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THE ROLL OF HONOR OF THE NEW YORK POLICE.

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WITH PICTURES BY JAY HAMBIDGE.

IT may be true that, inasmuch as a price must always be paid for everything, we pay for peace the price of a certain softening of national and civic fiber which, if carried too far, would be very serious indeed. Nevertheless, in our present highly complicated civilization there are a number of occupations which, even when carried on during a time of profound peace, call for the development in a very high degree of the prime virtues of the soldier—energy, daring, hardihood, discipline, power of command, power of obedience, and marked bodily prowess.

Some of these occupations are the ordinary vocations of great classes of people in civilized life. A notable case in point is the profession of railroad-men. Engineers, firemen, brakemen, and train-hands generally, follow an occupation which makes more of a demand upon heart, hand, and head than any trade or business, not directly connected in some way with war, which was ever carried on before the present century. The men of the fishing-fleet, the men who follow other hazardous occupations at sea, are the only ones whose business in life implies the acceptance of risk and responsibility, and the exercise of courage and judgment, in the way which is true of almost all work connected with the business of transportation as now conducted.

But besides the employments of private business, there are in every large city two departments where men enter the service knowing that part of their duty is to show willingness to face danger, and even death, in the course of their regular work. These are the police and the fire departments.

In the two years following May, 1895, I was President of the New York Police Board, and so, of course, was brought into close contact with the police, and grew to know well their daily life and the emergencies which they have continually to meet. As soon as our Board of Police was put into office, we introduced a number of radical changes in the management of the force, and one of these changes was the effort systematically to acknowledge gallantry. We did not have to work a revolution in the force as to courage in the way we had to work a revolution as to honesty. The police force had always been brave and efficient in dealing with rioters and the like; but by degrees, under the rule of Tammany, it had become very corrupt. Our great work, therefore, was the stamping out of dishonesty; and so far as the ridiculous bi-partizan law under which the department was administered would permit, this work was thoroughly done. But we were anxious that while stamping out what was evil in the force, we should keep and improve

what was good. While warring on dishonesty, we made every effort to increase the efficiency of the force. After all, it is unfortunately true, as has been shown by sad experience, that at times a police organization which is free from the taint of corruption may yet show itself weak in some great crisis, or unable to deal with the more dangerous kinds of criminals. This we were determined to prevent.

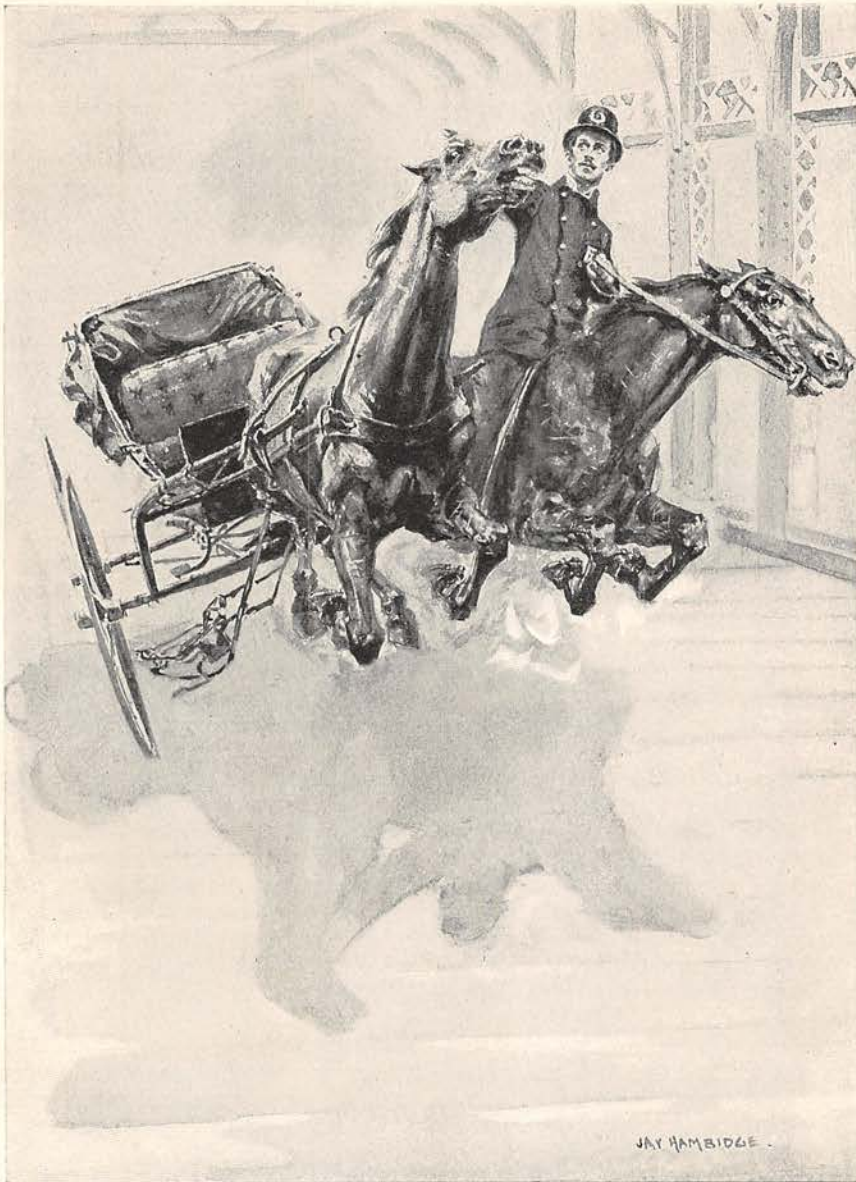
Our efforts were crowned with entire success. The improvement in the efficiency of the force went hand in hand with the improvement as to honesty. The men in uniform and the men in plain clothes—the detectives—did better work than ever before. The aggregate of crimes where punishment followed the commission of the crime increased, while the aggregate of crimes where the criminal escaped unpunished decreased. Every discredited politician, every sensational newspaper, and every timid fool who could be scared by clamor, was against us. All three classes strove by every means in their power to show that in making the force honest we had impaired its efficiency; indeed, by their utterances they actually tended to bring about the very condition of things against which they professed to protest. But we went steadily along the path we had marked out. The fight was hard, and there was plenty of cause for worry and anxiety; but a resolute determination neither to falter nor to swerve can accomplish a good deal even under the most unfavorable conditions. The result in this case was that in February, 1897, the judge who charged the grand jury was able to congratulate them on the phenomenal decrease of crime, especially of the violent sort, in New York. This decrease was steady during the two years. The police, after the reform policy had been thoroughly tried, proved more successful than ever before in protecting life and property, and in putting down crime and vice.

