

WOULD THROW OPEN HOTEL CAB STANDS

Chief Oliver of the License Bureau Would Give All Taxicabs Equal Privileges.

WANTS ZONE FARE SYSTEM

Thinks Maps Marked to Show the Proper Charge Should Be in the Cabs and Fares Reduced.

Francis V. S. Oliver, Chief of the Bureau of Licenses, who drew the ordinance for the regulation of taxicabs by the city, which was declared unconstitutional by the courts, has written for THE TIMES a statement of the points which, in his mind, should be included in the legislation along this line. Mr. Oliver brings forward the most radical change in the traffic regulation yet suggested, the abolition of all the private stands now maintained at the hotels, restaurants, and cafes of the city.

Mr. Oliver also treats the question of the fare that should be allowed, declaring that it should be based on a zone system, by which every passenger could tell what the legitimate fare should be. The Chief admits that he has not worked out this plan to his satisfaction as yet, but says that he will have it completed for presentation to the Aldermen when they take the matter up. Mr. Oliver's points are:

License fees for all vehicles should be the same. The licenses should expire on one date or within one month. This would give us a chance to get a different color for a license each year. As it is now, with some licenses expiring to-day and some to-morrow, it is difficult for both owners and this office to be sure that every vehicle is operating under an extant license.

Each vehicle should be inspected as to cleanliness and general suitability before it is licensed, and the number should be affixed thereon by City Inspectors. I have recently directed that every vehicle in this borough be brought to the bureau for inspection before it is licensed.

There should be an examination for drivers of all horse vehicles, so that it can be ascertained that they are familiar with the traffic rules and the law governing their business.

All licenses should be granted without any distinction between public and special cabs. A man should not be compelled to choose whether he will serve the public or be restricted to the service of the guests of some hotel.

All meter hack fare should be the same; horse hacks fares should be divided as they are now, and the fares of all kinds of vehicles should be decreased.

All drivers should be compelled to give to passengers upon request receipts with the name of the owner of the vehicle, its license number, and the name and license number of the driver. All large companies in the city do this voluntarily now. The pictures and descriptions of drivers should be on the city licenses, to prevent trading in them.

All fares should be calculated, where there is no taximeter, on a map hung in the cab divided into squares, circles or zones. I have experienced a great deal of difficulty in devising such a map. It is easy to do so when there is a definite starting point, but as any foot of space in the city may be the starting point, it is extremely difficult to devise an equitable map. If a meter should stop running or be patently fraudulently fast, the charge should be made by the map.

If the passenger is riding in a taxicab on a special agreement with the company or with the driver, who has a right to make an agreement, the meter should be covered by a hood and a sign placed thereon "Special Agreement." Many of the companies in the Summer offer special terms for trips to amusement places, such as Coney Island. As the companies know how much they are to get, there would be no harm in covering the meter. If the meter stops or is out of order, an "out of order" sign should be placed thereon and the meter should be covered by a hood. All charges should then depend upon the map which is hung inside.

No person shall be allowed to ride on the box of the driver, unless he is a member of the party hiring the cab.

All special hack stands should be abolished. Every hotel or building, where there is necessity for a cab service, should be allowed to have a public cabstand privilege upon application to this office. The number of cabs permitted thereon should not be fixed and unchangeable, but should depend upon the traffic condition, and might vary with the time of day.

Every cab should be allowed to stand at such a stand within the limited number. In this connection cabstands could be established all over the city in front of vacant lots. If a company could stand cabs in front of a vacant lot, erect a telephone booth on it, they would be within range of many hotels and restaurants without paying exorbitant fees to any person. To-day on the average each cab company pays to each hotel ten per cent. of its gross earnings, while standing in front of such hotel. This money comes from the public. We find the cab companies issuing stock on the value of these cabstands. In other words, they are using the public streets for the means of raising capital.

