

HELP! HELP!!

Policemen who are Heroes.

A MAN who has tackled a tiger, from whose clutches he only escaped with his life and the loss of an arm by his pluck and coolness, is composed of that stuff of which heroes are made. All heroes are modest; and so Sir Edward Bradford, K.C.B., K.C.S.I., Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, would be the last man in the world to brag of that terrible experience which causes him to go about with one coat-sleeve empty.

It is from other lips, too, that we must learn the story of the adventurous soldier whom fate has made a policeman. Sir Edward's father was a Hampshire rector, and he spent his schooldays at Marlborough College. As a youth of seventeen he entered the Madras Army, served in the Persian campaign, was twice commended in despatches, and won his medal. At twenty-nine he was a captain, at forty-six a colonel, and in India in many posts he proved as distinguished a servant of the Government as he had shown himself a daring officer.

Such, however, is Sir Edward Bradford's retiring disposition that when about five years ago he was selected to take command of a body of fifteen thousand policemen, the world, perhaps, heard for the first time that he was already discharging responsible and difficult duties in the Political and Secret Department of the India Office, to which he had been appointed upon his return home.

Under such a gallant chief it is no wonder that the annals of the Metropolitan Police positively teem with records of deeds of heroism performed from month to month and day to day by constables on the beat.

Firemen, soldiers, and sailors have their special dangers to run and their opportunities for displaying courage and bravery; but the ordinary policeman never knows when he may not be called upon to face death in the flames, or in the rushing waters, or at the hands of the murderous burglar.

Rescues from burning houses have been performed by policemen under all sorts of conditions; sometimes in a wholesale way, when, for instance, a great conflagration occurring near to the Charterhouse School and a large amount of property was attacked, necessitating thirty engines to quell the flames, the police assisted the brigade by removing from dwellings which were soon involved in the huge furnace numbers of poor people with their goods and chattels.

Upon that occasion many were the narrow escapes which the policemen ran, for walls were falling with the crash of thunder on every side.

It is, however, with individual, rather than collective, heroism that we have now to deal.

One July night, in Woolwich, a policeman named Cull, then doing duty as an acting-sergeant, was outside the Arsenal. Suddenly he perceived a smell of fire. It came from a house close by. The inmates were all sleeping.

"Fire!" cried the policeman, as he discovered that the licking flames were already bursting from the lower floors, cutting off all escape from the bedrooms.

It was a critical moment. The people were hard to awaken; but at last they were made aware of their danger.

"Wait," cried Cull; "I'll save you."

And with that he rushed off to the Arsenal and in a moment or two returned with a ladder, which he placed against the burning building. Flames leaped upon him as he ascended, but, nothing daunted, he reached the first floor, where a very stout man and woman stood helpless.

"The lady first," cried Cull, and he took her in his arms as best he could; but the weight was too much for him, and as he descended the ladder it turned, and both the woman and her preserver fell to the ground. The lady had her ankle broken. Meanwhile her husband was enveloped in flames.

But the ladder, although charring at every second, still held good. Cull, undismayed by his fall, climbed it once more, and this time he succeeded in rescuing, without mishap, the miserable man above.

Another deed of heroism was performed by a sergeant who heard a child scream terribly in a house.

Entering, he found in one of the rooms a little girl, only six years old. She was wrapped in fire, having accidentally set herself alight. At the cost of severe burns, the policeman extinguished the flames and saved the child's life.

How many medals of the Royal Humane Society are worn by policemen for conspicuous bravery in saving drowning persons it is not possible to say. Of the scores of cases let us mention one or two.

It was very early one morning in May, "Big Ben" at Westminster had just boomed the half-hour—between 2 a.m. and 3 a.m.—when Constable Matthews paced the Thames Embankment, close to Cleopatra's Needle.

No sound was heard, except the uneasy breathing of some vagrants who were asleep upon the seats.

A woman, crouching in the shadow of the obelisk, waited for the policeman to pass. Then with a wild, despairing cry she threw herself into the gurgling waters of the river, and was swept rapidly away.

Matthews heard the awful shriek and the splash. In an instant his mind was made up. His uniform was heavy and not easily to be removed, and, clothed as he was, he ran to the steps, sighted the drowning woman, and plunged into the eddying water.

There was a strong flood, and the constable, who had succeeded in grasping the woman, was, with



SIR EDWARD BRADFORD, K.C.B.
(From a Photograph by Elliott & Fry, Baker Street, W.)

her, being carried away; but his strength as a swimmer presently told against the tide, and inch by inch he fought the current, until, with the aid of a passer-by who was attracted by chance to the spot, he recovered his footing upon the granite steps, and brought his now unconscious burden to land.

