

CITY LIGHTING OWNERSHIP.

Commissioner Monroe's report on city lighting, in which, while asking for power to reject the bids of the gas and electric companies for the current year, he embodies a recommendation of municipal ownership, is the most important official document presented by any member of the Reform Administration.

The report, in effect, serves official notice on the lighting companies that their gross overcharges on the city must end; and at the same time it carries with it this more important mandate: Either the companies must accept the alternative of lower charges against the individual consumer and a just accounting with him or prepare for public ownership of all the lighting utilities.

What is found desirable by the city in its corporate capacity in effecting a cheapening of prices for light will be speedily found even more desirable for the community of private consumers. And such a discovery means the immediate end of a monopoly's long and too patiently endured extortions.

Engineer Lacombe's figures show the perfect feasibility of building a city lighting plant cheaply and maintaining it profitably.

The experience of Chicago has been wholly satisfactory, and is worth citation as an example. It costs that city only \$53.51 to produce a 2,000-candle power arc light. As Mr. Lacombe points out, "if this cost were doubled the price would still be nearly \$40 per lamp below the price" of \$146, which New York pays. In Chicago the cost of the plant per light operated was \$363, including subway construction.

Even at that figure three years of use would find New York's plant paid for. But this city would have the further and very great advantage of extensive subways already constructed. It has also the power of compelling the extension of electrical conduits by the subway company. The city is thus in a position, as Mr. Lacombe says, "where it can build a plant cheaply because of free conduits, and even with light operating expenses still keep the price per light far below the prices paid at present."

It is an attractive plan and one to be advocated as more promising than legislative measures for the city's relief from the long-continued oppression of a most objectionable monopoly.

THE STREET-CAR PROBLEM.

Chief Engineer Parsons predicted that the subway when completed would relieve the congestion of surface traffic for perhaps two days; Mr. Vreeland now puts the period of relief at one day.

In his Judson Memorial address the President of the Interurban Street Railway Company indulged in his customary dazzling juggle of figures showing the great growth of street-car traffic and asked over again his favorite question, "What are you going to do about it? It is a question asked without any accompanying suggestion of a remedy."

He showed that in New York 80,000 more persons use surface transit per day than a year ago, and that car accommodations must be provided daily for 2,000,000 passengers in the greater city and for 50 per cent. of the residents of nearby cities. After the theatre, between Fourteenth and Fifty-fifth streets his road is called on to transport 60,000 persons at the same moment. Within seven years, he prophesies, the surface lines in Manhattan and the Bronx will be required to transport one thousand millions of passengers a year!

The figures stun; what is the city going to do about it? It is a vexed question calling for the serious consideration not only of the street-car experts solicited of accommodating these vast cargoes of passengers for the company's financial gain, but also calling for the employment by the city of the ablest advice procurable to devise some provision for the hordes yet to come. With every month that passes the problem grows less easy of solution. If it is not to be left as an unwelcome legacy to the next administration it is time definite action were taken.

Meantime the public would like to see more vigorous measures adopted by the company for temporary relief. There has been no improvement at Thirty-fourth street, where time is still lost by the double crossing and life endangered. No attempt has been made to develop the Seventh avenue line; empty cars running only to Forty-third street still alternate with indecently crowded cars. Various minor provisions for relief by transfers remain unadopted.

Cannot Mr. Vreeland, in that "consulting capacity in which half the railroads of the world" employ him, apply his superior intelligence to the development of the details of relief here indicated? To do so would be to merit a gratitude from the community which it now withholds from him in his chosen role of confessing his incompetence to better the existing conditions.