The part played by the actual personal prowess of the members of the police force, and its recognition by the board, in producing this state of affairs was appreciable, though there were many other factors that combined to bring about the improvement. The immense improvement of discipline by punishing all offenders without mercy, no matter how great their political or personal influence; the resolute warfare against every kind of criminal who had hitherto been able to purchase protection; the prompt recognition of ability, even where it was entirely unconnected with personal prowess—all these

were elements which had enormous weight in producing the change. Mere courage and daring, and the rewarding of courage and daring, could not supply the lack of discipline, of ability, of honesty; but they are of vital consequence, nevertheless. No police force is worth anything if its members are not intelligent and honest; but neither is it worth anything unless its members are brave, hardy, and well disciplined.

We showed recognition of daring and personal prowess in two ways: first, by awarding a medal or a certificate in remembrance of the deed; and, second, by giving it weight in making any promotion, especially to the lower grades. In the higher grades—in all promotions above that of sergeant, for instance—resolute and daring courage cannot normally be considered as a factor of determining weight in making promotions; rather is it a quality the lack of which unfits a man for promotion: for in the higher places we must assume the existence of such a quality in any fit candidate, and must make the promotion with a view to the man's energy, executive capacity, and power of command. In the lower grades, however, marked gallantry should always be taken into account in deciding among different candidates for any given place, and, wherever possible, should be made the determining consideration.

During our two years' service we found it necessary to single out men for special mention, because of some feat of heroism, over a hundred times. The heroism usually took one of four forms: saving somebody from drowning, saving somebody from a burning building, stopping a runaway team, or arresting some law-breaker under exceptional circumstances. Of course we occasionally awarded honorable mention for some other reason, such as coolness which averted a panic, or unusual nerve and skill in some arrest of the ordinary kind; but these instances were rare. The above-mentioned four kinds of gallantry are naturally those in which policemen are most apt to distinguish themselves. Their business is to prevent disorder and to arrest criminals, and now and then a desperate criminal or a violent mob will show fight. Their duties keep them in the streets, so that they necessarily observe every runaway, and try to stop it. They are of course present at every fire, and almost invariably before the firemen get there, so that they frequently have a chance to display gallantry in the rescue of life and property before the men of hose and ladder make their appearance. Finally, the river-front of the city is very ex-



STOPPING A RUNAWAY.

tensive, and the policemen stationed along it have unusual opportunities to see and rescue people who are drowning.