At Tower Hill one November morning, not long after midnight, Police-constable Pennett suddenly saw a man jump into the Thames.

Off went his belt and with it his lamp, and, without pausing to divest himself of his heavy coat, he leaped after the would-be suicide and seized the struggling man.

It was a gallant rescue, but one which can be paralleled by many other incidents of the kind.

We will not enlarge upon the great courage displayed by policemen in killing mad dogs in the street, frequently sustaining the risk of death from hydrophobia by the bites of the infuriated animals.

After all, the mad dog is to be preferred to the armed burglar, whose cowardly attacks upon policemen have brought forth many instances of true heroism on the part of young officers.

A recent case will be so fresh in the minds of many that it will be sufficient to recall its leading features.

Last September, Police-constable Pipes, who had only joined the force in July, and was on night-duty for the first time alone, observed suspicious signs about a house in the Grosvenor Road, Canonbury.

As he went to the window he saw a man, who, putting on his hat, said quietly—

"It's all right; I'm just going out."

Pipes naturally considering that it was rather a curious way to leave a house by the window, climbed into the room, while the other man tried to get out of the room by the door, but could not do so as it was locked.

He seized the burglar, and thereupon ensued a sickening struggle.

Pipes, hanging on to his man, was dragged through the window, and the burglar, resolved upon freeing himself, drew his knife and began hacking the constable's fingers to the bone, "chopping as though he was chopping wood."

But even this torture did not cause Pipes to relax his grip. He dragged his prisoner up the area steps, but was then thrown back and lost his hold.

However, he at length regained his grasp, and with the help of a cabman who answered the policeman's whistle, the burglar was eventually secured.

Another young constable distinguished himself in a similar manner at Kensington.

Owen Davis had not been a policeman for more than four or five months, when one morning in July he noticed a ladder against some unoccupied houses. He "marked" it, as policemen do, in a secret manner, and when he returned to the spot a little later he saw that his mark had been disturbed.

"Someone must have gone up that ladder," he said to himself. "I must go up and see."

Up to the top he climbed from the back of the ladder, and as he stepped on to the roof-gutter two masked men who had been lying in ambush jumped upon him.

On the coping a frightful fight took place. The constable shattered his truncheon at one blow as he struck his assailant.

"I'll murder you!" cried the burglar, and with that he fired at the policeman four times, and he fell with as many bullet-holes in his tunic.

Meanwhile, Prettyjohn, another constable, hearing the din, began to ascend the ladder from the street below, and the second burglar, who had been on the look-out, by violently shaking the ladder to and fro compelled the policeman to slide to the ground.

When at last, the whole neighbourhood being aroused, the block of buildings was surrounded by police, the burglars had made good their escape.

There was another dreadful encounter between a policeman and desperate burglars.

A constable, by name Barker, was patrolling a lonely beat at Finchley, when he discovered two men in the act of breaking into a doctor's residence.

They took alarm and ran off.

Barker pursued the thieves for some distance, as far as the line of the Great Northern Railway. Here in the early morning dawn the pursued turned upon their enemy.

One man against two ruffians, he held his own for a while, but an unlucky blow that he received stretched him insensible.

"You've settled him," cried one burglar to the other.

"Not quite," said his companion; "but the 'up' express will do that."

"What do you mean?" asked the younger man in horrified tones, as he saw the elder burglar drag the apparently lifeless body towards the rails.

"Stow it, but lend a hand," was the reply.

The cowardly ruffians laid poor Barker on the metals, and when the "up" express came along it took off the policeman's leg in its passing.

In the Black Museum at New Scotland Yard there may be seen some memorials of the notorious burglars Wright and Wheatley, who are in penal servitude at the present time. Wright had already shot a policeman, although not fatally, when he added to his crimes the outrage which may be briefly described.

It took place in Hoxton, a well-known haunt of burglars. A burglary had been committed and the thieves, with their haul, had got away, when Police-constable Garner found one of the men in the playground of some schools.

Getting over the railings, he tried to capture this fellow—it was Wheatley. During the struggle Wright emerged from the darkness, for it was barely one o'clock in the morning.

Under his coat he wore a leathern belt, and from its pouch he drew a revolver and fired three times at Garner, who fell, wounded in the thigh.

Other police arrived, and with assistance they captured the would-be murderer.

Wright, meanwhile, walked quietly away, but half-way down the street met Clifford and Snell, two constables, who were about to seize him when the burglar turned and, brandishing a revolver, fired full at Snell, who received the bullet above the belt on the right side.

Clifford chased Wright, who kept the crowd which began to collect at bay with his revolver, until in "Tom Tit's Corner" he found a ladder. Rapidly he clambered to the roof, pursued by police and bystanders; and for more than an hour he jumped from roof to roof, until, after a hot chase, he was pinned by Sergeant Walsh, just as he was in the act of levelling his revolver at another policeman.