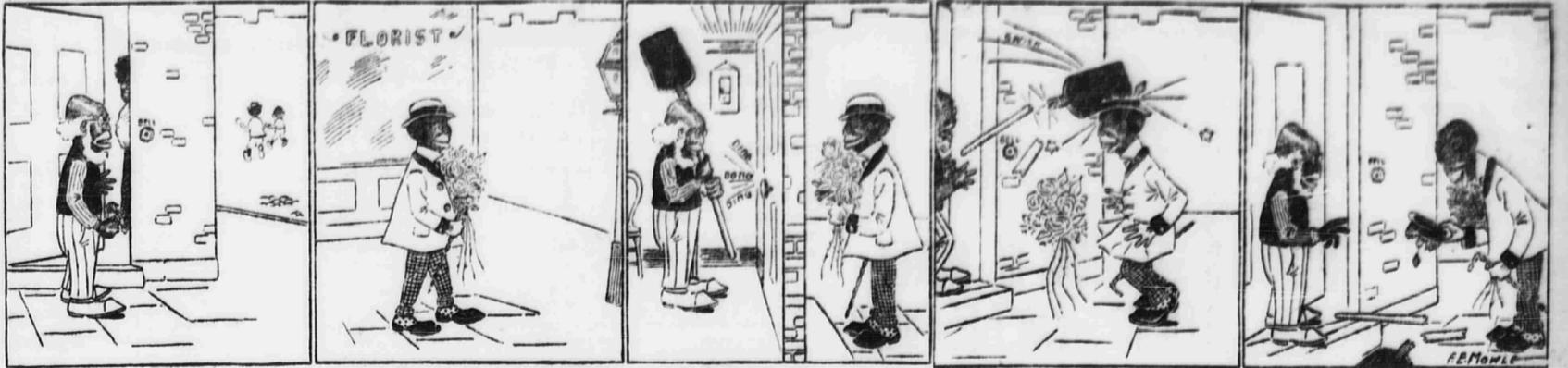
THE NEW YORK POLICEMAN.

They change their skies but not their minds who cross the sea. Here is Piper back from England and, just through his laudation of the British policeman, rebuking an Elizabeth street station patrolman for expectorating. The school of etiquette is once more in session.

The city has read Col. Piper's reasons for regarding the London officer as superior, and given them due consideration; yet it is not wholly convinced. Doubtless, as alleged, when the London "hobby's" club is raised traffic halts, and a lifted finger commands obedience. It may be that he has a deafer ear for temptations; he may not own so much real estate. Possibly the opportunity for corruption does not offer so frequently as to his American brother officer.

But in emergencies, when fire lines are to be drawn, the helpless to be rescued from accident or catastrophe, mobs to be charged and the peace kept in a great city, we are ready to count on the New York policeman to answer the most exacting requirements. Then he rises to his full stature, and the populace is not disappointed. In a force of 4,000 men not all are immature; there are some, perhaps a good many, sickly sheep. But for the responsible of admirable qualities it justifies the commendation of the community.

SWELL SAM RECEIVES A WELCOME THAT FAIRLY TURNS HIS HEAD.



1. Lindy—Who is it, pa? Pa Johnson—Only dem boys. Dat's de first time dey done fool me. I'll fix 'em nex' time. 2. Swell Sam—I'll call on Lindy unexpected like and jes' natchally 'prise her. 3. Swell Sam—Dat's Lindy. I kin heah de rustle of her skirts. Pa Johnson—Dat's dem boys agin. Watch me soak 'em. 4. Pa Johnson—I—I begs parding, sub— Swell Sam—Doin' mention it, I'm sorry to have broke such a good shovet, sun.

THE OLD JOKES' HOME.

By Roy L. McCardell.



THE above picture hardly does the S. P. C. H. badges justice. They are handsomely embossed in four colors. Those desiring badges must inclose a two-cent stamp. Address Prof. Josh M. A. Long, the Old Jokes' Home.

BEGINNING next Friday, we will have a weekly report from Old Doctor Lemonosky as to the death-rate in the Old Jokes' Home, the physical and mental condition of those who survive our system of kindly restraint, the chances of recovery of those in a grave condition, temperature, pulse, respiration, &c.

A word to officers of the S. P. C. H., and those about to become so: Our facilities are already overtaxed. Do not arrest jokes simply on suspicion; be sure they are old and feeble before taking them into custody. Do not try to get too many in the blue ambulance at one time. The merciful old-joke-catcher must be merciful to the old chestnut horse.

To those who write for a badge that they may become officers of the S. P. C. H., we respectfully request that they do not send in old jokes at the same time. Wait until you are an officer. But become an officer. Send in a stamp for a badge and keep the blue ambulance busy!

Arrivals Yesterday. From Up the Hudson. Prof. Josh M. A. Long: "When is a lawyer like a donkey? When is he drawing a conveyance. When is he unlike a donkey? Don't know."

"Why are your cheeks like a span of horses, Mollie?" "Because there is one each side of a waggin' tongue."

When are stockings like dead men? When they are men-dead; when their soles are departed; when they are in holes; when they are past healing; when they are no longer on their last legs. When is a neseagay a fish? When it is smelt.

When should free seats at church be abolished? Because they make people good for nothin'." H. CLINTON GAVEY, Grandview-on-Hudson.

