

*To the Chairman and Members of the Police Committee.*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit for your consideration the annual report of the Recorder's Court for 1886.

More than at any other time previously, this Court must have attracted the attention of serious men during the last year, for new and important questions, and matters altogether worthy of the consideration of higher tribunals, have been submitted to it.

I will mention only two : the first—decided in the negative, as is already known—whether Nude in art can be exhibited, forced even upon the public, in a country like ours, where the exhibition of the original, of which the so called artistic nudity is after all but a poor imitation, is strictly forbidden by Criminal Law ; the second is the prosecution against the Salvation Army, a self styled religious sect which, by its public demonstrations, noisily demands its share of that liberty of belief and religious practice assured our people by Constitution. Until this latter problem is solved, it behoves our tribunals to maintain those people within the exact limits of the law of decency and of due regard for public peace.

As was to be expected, Gentlemen, the extension of the city limits and the natural increase in population have brought about a corresponding increase in the number of crimes and offences coming under the jurisdiction of this Court. By establishing a comparison between the last two years, we find that, in 1886, there was an increase of 22 aggravated assaults, 40 common assault and batteries, 16 disorderly houses, 44 cases of damaging property, 371 cases of vagrancy, drunkenness, etc., 57 demands of sureties, 24 cases of insanity, 56 cases of infraction of the saloon license law, 92 cases of contravention to the by-law relating to fast driving in the streets of the city, 154 cases of negligence to cause ashes to be strewn on slippery sidewalks in winter, 37 refusals to obey the orders of the Board of Health, etc., etc.

On the whole, the number of offences against Statutes shows