Elaborate Joking.

ONE of the most elaborate attempts at a punning joke is told of Dr. Barton, a warden of Merton College, Oxford. He gave a dinner one day, and invited Mr. Rook, of his own college; Mr. Crowe, of New College; Mr. Woodcock, of Christ Church; and Mr. Partridge, of Brasenose, who, according to express invitation, were punctual at five o'clock.

"Well, gentlemen," said the wit, "I think I have got almost all the birds of the air, but we must wait for one bird more." Mr. Birdmore had been expressly invited for half-past five.

Made to Mystify.

ONE of the most curious inventions of this inventive age is what is called platinised glass. A piece of glass is coated with an exceedingly thin layer of a liquid charged with platinum, and is then raised to a red heat. The platinum becomes united to the glass in such a way as to form a very odd kind of mirror.

The glass has not really lost its transparency, and yet, if one places it against a wall and looks at it, he sees his image as in an ordinary looking-glass; but when light is allowed to come through the glass from the other side, as when it is placed in a window, it appears perfectly transparent like ordinary glass.

By constructing a window of platinised glass, one could stand close behind the panes in an unilluminated room and behold clearly everything going on outside, while passers-by who looked at the window would behold only a fine mirror, or set of mirrors, in which their own figures would be reflected while the person inside would remain invisible.

Various tricks have been contrived with the aid of this glass. In one a person, seeing what appears to be an ordinary mirror, approaches it to look at himself. A sudden change in the mechanism sends light through the glass from the back, whereupon it instantly becomes transparent, and the startled spectator finds himself

confronted by some grotesque figure which had been hidden behind the magic glass.

What wonders might not a magician of the dark ages have wrought if he could have had a piece of platinised glass?

Too Sharp for Them.

A FEW years ago, a banker's clerk, of Vienna, undertook to attend all the festivities held in that city without paying for admission, and entered into solemn wagers that he would gain access, free of charge, to each of the balls and concerts in spite of the strictest watch on the part of the doorkeepers.

Once he appeared in the uniform of a policeman, another time as a detective officer, with the official badge in his buttonhole, and so cleverly disguised that nobody dared to refuse him admission.

When the first opera ball was given at Vienna, and the carriages were standing in line to a distance of over a mile, two men bearing a covered litter suddenly broke through the row of carriages. It was supposed that a misfortune had happened in the ballroom, and they were allowed to pass. On reaching the vestibule our free guest rose from the stretcher faultlessly attired in evening dress.

The fourth time, a groom, wearing the Imperial livery and carrying his plumed hat under his arm, appeared at the top of the stairs, making a way for himself through the crowd with a short staff.

"Who is here from court?" inquired hundreds of voices.

"His Imperial Highness . . ." The remaining words were lost in the throng which swept through the doors, taking with them the groom, who was no other than our banker's clerk.

"Sauce, ladies and gentlemen, sauce!" and, carrying a tureen in both hands, proudly our ingenious friend passed in again in the character of a waiter.

At one of the last masked balls, a cab-driver, to the horror of the ticket-collectors, created a violent disturbance by rushing into the ante-room, shouting at the top of his voice—

"I say, I want my money, d'ye hear? Where is that gentleman that came in here without paying his fare? Ah! there he is!" he said, pointing with his whip in the direction of the ball-room, whither, in spite of all attempts to stop him, he followed the supposititious defaulter. And thus once more the ingenious clerk gained a free admission.

Just a Slight Mistake.

WIFE (returning home): "How is this, John—what made you put the children to bed so soon?"

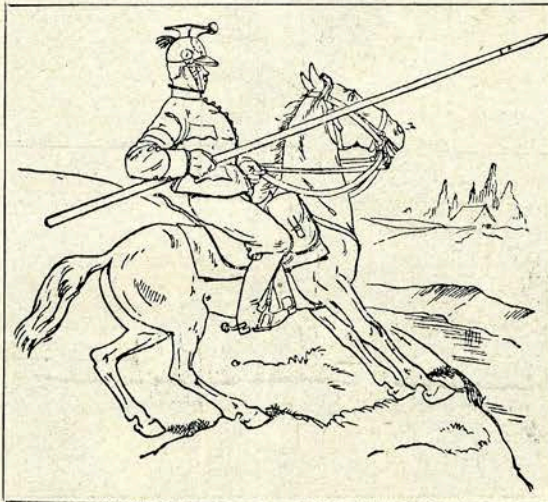
"Because they disturbed me in my writing, dear." "And did they allow you to undress them quietly?"