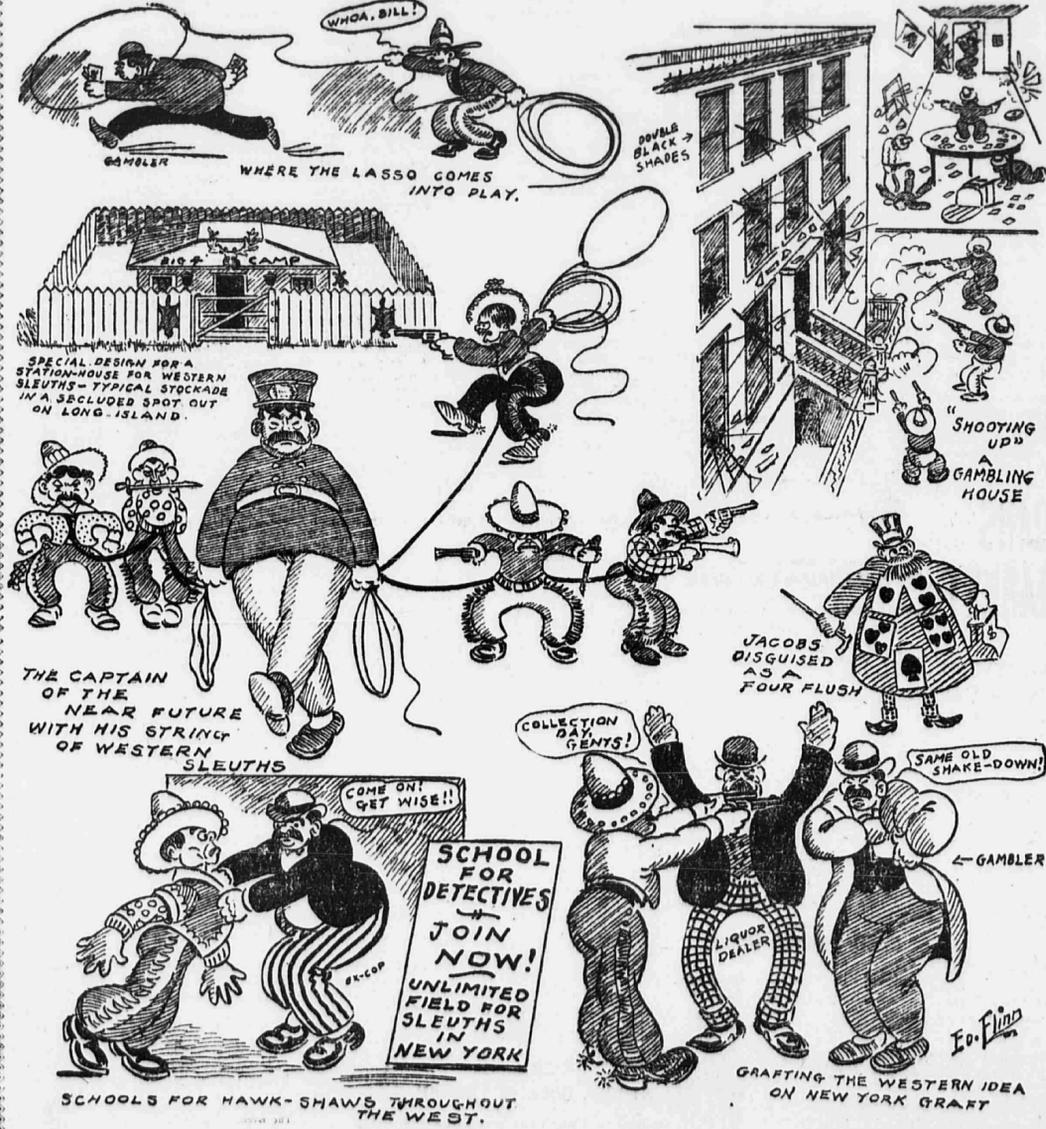
Brought in by a Badge Bearer. Prof. Josh M. A. Long: "The strongest men in the world are out west." "How so?" "Don't they hold up trains?" "There was a terrible murder in the hotel to-day."

"Was there?" "Yes; a paper hanger hung a border." "It must have been a put-up job." WILLIAM ZWERMAN, 120 East One Hundred and Sixteenth st.

Outdoor Signs. Prof. Josh M. A. Long: "While walking along Broadway I was confronted by a sign in big display letters as follows: 'Please take the other door.' I did and the copper on post arrested me." On the next block I was confronted by another sign, as follows: "Shoes blackened inside." IKE ROBINSON, No. 364 Tenth avenue.

