drew an awkward looking knife and hacked furiously at his diminutive, drunken and comparatively defenceless opponent. McManus had received a severe stab in the left side of his face and one or two cuts about the hands, when officer Malin, of the Tenth precinct, interfered and prevented the execution of Goldwater's murderous intentions. Both parties were discharged.

BURKE THE RIOTER AGAIN IN TROUBLE.—Peter F. Burke, alias "Rioter Burke," and a confederate named John Sharkey, were arraigned before Justice Dodge, at the Jefferson Market Police Court, yesterday, upon complaint of Thomas Gibney, of 245 Ninth avenue, who charges that on Friday night the prisoners entered his saloon at the above number, called for and partook of refreshments, which they refused to pay for, and, when remonstrated with by Gibney, they commenced to abuse and assault him and destroy his furniture; that Burke took hold of and pulled his nose, and also held a large knife in his hand, with which he threatened and attempted to stab and cut him. Thomas Shrekey also acted in a disorderly manner and threatened to shoot him. Officer Wolfe, of the Sixteenth precinct, testified that he was in the station house when Ward came; that there was a riot in Gibney's Saloon; that he, accompanied by another officer, repaired to the place, when he saw Burke with a large knife in his hand raising it in a menacing and threatening manner; and also threatened to stab him when he attempted to arrest him. A complaint of felonious assault was preferred against them, and they were locked up to answer the charge. Burke, upon his informal examination, stated he was twenty-seven years of age, a native of Ireland, residing at No. 337 West Twenty-sixth street, by occupation a dock inspector, and had nothing to say in reference to the charge preferred against him. Sharkey stated he was twenty-eight years of age, a native of Ireland, residing in Thirty-fifth street, by occupation a boiler maker, and not guilty of the charge. They were both committed in default of bail to answer at the General Sessions. Burke is the party who figured so conspicuously during the late riots in this city, and rode the white horse at the head of the riot, for which he was tried and sent to the State Prison for five years, but subsequently pardoned.

## VOICE OF THE PEOPLE.

**Call to Abate a Nuisance.**

The present unhealthy condition of the vacant lot on the corner of Eleventh street and University place is referred to by a correspondent as demanding instant action on the part of the health authorities. Our correspondent says nothing but what is true and his notice should be heeded.

**Fourth Avenue and the Harlem Railroad.**

A "Cartman" complains justly of the blocking up of Fourth avenue from Twenty-ninth to Thirty-first street, crossings included, by the cars of the Harlem Railroad, purposely left there "to the great inconvenience of persons whose business obliges them to pass and repass" that locality.

**A Plan to Supplant the Police.**

A "Timid Citizen" writes that inasmuch as the police are so insufficient to prevent crime a militia regiment might be ordered out every night to do patrol duty. "Timid Citizen" thinks this would do, while the rank and file of the militia may probably think otherwise.

**Mechanics' Homes.**

"Onward" asks who will start the ball in securing homes for the workingmen upon the plan suggested in last Sunday's HERALD. He would be one of a party putting from $100 to $200 each into a common fund to purchase the ground in the neighborhood of the city and continue to contribute till all are provided with comfortable homes.

**The Old Story Again.**

"Victim" complains bitterly of the bogus jewelry shops and gambling hells in this city, and relates his experience, having been taken in himself. It is the same old story over again; but new it is that when he complained to the police he was coolly informed that nothing could be done, as the evidence was insufficient to convict.

**Judge Dowling and Rowdies.**

"A Friend to the Right" takes exception to the statement in Sunday's HERALD that Judge Dowling is doing all in his power to put a stop to rowdyism in the street cars, and he alleges that the rowdy there referred to, after being sentenced and when the prosecuting parties had left the court, was recalled and discharged.

**A Call on the Vigilance Committee.**

A "Merchant" wants to know whether there is such a body as a vigilance committee in this city; and if there be, he believes it high time for it to interfere, that "one of the most notorious murderers and robbers on the Continent," Steve Doyle, alias Gus Shaw, lately arrested, be not treated to an illusory sentence, but be sent back to Michigan to be tried, convicted and punished for murder. "Men of New York," says "Merchant," "vigilance committee, if you are live men, bestir yourselves."