Perhaps the best way to convey an idea of why we awarded medals is to give a list of the men thus rewarded for two months. In October, 1895, we, on the 1st of the month, awarded a medal to a patrolman for peculiar gallantry in stopping a runaway horse under circumstances which made the act one of great danger to himself, and which doubtless resulted in saving the lives of those in

the vehicle. The patrolman thus rewarded was also later made a roundsman, and put in charge of the bicycle squad, our attention having been first called to him by this act. On the same day we gave honorable mention, but without a certificate or medal, to three other officers: one had also stopped a runaway horse; another had rescued a man from drowning; and the third had arrested an insane man armed with a revolver, under circumstances which went to show that the officer's coolness and

presence of mind saved both himself and the onlookers from death or injury at the hands of the armed maniac. On the 8th of the month we gave a medal to an officer who had rescued a boy from drowning by plunging into the water between the wharf and the steamer from which the boy fell, at the imminent risk of being crushed to death between the two, a fate from which he and the rescued boy were saved purely by his pluck and his skill as a swimmer. Honorable mention was made of two other officers—one for rescuing a boy from drowning, and one for stopping a runaway horse. On the 15th yet another officer received honorable mention for saving a man from drowning; and on the 22d a sergeant and two patrolmen were commended for the coolness and skill they displayed in stopping a prize-fight and arresting both the participants and the spectators, though they were an uncommonly tough crowd, and showed immediate fight.

In February, 1897, we rewarded five men: two for stopping runaways; one for arresting a murderer, an ex-convict, who was armed and showed fight; and two for saving women from burning buildings.

Among the first promotions we made were two which illustrated the attitude of the board toward cases of this kind, and which also incidentally illustrated exactly what we mean by "taking the force out of politics"—that is, by administering it on principles of decency, and appointing and promoting men on their merits, without regard to their political backing. The first case was that of an old fellow, a veteran of the Civil War, who was at the time a roundsman. I happened to notice one day that he had saved a woman from drowning, and had him summoned so that I might look into the matter. The old fellow brought up his record before me, and showed not a little nervousness and agitation; for it appeared that he had grown gray in the service, had performed feat after feat of heroism, but had no political backing of any account. He was a Grand Army man, but not one of the "political" type, and so had not received any attention from the former police boards; and now, at last, he thought there was a chance for him. He had been twenty-two years on the force, and during that time had saved some twenty-five persons from death by drowning, varying the performance once or twice by saving persons from burning buildings. Twice Congress had passed laws especially to empower the then Secretary of the Treasury, John Sherman, to give him a medal

for distinguished gallantry in saving life. The Life-Saving Society had also given him its medal, and so had the Police Department. On examining into his record carefully, we found that it was wholly free from complaints for any infraction of duty, and that he was sober and trustworthy. We felt that he was entitled to his promotion, and he got it. We did not know his politics, nor did we care about them. It is very unlikely that the woman whom he last saved, as he swam out toward her, felt any special interest as to whether he had voted for Cleveland or Harrison; nor did we. He had risked his life freely again and again in the performance of his duty; he had conducted himself so as to be a credit to the department and a credit to the city; and we felt that he was entitled to his reward. It is worth while mentioning that he kept on saving life after he was promoted to a sergeantcy. On October 21, 1896, he again saved a man from drowning. It was at night, nobody else was in the neighborhood, and the slip from which he jumped was in absolute darkness, and he was about ten minutes in the water, which was very cold. The captain of the precinct, in reporting the case, said: "The sergeant was off the bulkhead and into the water after his man quicker than it takes to say (Jack Robinson.)" There was no way in which the board could reward him for this, except by telling him that he was an honor to the department; for he had been given all the medals, and bars to the medals, that he could be given. It was the twenty-ninth person whose life he had saved during his twenty-three years' service in the department, and he was fifty-five years old when he saved him.

Can any intelligent and honest man say that we were wrong in rewarding this man? Yet it was because of our constantly acting in this manner, resolutely warring on dishonesty, and on that peculiar form of baseness which masquerades as "practical" politics, and steadily refusing to pay heed to any consideration except the good of the service and the city, and the merits of the men themselves, that we drew down upon our heads the bitter animosity, the malignant hostility, of the bread-and-butter spoils politicians. Through their tools in the legislature they repealed the civil-service law. They attempted to legislate us out of office, and desisted only because at last decent citizens were roused to take action in our favor. They denounced us with a ferocity that became fairly incoherent. They joined

with the baser portion of the sensational press in every species of foul, indecent falsehood and slander as to what we were doing. When all this failed they tried intrigue. But they could not make one of my colleagues, Major Avery D. Andrews, swerve a hand's-breadth; and though they finally caused a split in the board, it was, fortunately, not until most of our work was done. They did all this on the plea that we were impractical, hostile to the «organization,» and not good politicians, because, forsooth, we applied in public life the principles of common sense, honor, and morality which any decent man would uphold in private life.

