tion to his duties, has contributed greatly to the efficiency of the force.

The number of men under the present Board of Commissioners, since their organization, has been 350 officers and men, while their predecessors had 450. The Commissioners have endeavored to produce the best possible results from this reduced number, desiring to keep down the expenses as much as possible.

The peaceful and quiet manner in which law and order has been maintained throughout the city for the past year is the best guarantee of the efficiency of the force, and reflects great credit upon the Commissioners, as well as each officer and man.

Our citizens are frequently fined for small violations of law when really they offend innocently. It is the duty of officers to give them notice, and not to fine until they are convinced it is a wilful violation.

PORT WARDEN, HARBOR AND FALLS.

George J. Loane, Esq., Port Warden, presents a full report of the operations of his department for the past year. It was evident to those who preceded us in the management of the city, that nine-tenths of all the sediment that goes into the harbor came down the falls. They therefore wisely concluded to form a basin to receive it; for it was evident that by this means they could manage this sediment to greater advantage, and at much less expense in the back basin than in the harbor. It has been my desire to carry out this principle. A large dredging machine has been kept constantly at work in the back basin as far up the falls as the first bridge. The result has been that on the first of December there was a greater depth of water in the mouth of the falls and back basin, than had ever been at any previous time. It being impossible to send this large dredging machine above the bridges, and finding that the falls were rapidly filling up, I asked the Council at its last session for an appropriation to build a small machine to pass freely under the bridges. The necessity was apparent, the appropriation was granted, and the machine built. It was put into operation late in the season, but new difficulties soon presented themselves. The machine digs a channel into which it advances against the mound of earth in front; the scows advance on the side, but the falls having been neglected so long there is no depth of water, and a few scoops full of sediment makes the scow hard and fast on the bottom. In consequence of this, it was deemed necessary to dig a channel for the scow, and throw the sediment on one side. This caused double work, and some plan must be adopted to obviate

this difficulty. If the scoop could be made to swing round, so as to drop the sediment into the scows following in the rear of the machine, this would remedy the evil. These are the reasons why more work has not been done in the falls.

A plan has been in use by the Government in deepening the Patapsco River, by depositing each scoop full of sediment as it was taken up, into a box. These boxes were placed in rows in a scow, and when filled transferred to the discharging machine, which took them and deposited the sediment one hundred feet back from the edge of the wharf. In this manner Fort Carroll was made. An appropriation was asked for last season to pay for this discharging machine, and it was thought that the Council would grant it before the session closed. It was commenced by the hands in the city yard at times when they could not be otherwise employed; parts of the machine have already been ordered, and an appropriation is asked to complete the discharging machine. The utility and necessity of it will be apparent from the fact that fifty hands cannot remove the mud that two machines will dig. The necessities of the harbor require two machines at least; twelve shovelers is all that could be employed out of the appropriation of last year, after other expenses were paid.

The report asks for an appropriation of seventy-five thousand dollars during the year to give the entire harbor a thorough cleaning. This is needed, and might be a judicious movement; but I should prefer seeing one large and one small machine, worked to their utmost capacity with a discharging machine, and see what they can accomplish first.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

The report of the Commissioners of Public Schools will be found to be one of unusual interest, and I feel it my duty to speak in behalf of this Department as one of the greatest importance to our city government. If the members of the City Council would occasionally visit the several schools they would be fully satisfied that the Commissioners are engaged in a laudable work in building up a system of public instruction suited to the condition of all classes. The proper education of youth is one of the surest safeguards of our free institutions, and the authorities of our city may well afford to bestow a liberal patronage upon this Institution, when it more than doubly repays in the improved moral and intellectual power of the people.

HOUSE OF REFUGE.

The gentlemen who are devoting so much time and manifesting such intense interest in the boys who are brought to