**Reading Rooms for Boys.**

Called out by the article on boys in the HERALD of February 1, a member of the Young Men's Christian Association writes us to say that this society had some years ago established reading rooms, free to all and open from eight A. M. to ten P. M., at No. 161 Fifth avenue, corner Twenty-second street; 285 Hudson street, 473 Grand street and at Harlem. As soon as the magnificent building of the association, corner Fourth avenue and Twenty-third street, shall be finished a free reading room will be opened there and also a gymnasium.

**The Southside Railroad in Brooklyn.**

An excited individual, residing in Bushwick and signing himself "Argus," sends us an energetic protest against the action of the "sapient Common Council and joke-cracking Mayor," allowing the Southside Railroad to run cars through the Eastern district. He heads his communication "Steam Cars and Murder," calls it an "iniquitous measure," charges the newspapers with being "subsidized to advocate it," refers to the example of Philadelphia, where the steam cars have been tried but found wanting, and the "ceaseless rolling of these juggernaut lumbrels," whatever these may be, is now stopped, and hopes in conclusion for "the abatement of the monstrous and crying nuisance, on the grounds of public safety, general utility and humanity."

**The Hackmen at the Railroad Depots.**

A "Hackman and Law-abiding Citizen" denies the statement in the HERALD that a number of pickpockets had been arrested on Saturday night. He says they were honest hack men, arrested on the charge of having solicited passengers in the depot, contrary to law, four of whom were immediately discharged at the Twenty-first precinct station house and the rest by Judge Kelly next morning. This communication makes some severe charges against the police, stating, among other things, that one gang of pickpockets, known as "Whitey Bob's Mob," seem to have the privilege of "working the Boston and Harlem trains" without much interference from the police; that pickpockets at the depots are well known to all hackmen, who dare not give any information for fear of violence from the thieves, and the utter want of protection from the police.

**The Seamen and the Ship Owners.**

"W" writes us to protest against the statement of Captain C. C. Duncan, published in the HERALD, that the "shipowners were the sailors' true friends and their enemies were the shipping and boarding masters." "W" differs from the captain and asserts that the shipowners, who keep down the wages and won't even pay their officers more than $35 per month are the greatest enemies of the sailors. "All shipping masters and boarding house keepers are not rogues," says "W."

Another correspondent upon the same subject says that the mariners of the port of New York have not much to complain of and need not murmur, considering how men engaged in the same pursuit are treated in some other portions of the world. And he instances San Francisco, where the sailors "the moment the anchor drops are seized and taken on shore" by the boarding house keepers, who hold them in a species of slavery until outgoing ships require men, when they are placed on board, whether they like it or not, and the advance is paid over to the boarding master. The writer even mentions cases of kidnapping as having occurred at San Francisco. This evil is said to have become so prevalent that the United States Grand Jury for the Northern district of California took action in the matter last week and petitioned Congress to interfere.

## THE SPRING TRADE.

**Our Metropolis as the Grand National Emporium of Trade—The Wholesale Trade Opening with Most Encouraging Prospects—Prices as Compared with Last Year—Inauguration of the Spring Retail City Trade Under the Most Favorable Auspices.**

The seasons which roll on with the varied year come not more surely and uniformly than the seasons of trade. We are just now entering on the spring trade. Seeing that winter is not yet over this might seem a misnomer, but it must be borne in mind that we are a fast, go-ahead people, not given to dilatoriness, but to taking time by the forelock. And thus spring trade in the metropolis is ushered in with the present month. With some branches of trade the spring trade opens on the first of this month, with others it does not begin till the middle of the month, and there are few that are not under assured headway before the advent of positive spring. The prospect of a good spring trade is eminently encouraging—has not been better, in fact, for years. The new government soon to be inaugurated at Washington; the hearty co-operation that Congress has already evinced with the policy of the incoming administration; the prospect of reform and economy in the management of our political affairs; the cheering hope of an era of wiser legislation and less reckless expenditure of the national finances and less corruption and schemes of spoliation, and speedy admission of all the Southern States into the Union, from which the suicidal legislation of partisan plunderers and jobbers has so long excluded them—all these have infused a general confidence everywhere, have given a new impetus to trade, roused our wholesale merchants to renewed activity and enlarged purchases, and, in brightening the future pathway of trade of retail merchants coming here to make their purchases, induce them to do so in the fullest assurance of speedy and satisfactory sales. What more pleasant picture of the prospects of spring trade can be drawn than this? Is it to be wondered at that our city, the great head centre of trade in this country, the great commercial emporium of this Western Continent, should be so stirred with unwonted animation; that unusual activity should show itself at our wharves in the unloading of monster ships, newly arrived from foreign ports; that the most lively commotion should prevail at the Custom House and bonded warehouses in paying duties and getting goods from bond; that our mammoth wholesale stores, in unpacking and invoicing and arranging for sale their multifarious and rich imported fabrics, should be bursting with preternatural liveliness, and that our retail stores should be hurrying off at ruinous prices their old stocks of goods to make room for goods newer and brighter, and from bringing new modes and fashions with them more in demand and commanding readier sales? It is not to be wondered at; and now, having thus answered this question, we will proceed to write specifically of the leading different branches of trade and the pleasing and lively prospect ahead, showing beyond question that the present spring trade will be unusually large in nearly every distinctive branch.