Early in our term we promoted a patrolman to the grade of roundsman for activity in catching a burglar under rather peculiar circumstances. I happened to note his getting a burglar one week. Apparently he had fallen into the habit, for he got another the next week. In the latter case the burglar escaped from the house soon after midnight, and ran away toward Park Avenue, with the policeman in hot chase. The New York Central Railroad runs under Park Avenue, and there is a succession of openings in the top of the tunnel. Finding that the policeman was gaining on him, the burglar took a desperate chance, and leaped down one of these openings, at the risk of breaking his neck. Now the burglar was running for his liberty, and it was the part of wisdom for him to imperil life or limb; but the policeman was merely doing his duty, and nobody could have blamed him for not taking the jump. However, he jumped; and in this particular case the hand of the Lord was heavy upon the unrighteous. The burglar had the breath knocked out of him, and the «cop» did n't. When his victim could walk the officer trotted him around to the station-house, and a week afterward he himself was promoted, it appearing, upon careful investigation, that he was sober, trustworthy, and strictly attentive to his duty.

Here again it seems to me that we followed the eminently common-sense plan of promoting a man who had earned his promotion by faithful and distinguished service, and by proved superior capacity. We cared no more for the policeman's views on the tariff or the currency than we did for those of the burglar. Our interest, and the interest of citizens generally, was to have the officer catch that burglar and otherwise do his duty. If he did his duty we were for him; if he did not we were against him; in neither event did we care whether the officer had or had

not the backing of the congressional delegation of the city or the Central Committee of the county. Of course, as before, this exposed us to wild outcries from the local political bosses and heelers, and much sneering at «civil-service reform»; but all the outcries and sneers meant was that we were doing our duty as decent men and as public officials, with some slight appreciation of what was implied by the words honor and uprightness. Political organizations are eminently necessary and useful; but when they are seized by professional spoils politicians of low morality, who run the «machine» in their own interests, who clamor against honesty, and defy decency, and rail against that device for obtaining clean government which is known as civil-service reform—then it is time for all citizens who believe in good citizenship to rise in revolt.

Two or three cases may be given as examples where the men's names were put on the roll of honor, but where it was not possible or advisable to promote them. First I will take a couple of instances of gallantry at fires which occurred in January, 1897.

In one case an officer, while going home to get his breakfast, saw a number of people gathered round a fire-box on a street corner, and trying ineffectively to send off an alarm. The officer at once stopped, sent off the alarm, and ran round to where the fire was supposed to be. It was in a tenement-house, and the inmates, with the curious apathy they sometimes show, had declined to take any interest in the fire. The officer dashed up-stairs, and literally drove them all out of their rooms. Once out, they saw that the hallway was filled with smoke, and came down quickly enough of their own accord. But while the officer was hunting through the rooms to see whether any children had been left behind, the flames suddenly burst out, running through the halls and up the staircases. Shielding his eyes, he dashed down one flight of stairs through the flames, leaped the balusters, and rolled down the next flight into the street. He was badly scorched, and the skin was hanging from his hands, so that he had to be sent to the hospital. If it had not been for his prompt action there would have been a very serious loss of life in the building.

The other case, where the officer did fireman's work at about the same time, resulted in a rather more definite saving of life. Two policemen saw flames and smoke coming out of a four-story brick building. After sending in an alarm, one of them hastily established



A RESCUE AT A FIRE.

the fire-line to keep the crowd away from the building, and got everything in readiness for the coming of the firemen, while the other was alarming the people within. Almost all of them got out; but one woman, having run to the window of the second story, disappeared back into the room, and did not emerge. There was no flame in the halls,

but they were thick with smoke, as were the rooms. The officer ran up-stairs, holding his breath. When he got on the landing he heard the woman moaning inside, and groped his way in on all fours. She was lying unconscious on the floor, and by this time he himself was almost smothered; but he managed to carry her down-stairs before he fell.

She speedily came to. The firemen arrived two or three minutes later, and got the fire under control.

In November, 1896, an officer who had previously saved a man from death by drowning added to his record by saving five persons from burning. He was at the time asleep, when he was aroused by a fire in a house a few doors away. Running over the roofs of the adjoining houses until he reached the burning building, he found that on the fourth floor the flames had cut off all exit from an apartment in which there were four women, two of them over fifty, and one of the others with a six-months-old baby. The officer ran down into the adjoining house, broke open the door of the apartment on the same floor,—the fourth,—and crept out on the coping, less than three inches wide, that ran from one house to the other. Being a large and very powerful and active man, he managed to keep hold of the casing of the window with one hand, and with the other to reach to the window of the apartment where the women and child were. The firemen appeared, and stretched a net underneath. The crowd that was looking on suddenly became motionless and silent. Then, one by one, he drew the women out of their window, and holding them tight against the wall, passed them into the other window. The exertion in such an attitude was great, and he strained himself badly; but he possessed a practical mind, and as soon as the women were saved he began a prompt investigation of the cause of the fire, and arrested two men whose carelessness, as was afterward proved, caused it.