From Hackensack. Prof. Josh M. A. Long: "A tramp said my biscuits were like cement, and yet he ate them." "Why did he?" "Because he wanted to make himself solid." "Just get on to this one's curves and yet not playing ball. What is it?" "The pitcher." Mrs. ANNIE KEMPTON, No. 16 Moore street, Hackensack, N. J.

NEW YORK'S WESTERNIZED POLICE FORCE OF THE FUTURE.



WHERE THE LASSO COMES INTO PLAY. SPECIAL DESIGN FOR A STATION-HOUSE FOR WESTERN SLEUTHS—TYPICAL STOCKADE IN A SECLUDED SPOT OUT ON LONG-ISLAND. THE CAPTAIN OF THE NEAR FUTURE WITH HIS STRING OF WESTERN SLEUTHS. SCHOOLS FOR HAWK-SHAWNS THROUGHOUT THE WEST. GRAFTING THE WESTERN IDEA ON NEW YORK GRAFT. COLLECTION DAY, GENIS! SAME OLD SHAKE-DOWN! JACOBS DISGUISED AS A FOUR FLUSH. SHOOTING UP A GAMBLING HOUSE. DOUBLE BACK SHADES. GAMBLER. SWELL SAM—Doin' mention it, I'm sorry to have broke such a good shovet, sun.

Some possible results of Greene's importation of sleuths from the "Wild and Woolly."

The Prodigal's Return—By R. C. Pitzer.

A Dream of Love and Home and a Strange Awakening.

(Copyright, 1902, by Daily Story Publishing Co.) ONE hot August afternoon a tramp walked listlessly down a dusty Iowa lane. Finally he came within sight of a group of trees, whose green freshness spoke eloquently of rest. He increased his pace and was soon seated on a shaded bank. Behind him was a picket fence, and further back was a substantial farmhouse, half hidden by its grove of trees. "You'd better not let father catch you there or—"

she's still Florence, dear." He kissed her. "And they won't mind my clothes?" "Yes, and you are—you are!" "Why, of course not, you foolish boy. Come along, quick! We must go and see them." Mary caught his hand and half dragged him to the gate and down the lane. "Oh, how you've changed," she chattered. "I didn't know you at first. I took pity on you because father and Towse, our dog, hate tramps so. Wasn't that fun?"

Mary ran into the house, and in an instant a white-haired old lady came to be caught up in her son's arms. The prodigal's home-coming was all that the brightest optimist could have wished. Will was home, and after the first transports were over, the quiet of absolute content settled down on the farmhouse. Then he went to his old room, untouched for four years, and shaved and dressed himself. When he came downstairs again his father, still in his field overalls, was pacing up and down the room. The old gentleman's face lighted up with pleasure when he caught sight of his son. "Will," he said, "I've forgot the past. I was hasty, my son, and you took after your father, I suppose." A smile flickered about the corners of his mouth for an instant. "Your mother and I got to know Florence better afterward. She's not like the old man. I always disliked

him." "You'll have to learn about the farm, and I reckon that now's as good a time as any to begin in." Will left the window, and the old gentleman entered into a statement regarding the stock, talking in an unnecessarily loud tone. Will thought, "You dear boy," she said, "now you look like my brother Will. You're thinking of Florence, I know. Perhaps—with a shy glance at her father—'perhaps he'll let you go over after awhile.'" "Father doesn't want me to go." Mary looked at the old gentleman, who winked portentously. A ripple of amusement ran over her face. "Hello!" called Will, "here's a buggy. They might let us have our first meal alone, anyhow. Who's coming?" Mary and her father glanced at each other. "Oh," said the former, "that's—that's a new friend whom we expect to dinner. You'll like her, Will. She's as pretty—"

RUBBERINTON'S STORY.

He Takes Just One Look at the Joys of Wedded Life.

ROBERT RUBBERINTON, 24, carefully measured out a half ounce of Scotch before he poured it into his high glass. Then languidly toying with the spoon, he turned to the chief mixer and drawled: "The Good Book tells us that Job had a carpet of bulls over his cattle from his shin bones up; that the distemper wiped out his flocks; that the pip emptied his hennery; that the kids all came down with colic; that Mrs. Job tied a double bow-knot in the lash of her tongue and laid on, and he never got a grouch. But let me put you on, that had Job lived to-day he'd have to pass all his medals up to a fraternity of cheerful souls who live up beyond the Harlem bend. I took a few observations yesterday that bent into my gray matter that there are certain denizens who nestle under the overskirts of this burg that could frame up their future from Mr. Dore's lines on the inferno and chuckle till their teeth rattled.

