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MAYOR GAYNOR'S ADVICE TO HIS
PATROLMEN IN NEW YORK

(Which is well for Lexington's patrolment to know.)

The philosophic mayor of Greater New York not long since wrote an interesting preface to a pamphlet containing a digest of the municipal laws and ordinances for the use of patrolmen. He gave them some excellent advice as to the use of good judgment in making arrests. Mayor Gaynor's preface is as follows:

"In this digest of laws and ordinances you will see the word 'arrest' frequently used. But you now all know that you do not arrest without a warrant for small offenses unless it is quite necessary to do so. You serve a 'summons' instead as often as you can.

A book of summonses will be given you with this digest. And remember you are not obliged to arrest (or summons) for every little offense. The law says you 'may' arrest without a warrant for every misdemeanor committed in your sight. It does not say you must.

You must use your good judgment. In the case of little batteries and rows and the like, it most often suffices to send the offenders along about their business. And in case of ordinance violations, it also often suffices for you to admonish the offender that he will be arrested or summoned if the violation continue.

"Stay on your post, if possible. You should never leave your post with a prisoner unless it is necessary. Summon him or her instead if the offense be small. Sometimes the offender may be a stranger, and may have no home or place of business. Then you may have to arrest; but not if the offense be trivial. Use your good discretion.

"To show how intelligently you are already acting along these lines, let me tell you that by using your good judgment in the way I have mentioned, and also resorting to the summons, you have already reduced the enormous number of arrests without a warrant made in the year before I became mayor, namely, 235,168, down to 132,923. And of the 235,168 boys, girls, men, and women thus arbitrarily arrested and locked up in station houses in that year, 102,257 were promptly discharged by the magistrates as having been arrested for no cause or for too trivial cause.
“Did you ever think of the amount of humiliation, suffering, and anguish caused by these unnecessary arrests, and the tendency they had to make criminals, especially the boys? You have done away with that barbarous condition in three years, and I thank you for it. And, meanwhile, while petty politicians and corrupt newspapers have been trying to defame and degrade you, for their own ends, you have gradually worked out other great reforms.

“Remember that your chief business is to keep outward order and decency, and arrest real criminals, not good citizens guilty only of some small thing.”