A number of cases occurred in which the officers were obliged to use their revolvers in dealing with criminals who used theirs. We promoted one patrolman—a man with an already excellent record—for gallantry shown in a fray which resulted in the death of his antagonist. He was after a gang of toughs who had just waylaid, robbed, and beaten a man. They scattered, and he pursued the ringleader. Running hard, he gained on his man, whereupon the latter suddenly turned, and fired full in his face. The officer already had his revolver drawn, and the two shots rang out almost together. The policeman was within a fraction of death, for the bullet from his opponent's pistol went through his helmet, and just broke the skin of his head. His own aim was truer, and the man he was after fell dead, shot through the heart.

In May, 1896, a number of burglaries occurred far up-town, in the neighborhood of 156th street and Union Avenue. Two officers

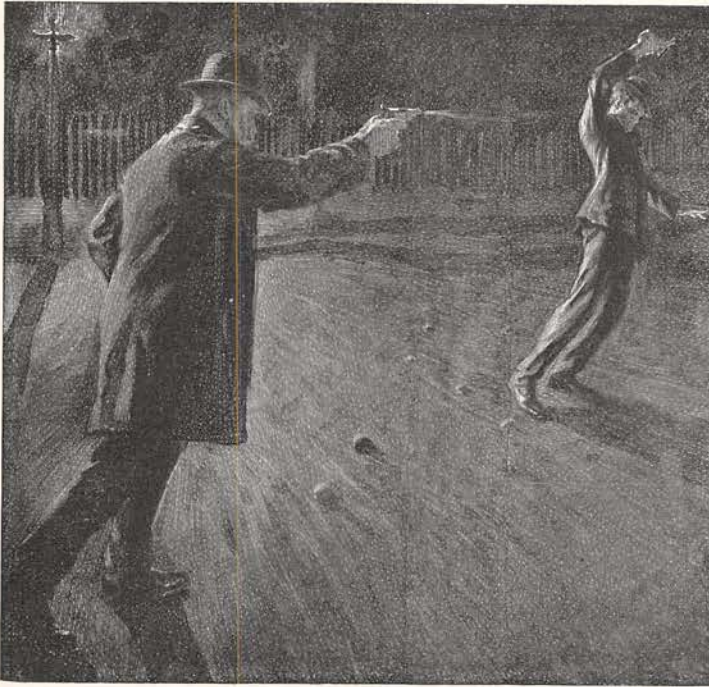
were sent out each night to patrol the streets in plain clothes. About two o'clock on the morning of May 8, they caught a glimpse of two men loitering about a large corner house, and determined to make them explain their actions. In order to cut off their escape, one officer went down one street, and one the other. The first officer, whose name was Ryan, found the two men at the gateway of the side entrance of the house, and hailed to know what they were doing. Without answering, they turned and ran toward Prospect Avenue, with Ryan in close pursuit. After running about one hundred feet, one of them turned, and fired three shots at Ryan, but failed to hit him. The two then separated, and the man who had done the shooting escaped. The other man, whose name proved to be O'Connor, again took to his heels, with Ryan still after him; they turned the corner, and met the other officer, whose name was Reid, running as hard as he could toward the shooting. When O'Connor saw himself cut off by Reid, he fired at his new foe, the bullet cutting Reid's overcoat on the left shoulder. Reid promptly fired in return, his bullet going into O'Connor's neck, and causing him to turn a complete somersault. The two officers then cared for their prisoner until the ambulance arrived, when he was taken to the hospital, and pronounced mortally wounded. His companion was afterward caught, and they turned out to be the very burglars for whom Reid and Ryan had been on the lookout.

In December, 1896, one of our officers was shot. A row occurred in a restaurant, which ended in two young toughs drawing their revolvers and literally running amuck, shooting two or three men. A policeman, attracted by the noise, ran up, and seized one of them, whereupon the other shot him in the mouth, wounding him badly. Nevertheless, the officer kept his prisoner, and carried him to the station-house. The tough who had done the shooting ran out, and was seized by another officer. He fired at him, the bullet passing through the officer's overcoat, but he was promptly knocked down, disarmed, and brought to the station-house. In this case neither policeman used his revolver, and each brought in his man, although the latter was armed and resisted arrest, one of the officers taking in his prisoner after having been himself severely wounded. A lamentable feature of the case was that this same officer was a man who, though capable of great gallantry, was also given to shirk his work, and we were finally obliged to dismiss

him from the force, after passing over two or three glaring misdeeds in view of his record for gallantry.