DRY GOODS.

What would the world be without dry goods? As well ask what the world would be without air or water. Dry goods have become almost as essential to modern existence. They embrace an extended catalogue of our civilized wants, and increasing wealth and refinement constantly increase the catalogue. A most interesting chapter might be written on the progress made in the manufacture of dry goods; how human ingenuity has been taxed in devising fabrics for our use and comfort; how the vast resources of nature have been drawn upon to contribute the required material; how the illimitable wealth of art has been made auxiliary to the perfecting of this material, and how study and science are still exhausting themselves in the effort to compass the utmost possible variety, beauty and perfection in this grand specialty of human wants and products. Everybody must have dry goods, the poorest as well as the richest. The demand is universal. New York is the great depot for supplying this demand in this country. In dry goods the spring trade began on the first of this month, and with each passing day the tide of trade increases in flow, and will increase till the ebb, which begins about the middle of June. During the early winter months importers were selecting their foreign fabrics, the importations being mainly from England, France and Germany, and each striving to outrival the other in the extent and variety of their selections. Goods of domestic manufacture were also thus early selected. Meanwhile agents of jobbing houses were travelling over every State in the Union securing purchasers. All the goods have arrived; the scattered horde of "drummers" has returned to the city, and the welcome purchasers are already beginning to make their appearance. We are now speaking of the wholesale trade. Merchants are beginning to flock to the hotels. The first arrival of merchants is from the South and West. Later they will begin to come from the interior and distant sections of this State and Pennsylvania and contiguous States and the Eastern States. The average prices will not vary much from those of last year. In some lines of domestics there is a comparative scarcity, but it is thought the supply will very nearly equal the demand. Altogether, a much better trade is anticipated than last spring. Our wholesale merchants are showing more leniency in sales as regards time of payment. The long credits given before the war will not be revived; but to well accredited buyers the most accommodating terms will be given. A special indication of returning confidence is the increased liberality shown to Southern merchants. While immediately after the war none of these could buy except for cash, it is found now, especially as they had a good cotton crop last year, that they pay well and promptly. However, our merchants are not disposed to be reckless. The severe lessons of the past have taught them caution. Formerly the spirit of rivalry exercised itself upon the special point to see which could sell the most goods. Now the chief rivalry is to secure safe sales. Purchasers are also more cautious. And thus, with judicious caution on each side, and with abundant goods and sellers and buyers, and with every prospect of a lively and gratifying trade, opens the spring trade in dry goods.

SILK GOODS.

The spring trade in this class of goods—a very large trade, and, as ladies are the principal buyers, regarded in their eyes as important as it is indispensable—does not open till about the middle of this month. France, as is well known, furnishes most of the goods in this line, though some very fine silks are bought in Germany and Italy. Plain silks, of course, are chiefly in demand, though for fancy plaids and stripes there is a growing taste. Latterly ribbons have been growing wider, with an increasing tendency to the brightest colors. Some new and very elegant patterns will be introduced this spring. It is gratifying to be able to state the fact, and one that will be as pleasing to lady buyers as to the men, who mainly have to pay the bills, that prices will be somewhat lower this spring than last season. As with dry goods, the first purchasers come from the West and Southwest and the later ones from States more contiguous to New York.

FANCY GOODS AND YANKEE NOTIONS.