"No; that one in the corner screamed dreadfully."

"That one in the corner? (Goes and peeps.) Why, bless me, what have you done, John?—that's Freddy Smith from next door!"

Lancelot the Brave.

And His Unfortunate Predicament.



I.

At the Word of Command.

AN extraordinary story is being told in Berlin about the miraculous escape of a woman and her little boy at Brieg at a military review. During the manoeuvres, they got in front of a regiment of cuirassiers which was riding at full gallop.

It was impossible for the woman or the boy to get out of the way, or for the soldiers to halt, on account of the crush behind. The public raised a shout of horror, thinking that the woman and child would be trampled to death; when, above the shout, rose the voice of the commanding officer.

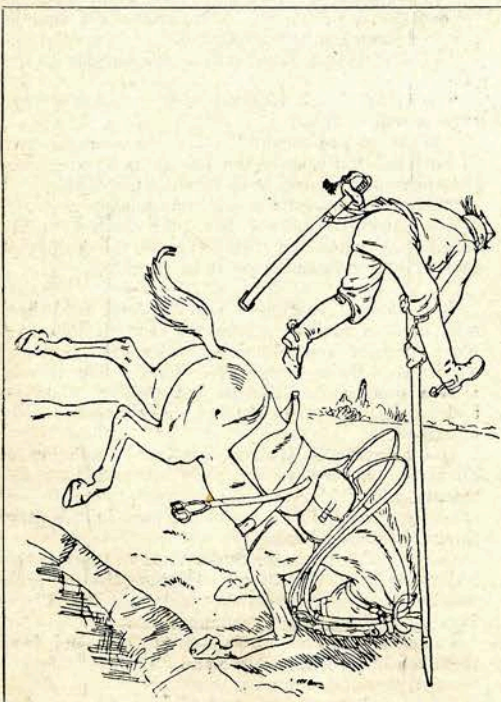
"Lie down!" he cried. The two instantly obeyed. To the astonishment of everybody, the whole regiment rode over them, the horses leaping at word of command, and the woman and boy rose unharmed, although quite speechless with terror through their narrow escape.

"WHAT is Smith doing now?" asked one of his old friends.

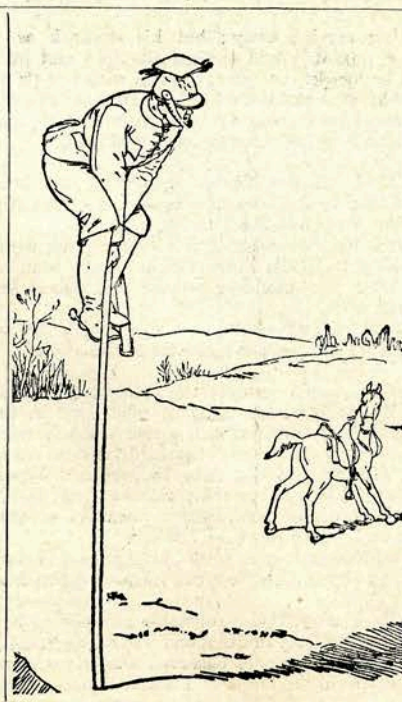
"He is travelling with a circus."

"Pretty hard work isn't it?"

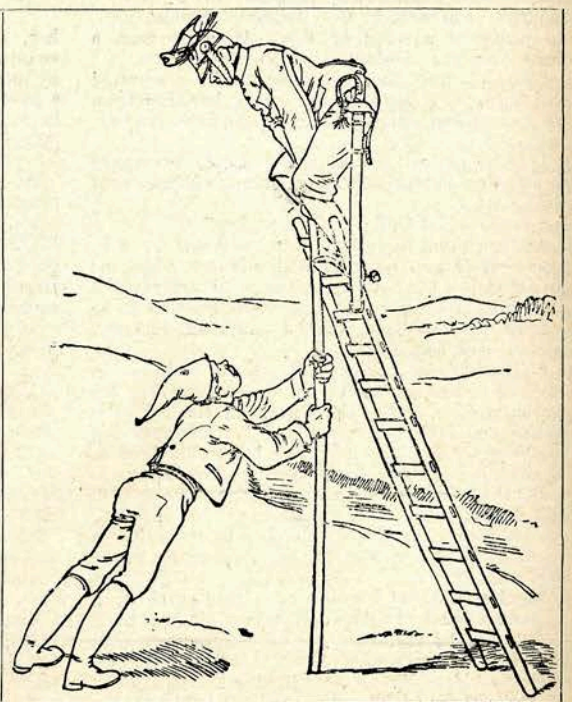
"No; he has nothing to do but to stick his head in the lion's mouth twice a day."



II.



III.



IV.