We promoted another man on account of finding out accidentally that he had performed a very notable feat, which he had forborne even to mention, so that his name never came on the roll of honor. Late at night, while patrolling in a lonely part of his post, he came upon three young toughs who had turned highwaymen and were robbing a peddler. He ran in at once with his night-stick, whereupon the toughs showed fight, and one of them struck at him with a blud-

circumstances. Two men were driving in a buggy, when the horse stumbled, and in recovering himself broke the head-stall, so that the bridle fell off. The horse was a spirited trotter, and at once ran away at full speed. Heyer saw the occurrence, and followed at a run. When he got alongside the runaway he seized him by the forelock, guided him dexterously over the bridge, preventing him from running into the numerous wagons that were on the road, and finally forced him up a hill and into a wagon-shed. Three months later this same officer saved a man from drowning.

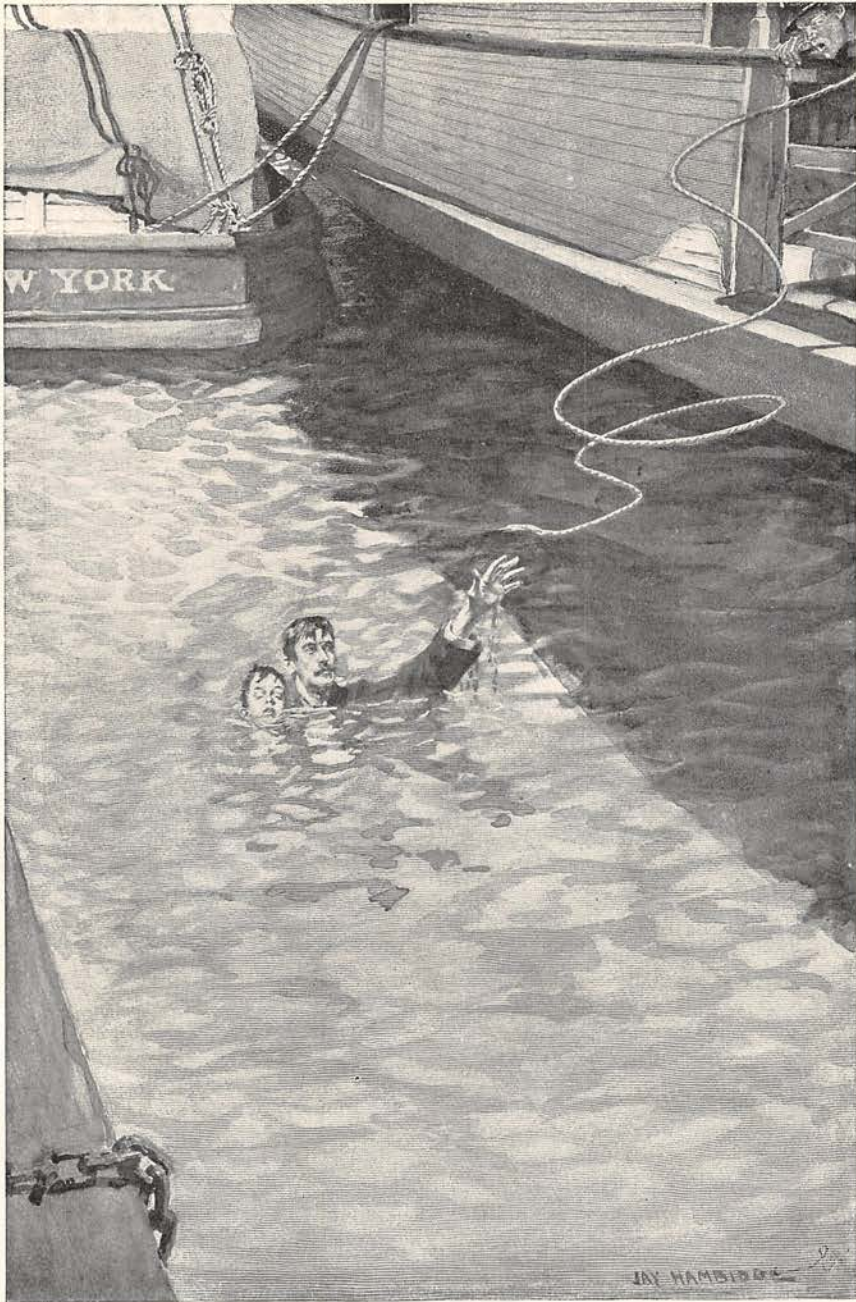


THE SHOOTING OF BURGLAR O'CONNOR.

geon, breaking his left hand. The officer, however, made such good use of his night-stick that he knocked down two of his assailants, whereupon the third ran away, and he brought both of his prisoners to the station-house. Then he went round to the hospital, had his broken hand set in plaster, and actually reported for duty at the next tour, without losing one hour. He was a quiet fellow, with a record free from complaints, and we made him roundsman.

