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IS NEW YORK'S "FINEST" MOST OBSOLETE?



Photo by Brown Bros.

New York crowds are not easy to control.

Compared With Big Cities of Europe Police Department Here Is Lacking in System and Control

IN one of New York's police stations this incident once occurred: A captain was questioning an intelligent sergeant. The captain put this proposition: A patrolman comes upon a known criminal in the act of committing a crime. The patrolman runs to arrest him, but is warned that unless he desists he will incur the disfavor of the criminal's political sponsor.

"If you were that patrolman," asked the captain of police, "what would you do?"

The sergeant cleared his throat.

"That," he said solemnly, "would be a very embarrassing situation, sir."

This gentle evasion explains the statement in 1909 of Gen. Theodor A. Bingham, deposed Police Commissioner, that New York city's police "graft and blackmail" mounts up to \$100,000,000 a year. It makes comprehensible the charge that New York city is the home of the most obsolete police force (with the possible exception of St. Petersburg) of any metropolis on earth.

Here of late a new city administration has bet about to "reorganize," as it is called, New York's Police Department. This is noteworthy in that the usual stimulus—a Lexow, Maset or Rosenthal explosion—is lacking. The first step in the reorganization has been decided upon, and the Goethals bill has been laid at Albany before the legislators from Syracuse and Schenectady and Poughkeepsie.

Meanwhile there is a certain answer back of respectable age which reduces to its simplest terms thus:

Englishman—Our London police are so clever that they know all about our most horrible crimes within a day or two after they happen.

New Yorker—That's nothing! Our New York police know all about our most horrible crimes two days before they are going to happen.

They know where every theatre on Broadway is located and where every theatre on Second ave-



The London constable is a genius at handling traffic.

nue. But a number of ugly facts are hid beneath this merry quip. For instance: New York annually pays 241 per cent. more than London for each

police employee. London's police, with 18,195 employees, cost \$11,381,022.87 in 1911; New York's police, with 10,620 employees, cost \$16,114,781.70.

Many Places Where Reorganizations Might Get Points—Enforcing Laws in London, Paris and Berlin

London protects its 7,252,963 inhabitants for over \$4,750,000 annually less than New York protects its 5,583,871. London patrols its 690.42 square miles for 70.5 per cent. of the budget New York requires to patrol 326.89 square miles.

London in 1911 convicted 78.94 per cent. of its twenty-two homicides; New York convicted 9 per cent. of the 148 murders in the same year.

London in 1911 recovered 23.99 per cent. of its \$23,783.94 worth of stolen property; New York last year, according to Frederick R. Shepherd, burglary insurance expert, recovered less than 1 per cent. of thefts, whose total valuation was suppressed, but is said to have exceeded \$5,000,000 in silverware and jewelry alone.

But you protest that London's police system is older and hence more mature than New York's. New York's police organization descends directly from the New Amsterdam rattlewatch of 1604; London's police system was founded in 1847.

Let the reorganizers of New York's Police Department—who are accustomed to shouldering their way through the hubbub of 240 Centre street—follow the Thames Embankment in London to where new Scotland Yard stands amid its flower gardens. If they enter they will find that the great steepled building is apparently deserted. They will miss the soggy smell of disinfectants. They will miss the hubbub of crowds jabbering and gesticulating in the hallways—crowds of plaintiffs, bondsmen, lawyers, doormen and excited citizens in plain clothes. The hollow, empty building will seem as silent as a simple country cemetery, save for the casual clicking of a distant typewriter. Yet this is the headquarters of the largest police force in the world.

The fact is that crowds are not allowed about the offices of the London Metropolitan Police. For here are the quarters of Sir Edward Richard Henry, Commissioner of Police, a position no im-