"About ten years ago Billy Puffer, an old pal of mine, fell to the soft soothingness of as charming a mass of whiteness and plumpness and fluffiness as ever cast a nover. There are five little Puffers now up along the sky-line of the Harlem honeycomb. Billy sent me a summons yesterday to the Puffer board, and I met him in his office in one of the downtown heaven-toppers just as the lights began to blink. "I guess we had better take an express," he stammered, "as I will have to stop a few seconds at the market." After he had bought a ham, two chickens, a duck, three cabbages, four heads of lettuce, two bunches of celery, a five-pound box of flowers and a peck of potatoes we started out for the 'L' station. As we passed a feed store I ventured the question that he might have overlooked a bale of hay on his memoranda, but he smiled cheerfully and replied absently that that was down on his Saturday order.

"Did you ever see 'em bale cotton by hydraulic pressure? Well, if the wise one who invented that hydraulic machine had taken a shyness on that train he'd have felt that he'd an in-growing hair instead of a bulging dome of greased thought-works. But there was never a groan out of the cramped mass. I've got it right when I wiz that if the company insisted in taking them apart and stowing their legs and arms on shelves and their trunks in lockers they'd have grinned at the novelty.

"When they piled open the boxes they brushed us into a dinky box and dropped a hundred at our feet when we were at last allowed to expand to our original shape. "After we had climbed six stories, after Billy had washed and dried the lunch and breakfast dishes so we could use 'em for dinner, after he had brewed a kettle of lactical dops for little Puffer No. 5, after he had washed the faces and hands of the little Puffers Nos. 3 and 4, after he had peeled the potatoes, after he had mildly reproved little Puffer No. 1 for poking holes in my tall tile with a potato-masher (Mrs. Puffer was getting on her glad rigging), he invited me out to the corner for a cocktail. Not for a minute had he puckered a wrinkle or taken a reef in that chronic smile. "After two cocktails he opened up with: 'Say, Bob, you'll never know what it is to live till you die up.' "I didn't tell him 'to the deep, deep crypt for mine,' but I took a few thought speels and before he'd had a potato-masher 'it' when it comes to, aming a stack of patient esnits." BARTON CURRIE.

ODD FACTS ABOUT MATCHES.

How Different People Regard Them.

By G. S. Street.

WE are all too apt to ignore the significance of common things. We use them, we fling them aside; our imagination and our reasoning powers have no case of them. Our minds exhaust the sensational problems in the news of the day, and then we complain that we are bored. While all the time near to our hands are hundreds of simple things over which we might—say we might—ponder with enjoyment till doomed. Take matches.

Behold this simple object, made of wood or wax, as the case may be, in its body, and with a head, a directing intelligence, made of phosphorus, or whatever it is, says G. S. Street in the Chicago Tribune. You strike it, you light your pipe with it, and you throw it away; that is all. But do you know through how many hands that simple object has passed before you use it? Do you know how many people are engaged in making matches? If all the matches in the world were joined end to end, do you know how many times round the world they would stretch? No. No more do I.

I know one who smokes cigars of immense size, costing fabulous sums, who presses them on his friends and urges them to throw away several inches unsmoked and light another. This same man, should he see a match wasted, would be allowed to go unused, or two used where one would have done, compresses his lips and frowns involuntarily; he says nothing, but the iron has entered into his soul. Nay, he himself will burn a match, while several men light their cigars, till it holds his fingers, while I would give a whole penny box of matches to beggar and think nothing of it. There are occasions when a man would give a large fraction of his worldly goods for the match he has not, and another way to enjoy yourself is to think of such occasions when you take a match from your well-filled box. (I recommend these simple pleasures in good faith; it is a hard world, and we need all we can get.) I have found myself on a night journey, alone in the railway carriage, unable to sleep, longing to smoke, with a good pipe and a pouch full of tobacco and no match. The agonized search in every pocket, the growing terror, the ghastly certainty, the mad rebellion against facts, the numbing, dull despair! You can imagine it all, I am sure. Now, is there in the wide world another object so small and simple as a match which would cause all that emotion? For several stricken hours I sat, thinking, thinking of one horrible circumstance, and had I been wealthy would have stopped the train, asked a match of the guard, and cheerfully paid the fine for so-called frivolity. At the first stop I placed a pipe in the train as though I had been about up with a madman. This of smoking. Think of these things, I beg you, when you light your pipe.