The mounted squad have, of course, many opportunities to distinguish themselves in stopping runaways. In May, 1895, a mounted policeman succeeded in stopping a runaway at Kingsbridge under rather noteworthy

The members of the bicycle squad, which was established soon after we took office, soon grew to show not only extraordinary proficiency on the wheel, but extraordinary daring. They frequently stopped runaways, wheeling alongside of them, grasping the horses while going at full speed; and, what was even more remarkable, they managed not only to overtake, but to jump into the vehicle and capture, on two or three different occasions, men who were guilty of reckless driving, and who fought violently in resisting arrest. They were picked men, being young and active, and any feat of daring which could be accomplished on the wheel they were certain to accomplish.



OVERBOARD.

Three of the best riders of the bicycle squad, whose names and records happen to occur to me, were men of the three ethnic strains most strongly represented in the New York police force, being respectively of native American, German, and Irish—or, more accurately, in this particular case of mixed Scotch and Irish—parentage.

The German was a man of enormous power, and he was able to stop each of the

many runaways he tackled without losing his wheel. Choosing his time, he would get alongside the horse, and seize the bit in his left hand, keeping his right on the cross-bar of the wheel. By degrees he then got the animal under control. He never failed to stop it, and never lost his wheel. He also never failed to overtake any "scorcher," although many of these were professional riders who deliberately violated the law to

see if they could not get away from him; for the wheelmen soon get to know the officers whose beats they cross.

The Yankee, though a tall, powerful man and a very good rider, scarcely came up to the German in either respect; he possessed exceptional ability, however, as well as exceptional nerve and coolness, and he won his promotion first. He stopped about as many runaways; but where the horse was really panic-stricken he usually had to turn his wheel loose, getting a firm grip on the horse's reins, and then kicking his wheel so that it would fall out of the way of injury from the wagon. On one occasion he had a fight with a drunken and reckless driver who was urging to top speed a very spirited horse. He first got hold of the horse, whereupon the driver lashed both him and the beast, and the animal, already mad with terror, could not be stopped. The officer had of course kicked away his wheel at the beginning, and after being dragged along for some distance he let go the beast, and made a grab at the wagon. The driver hit him with his whip, but he managed to get in, and after a vigorous tussle overcame his man, and disposed of him by getting him down and sitting on him. This left his hands free for the reins. By degrees he got the horse under control, and drove the wagon round to the station-house, still sitting on his victim. «I jounced up and down on him to keep him quiet when he turned ugly,» he remarked to me parenthetically. Having disposed of the wagon, he took the man round to the court, and on the way the latter suddenly sprang on him, and tried to throttle him. Convinced at last that patience had ceased to be a virtue, he quieted his assailant with a smash on the head that took all the fight out of him until he was brought before the judge and fined. Like the other «bicycle cops,» this officer made a number of arrests of criminals, such as thieves, highwaymen, and the like, in addition to his natural prey—scorchers, runaways, and reckless drivers.

The third member of the trio, a tall, sinewy man with flaming red hair, which rather added to the terror he inspired in evil-doers, was usually stationed in a rather tough part of the city, where there was a tendency to crimes of violence, and incidentally an occasional desire to harass wheelmen. The officer was as good off his wheel as on it, and he speedily established perfect order on his beat, being always willing to «take chances» in getting his man. He was no respecter of persons, and when it became his duty to

arrest a wealthy man for persistently refusing to have his carriage-lamps lighted after nightfall, he brought him in with the same indifference that he displayed in arresting a street-corner tough who had thrown a brick at a wheelman.

Soon after it came into office the board undertook to train the men in the use of the pistol. A school of pistol practice was established, and the marksmanship of the officers was wonderfully improved in a very short while. The man who was put in charge of the school was a roundsman whom we promoted to sergeant. He was one of the champion revolver shots of the country, and prided himself on being able to hit just where he aimed. Twice he was forced to fire at criminals who resisted arrest, and in each case he hit his man in the arm or leg, simply stopping him or crippling him, without danger to his life. This same roundsman one Sunday met a volunteer military company returning from a spree, which had included both shooting at a target and heavy drinking. They were very noisy and disorderly, and the roundsman promptly arrested the captain. The company attempted to rescue him, but he held them at bay, brought in his prisoner in triumph, and then sallied out with reinforcements, and brought in all the others.