Each year shows an increase in these classes of fabrics. The disposition to indulge in fancy goods evinces unfailing growth, and Yankee ingenuity never sleeps. Unending as is the list of goods specified as Yankee notions, that is, unending as it was seemingly last year and the year before and so on back to the earliest days of wooden nutmegs, when Yankee ingenuity first showed itself, there always come out each spring curious and undreamed of additions to the grandly interminable inventory. The spring trade in this branch of traffic—and incredibly immense is the traffic—does not fairly open until the middle of this month. A very brisk trade is expected in this line, with prices firm—that is, varying very little from those of last year.

LACES AND EMBROIDERIES.

The ladies of this country owe a large debt to Belgium—a debt for the laces she furnishes them—a debt for the exquisitely delicate fabrics into which laces are so ingeniously wrought. Many embroideries brought to the New York market come from Switzerland and France, but the great bulk of them come from Ireland. The spring trade in these articles commences about the middle of this month. The trade, as can already be seen from the expensive and luxurious character of the goods, is principally confined to the larger cities and towns. Prices, according to the present indications of the market, will be somewhat in advance of what they were a year ago. It is also believed the trade will be much better this spring than last.

MILLINERY GOODS.

There would be but little in life worth living for—this is to be taken from a feminine standpoint of view—were it not for the enjoyable periodical sensation of a new bonnet. It requires but slight knowledge of feminine characteristics to know that of all spring goods the ladies are the most impatient on the subject of millinery goods. These are about the earliest goods bought in the market. An unusual and beautiful variety is offered this spring. Prices are a little higher than they were a year ago, and there is every prospect of a splendid trade. Most of this class of goods are imported from Paris and Lyons, France, and Nottingham, England.

CLOTHING.

The amount of ready made clothing sold here for other markets is incredibly large. More people are employed making these garments than is generally imagined. These workmen not only crowd our pent-up alleys and the cramped rooms of our tenement houses, but are scattered in the villages of New Jersey, make a good share of the population of the towns bordering the Hudson river and those lining the railroad routes permeating Connecticut. The clothing thus made finds its way into all the leading cities and villages and towns of the country, each year increasing the demand and required supply. The wholesale spring trade opens the middle of this month, the retail trade beginning two or three weeks later. The trade commences with the purchases made for the Western and Southwestern markets. For garments made from domestic cloths the prices will be about the same as last spring, but those made of imported cloths will command considerably higher prices, the prices of French and English cloths being higher than they were a year ago. More ready made clothing will go South this year than at any time since the close of the rebellion.

CHINA AND GLASS WARE.

All this class of goods is imported, the leading points of importation being France, England, Belgium and Austria. The prices, of course, depend upon the value of gold. At the present opening of the spring trade, which began on the first of this month, the prices did not differ materially from those ruling at the corresponding season a year ago. It is thought by the dealers that there will be an unusually good trade. For the finer grades of goods, as Sevres china, Parian marble, Bohemian and Venetian glass, porcelain and other classes of wares, such as only the rich can afford to buy, there is a constantly increasing demand—an assured token of increasing wealth and refinement, not to say luxurious extravagance, so rapidly diffusing itself in this country. Many special sets are being ordered, with initials in monogram and coats of arms—a further token of the ambitious striving of wealth in this country for aristocratic distinction. A multitude of new styles show themselves in the freshly arrived goods, quaintly curious and elaborately delicate patterns, the very perfection of the highest art. The Southern trade begins first, and then the Western trade, which opens about the 1st of March. The near by trade is a little later.

CROCKERY.

This is a heavy, but very important and very useful branch of trade. The bulk of the spring trade, owing to the cumbrous size and weight of the goods, as packed in crates for safe importation, is at the opening of spring navigation. Of foreign goods most come from Staffordshire, England, but domestic fabrics are constantly increasing in quantity as well as in demand. It is the general opinion of the wholesale dealers that they will have an unusually large trade, as the trade last year was particularly dull. Prices, alike for the manufacturer, importer and jobber, promise to be much better. Quite a share of this class of trade, owing to the necessity, or rather general practice, of waiting for the opening of spring navigation, as stated above, is accomplished by orders.

BOOTS AND SHOES.

