

Selected Story.

Pipley, the Policeman.

"It's all very well to report a man, and make minutes about him, and all that sorter thing," said John Pipley, policeman, as he went down Great Bulky street, beating his white-gloved hands together, and rolling his eyes about in all directions. "A man can't be all eyes like a peacock, and looking everywhere at once. Here, just get out o' that, now, will yer?"

"I ain't in nobody's way, am I?"

"Yes, you are, so go on! That there handcart o' yours'n been getting bigger every week, and how's carriages to draw up if you're here?"

This bit of fencing took place between Pipley and a man with an apple barrow—the fruit vender going off grumbling, and Pipley on the lookout for workers of mischief against the laws. He was not a perfect man, John Pipley; he was a good officer, and worked hard for his pay; but he was not perfect, and he knew it. In early days, before Mrs. Pipley agreed to rest in future upon his manly breast, he had been seen more than once to steal up from areas, and close the gate very carefully after him—of course returning from voyages of investigation and examination of locks, bolts and bars. Of course he had on these occasions tried the coal-cellar, and dustbin. But why was a gentle cough heard, and a door closed softly, when John came up? and, again, why bulged those pockets to the distortion of the symmetry of his manly form—the knob-blooming of his neat blue uniform?

It is a very old joke to accuse policemen of partiality for cooks; but the charges are none the less true, and the great force need not blush. Have not the greatest generals and statesmen found solace in the society of the other sex?

But John was now a married man, and devoted himself most strongly to his profession. It was not often that he interfered with applewomen. His orders were to keep the way clear; but, as John said, "We must all live, and selling apples is honest—as honest as selling tea and sugar—honest, for you can't adulterate your apples, though you may boil an orange. But John was now under a cloud, and he did interfere with apple men and women; 'chivied' small boys; cuffed one who had 'cut behind' a coach and nearly been run over. John even had words with a political magnate's coachman, and moved him on, in spite of the crest upon the panel and the dashing bays.

For John was under a cloud. Mysterious robberies had been taking place on his beat, and though he had done his best to catch the members of the gang, they had been too much for him and the robberies went on.

Now this was very galling to a man who had set his mind upon rising in life. Blue was all very well; but sergeant was better; but inspector, and then superintendent—those were the goals that John P. pipley wished to reach in the race of life; and now, instead of going forward, his movement was retrograde; he was threatened with reports, and all because of the scoundrels who had been too much for him.

"I'll be down upon them, though, one of these days," said John. "I'll put salt on some of your tails, my pretty jail birds."

So he went on, up and down, down and up, and had nothing to report at last.

And the robberies went on. A carpet bag was taken from a coach in motion. Next day, a shawl and a carriage time-piece were stolen, as the barouche stood at a fashionable milliner's door. The disturbance about that was hardly over when a boy was hustled, and a valuable parcel wrested from his hands. Again, a boy was garroted, and a pet dog and a mother of pearl opera-glass taken from his encircling arms.

John Pipley was in despair.

Another day. Great coat and umbrella from the front hall of Rubble-mede's mansion, in Upper Crook street; two umbrellas from No. 24 in the same street, and a roll of carpet from the big store round the corner.

John had a sharp lecture from the captain, and he went again upon his beat, horribly wroth.

"If I had only been by that shop door I could have nailed them," said John, angrily; "but a man can't be everywhere at once. I'll have them, though, next time, hang me if I don't, or else I'll leave the force."

To be Continued.

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Dec. 5—pat 3i

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Jan. 18—2aw ar 3i

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