These are only a few cases out of the many on the roll of honor. Wherever we could, we recognized any signal feat of courage which resulted in the saving of life, or which was incidental to the performance of police duty. Besides awarding a medal, we also strove to give more tangible proof of our appreciation where this was possible, either by passing over, so far as we could, an infraction of discipline, or by actual promotion where the man was worthy. In considering promotions to the higher grades, it was not possible to take much account of physical courage or hardihood, although, of course, its lack would have been a conclusive bar to advancement; for in the higher grades good judgment, power of command, and ability to take and bear responsibility, are needed beyond all other qualities. But in promotion to the lower grades, where there is much less demand upon the higher mental qualities, proof of signal physical courage can often be made a determining factor in a promotion.

Of course other qualities must go with courage, and it may often happen that the best man for a position will earn his promotion in spite of the fact that no opportunity is thrown in his way to show his hardihood or physical prowess. An alert, active, hard-



ONE OF THE BICYCLE SQUAD.

working fellow, evidently possessed of intelligence and resolution, and fit to bear responsibility, cannot be held back merely because there has never been a chance for him to distinguish himself at a fire or against a dangerous criminal. Nor can we promote a man given to drink or to gross misconduct, no matter how much of a hero he may be. Very frequently careful and patient investigation has shown that some

man who had distinguished himself by a brilliant exhibition of personal gallantry on some given occasion was nevertheless unfit for promotion, whether because of lack of steadiness and sobriety, or for some other good reason. I remember one very gallant man whom I would have liked to promote, but who could not keep clear of drink. We overlooked this so far as we could while he was patrolman, because of his occasional per-

formance of deeds of marked excellence; but it rendered him unfit for promotion. I remember another man whom we promoted, but were forced afterward to reduce. He displayed great courage and address on several different occasions in arresting criminals and saving human life; but he was not truthful, and he proved a poor disciplinarian, protecting his favorites and wreaking vengeance upon those whom he did not like.

In making promotions, therefore, we could not consider courage and personal prowess as conclusive. But we did treat them as factors of the greatest weight. Where a man was sober, steady, and orderly as well as daring and energetic, there was no difficulty whatever in giving him his promotion; and if we found a man to be deficient, even in a very slight degree, in courage, no amount of faithful performance of his ordinary duties could atone for the deficiency. The difficulty came in the mixed cases. A man who was sober, industrious, and intelligent, but who had never had a chance to display heroism, could not be permanently kept back; and yet in promoting him there was a risk lest he might prove to be deficient in the quality of rising to a serious crisis. On the other hand, if the man had repeatedly shown striking qualities of daring and resource, and yet had been guilty of marked shortcomings, it was a case to be carefully weighed. If, on the whole, the shortcomings were so serious that we could not trust the man, then his promotion had to be denied; but unless they were very serious, we usually gave such a man a chance to show what he was made of.

Generally the result justified our judgment. The responsibility sobered the man, the recognition of his merits made him proud, and he felt bound to justify himself by proving that he was fit to hold the position he had reached. The man with strong virtues and strong failings is always preferable to the bloodless creature with neither.

Of course the best men of all are those who have the virtues without the shortcomings—who are resolute, strong, and clear-eyed, without being wild or disorderly. But there is small use indeed in the man whose virtue is merely one of the incidents of a condition of low vitality. A policeman is worth little unless he is honest, temperate, orderly, and cleanly without and within; but he is worth even less if he does not possess the positive, virile good qualities of hardihood, energy, resolution, and personal daring.

I doubt if the average citizen, especially the average stay-at-home citizen, realizes how often the man of the night-stick is called upon to display qualities which in a soldier would be called heroic. His feats in saving life or in arresting dangerous criminals, alone and at night, attract no special attention when mentioned in the newspapers; but they often imply just as much courage as those of the man who captures an enemy's flag in battle, or plants his own flag on a hostile parapet. The men of the New York police force represent all the different creeds and different race origins that go to the make-up of our stock; but they all become good Americans who pay no heed to differences of creed and race, for otherwise they would be useless. The police occupy positions of great importance. They not merely preserve order, the first essential of both liberty and civilization, but to a large portion of our population they stand as the embodiment as well as the representative of the law of the land. To the average dweller in a tenement-house district, especially if born abroad, the policeman is in his own person all that there is of government: he is judge, executive and legislature, constitution and town meeting. His power and influence are great. For any vice or shortcoming he should be sternly punished, but for gallantry and good conduct he should receive prompt and generous recognition.

Theodore Roosevelt.