The annual wholesale trade in boots and shoes in this city is almost fabulously large, amounting yearly to millions of dollars. Most of the heavy work, as pegged boots, is made in Natick, Mass. The lighter work, as ladies' fine gaiters and other shoes, is, since the introduction of sewing machines in connection with the manufacture of boots and shoes, made principally in this city. Experience has shown that the same quality of this class of work can be made here as at the East. Lynn is the principal manufactory of ladies' gaiters. The spring trade has already commenced, having begun on the first of this month. First comes the Southern trade and then the Western trade. It is a singular fact, but worthy of stating here, as based on the statements of wholesale dealers in this class of goods, that Southern buyers paid better last year than Western buyers. Prices will be little better than they were last year. Besides sending an almost unending quantity of cases of boots and shoes South and West, heavy shipments are also made to California, the West India Islands and South America.

FURNISHING GOODS.

The Southern trade has already commenced in this line of merchantable products. The Western trade will commence the middle of this month, and the near trade two weeks later. Prices are a little in advance of what they were last year.

GROCERIES.

A good many goods embraced in this specialty of trade are now being sold, but principally on orders. Owing to the same reason given above in reference to the crockery trade, the business does not become brisk except to seaport cities until the opening of the rivers and canals. More or less goods are shipped to Chicago and contiguous cities through there being competitive railroads to these points; but on the Hudson River Railroad, under the *regime* of Mr. Vanderbilt, the freights are placed so high as to render it ruinous to transport heavy goods over this route. The result is that not until the latter part of March or the 1st of April can the spring trade be said really to be open. Prices are about the same as last year. Very little trade is done with the South in groceries. It is a noticeable fact, however, that more New Orleans molasses and sugars have been received here during the past year than during many years previous, and it is further noticeable that the quality of these articles of Southern production is much better than ever heretofore—a fact attributed to the introduction of Northern capitalists and keener Yankee capacity and shrewdness in their manufacture.

INDIA RUBBER GOODS.

For the multifarious products manufactured from vulcanized rubber there is a constantly increasing demand. The spring trade has already commenced with marked vigor and animation. The opening trade is principally Western. There is but little trade East, and most of the Southern trade is during the summer months. Present prices do not vary materially from those of last year.

THE HAT TRADE.

The major part of hats designed for the wholesale trade are manufactured at Danbury, Conn. A large quantity is also made here, but more especially for local and near by trade. First comes the Southern trade, which opened on the first of this month, and after that the Western trade, which is not fairly inaugurated till the first of next month. Present prospects give abundant promise of an unusually brisk spring trade, with average prices, ruling about the same as last spring.

BOOKS.

That old apothegm, or whatever you choose to call it, about there being no end to the making of books, is amply verified by the astonishing display of new books waiting venture in the spring market. The *cacoethes scribendi* still prevails in virulent form. The demand for books, happily, is yearly increasing, which may be set down as highly complimentary to the masses of our people and as indicating the growing refinement of intellectual culture. The spring trade, however, does not begin till the first of next month. Everything indicates unusual activity in the book market. It is a lamentable fact, though, that hitherto—and it will doubtless be the same this year—the principal trade has been North and West, that of the South being exceedingly limited and confined mostly to the principal Southern cities. Last spring's prices will not differ essentially from those of this spring.

WATCHES, JEWELRY AND SILVER WARE.

In these branches of trade, generally combined in one, there is a very large wholesale business done in this city. The spring trade has already opened under the most hopeful auspices, and with prices varying very little from what they have been—a little lower in the average if anything. Watches of American manufacture are rapidly growing into more popular demand and use. The custom of importing the works of watches and putting them in cases here still prevails, however, to a very large extent, and as these imported works are of first class workmanship the imports will continue as long as labor in Switzerland and elsewhere where watches are manufactured is so much cheaper there than here. It is the cheaper class of jewelry that generally enters into the wholesale trade. Taste for a display of jewelry is a widespread weakness, and when this taste can be gratified at comparatively trifling expense, inexpensively gaudy jewelry is bound to find abundant purchasers. The ambition for glittering display is gratified, and very largely, with total absence of the golden reality. It is, therefore, not going beyond the mark to say that of this class of cheap jewelry millions of dollars' worth are annually sold here. For first class jewelry one of course must go to first class establishments and pay first class prices. It is the same with silver ware. But it is unnecessary to dwell on this point. In the genuine articles of watches, jewelry and silver ware, and those