The starter in front of a hotel should be licensed and be held responsible for the order of the stand. He should take the number of each cab which carries a passenger therefrom, with the time of departure, and, if possible, the destination thereof, and should hold such records open to the public for inspection.

The Magistrates should be given the right to revoke hack licenses. This would give the public a quick and easy way of punishing those persons guilty of fraud and would supply what is lacking now—a means, at once easy and fair, of revoking licenses.

The Merchants' Association and several other important organizations in the city have taken up this taxicab question. Several ordinances for dealing with it have been introduced to the Aldermen, and, when it comes up for final settlement in a few weeks, it will be considered more seriously than ever before.

POLICE BICYCLE STOLEN.

It Was Taken, the Patrolman Says, as He Sought a Light.

Bicycle Policeman Winfield Swain, a recent appointee to the West 100th Street Station, yesterday morning charged Herman Weiner of 18 Columbia Street, before Magistrate Appleton in the West Side Court, a Western Union messenger, with stealing his official bicycle on Sunday evening. He left his wheel, he said, in front of the Hendrick Hudson apartment house on Riverside Drive, while he went inside to get a light for his lamp, which had been extinguished by a blast of wind from the Jersey shore.

When he came out the machine had disappeared and he began a search for it. An hour later he located it in the telegraph office at the corner of Broadway and 106th Street, where it had been left by Weiner while he took a message to Fifty-seventh Street.

Weiner, who was held in a thousand dollars bail on a short affidavit until this morning told the Magistrate that as he was leaving the Hudson apartments after delivering a message he was approached by a lad, who said he had delivered a C. O. D. package from a drug store and had lost his money. He had to make good to his employer and wanted \$10 for the machine. Weiner offered \$8, but the offer was refused. He then, he said, went toward the telegraph office, and when within half a block of it was overtaken by the alleged drug messenger, who took the \$8 and handed over the wheel.

Magistrate Appleton held Weiner on his own consent till this morning in order to give Swain a chance to do a little "detective work." The Magistrate gave the patrolman two subpoenas to serve on witnesses to prove that he went into the apartment house to secure a light for his lamp.

LUNATIC RUNS FOR FREEDOM.

He Dodges Through West Orange Crowd, with His Keepers After Him.

John Bolan, a member of an old West Orange family, escaped yesterday morning from the Overbrook Hospital for the Insane, where he had been confined since September suffering from the illusion that he is a victim of vivisection. He behaved himself in the asylum and was allowed much latitude.

On a pretence of seeking fresh air he walked out on a fire escape yesterday morning, clambered down, and got away. Chief of Police William H. Bamford of West Orange went to his old home when he got word of the escape and there arrested him.

Bolan was taken to Police Headquarters in the ambulance, and Joseph McCarthy, a keeper from the hospital, took him in charge, declaring he could make the journey to Overbrook safely enough by trolley through Montclair. The first transfer point is at Main and Day Streets, Orange, and Patrick Riley, the ambulance orderly, expecting trouble, went a block out of his way to see what would happen.

Bolan stood peaceably enough for a time at the side of his guard, but suddenly gave him a shove and darted away. By the time McCarthy had recovered himself Bolan had a lead of half a block. Weaving his way through the crowd, Bolan dashed down Cone Street and across Main Street. Riley sprang from his ambulance in front of the lunatic and knocked him down. The rest of his journey to the hospital was made in the ambulance securely bound.

X-RAYS TO FIND STOLEN RING.

Negro Prisoner Accused of Having Swallowed His Booty.

George W. Main of 130 Freemont Street, Jersey City, had John Miller, a negro, living at 419 Monmouth Street, arrested yesterday, charging him with having stolen his diamond ring, valued at \$100.

At the Seventh Street Police Station, where Miller was taken, Main suggested that the X-rays be put on Miller, because he had reasons to believe that the prisoner had swallowed the ring. It will be decided in the Second Criminal Court in Jersey City this morning whether it is necessary to X-ray Miller to locate the ring.