

GIANTS IN A CONTEST

CHICAGO SAID TO HAVE THE BIGGEST POLICEMAN ON EARTH.

He is Six Feet Three Inches Tall and Weighs 317 Pounds—Champion Policeman of Other Cities—Modern Goliath In and Out of Shows—Tall Women.

There seems to be a revival in literature pertaining to giants. One phase of it started in St. Louis.

The other day a St. Louis editor discovered a wonderful young giant wearing the blue uniform and brass buttons of the St. Louis police force—a stalwart son of Anak, impressive in his official trappings and a terror to evildoers. With a flourish of boastful delight he sent forth a challenge to the students of giant greatness in other cities, calling on them in words that rang a defiant note to produce the equal or superior of the St. Louis Goliath.

The towering specimen of gianthood offered by St. Louis is Patrolman Murray P. Davidson, twenty-nine years old. His height is six feet two and a half inches, and his weight 291 pounds. The challenge in his behalf was directed to the police chiefs in other big American cities.

"Have you any officer in your city that will beat him?" said the letter.

The proud boast of St. Louis that it had the biggest policeman on earth was destined to early humiliation. Chief Kipley, of Chicago, read the challenge. Then a sardonic smile uncoiled itself upon his usually imperturbable face. He touched an electric button and asked for Edward Martini. In response Martini was speedily ushered into the chief's presence. The latter proudly surveyed his subordinate from the ground up, his gaze seeming to rest on the ceiling when it had reached the giant's head.

"What are your dimensions, Martini?" asked Chief Kipley.

"I am six feet three inches in height," said the policeman. "My weight is 317 pounds, my chest expansion eight inches."

"That will do," answered the chief, with a lofty wave of his hand. "It beats the St. Louis giant, and we can rest on our laurels until we hear from some other precinct."

He is thirty-six years old, and a native of Wisconsin. His record, dimensions and photograph were promptly forwarded to St. Louis, to the great chagrin of the champion giant of that town.

It was only a day or two before a Ohio giant entered the lists. This was Officer F. K. Starrett, a member of the Columbus police force. But he failed to carry off the palm. He easily beat the St. Louis giant in every point except height. His principal measurements are: Height, six feet one inch; breadth of shoulders, twenty-six inches; chest and waist girth, each fifty-five inches; calf of leg, twenty inches; thigh, thirty inches. He is thirty-nine years old and weighs 347 pounds. The Buckeye giant has thirty pounds the better of Chicago's biggest policeman, but the latter is superior and more impressive in height. Yet he lowers the proud standard that was raised by the champion giant of St. Louis.

There are doubtless many other blue-coated giants that will be heard from before this interesting contest is ended. It is natural that men of extraordinary strength and proportions should seek and find employment on the police force of large cities. A year or two ago, just after the reorganization of the Broadway squad in New York, it was said that Archiebald Taggart and Harry Graham, at that time roundsmen in the squad, were probably the biggest policemen in the world. Graham was the tallest man on the New York police force, being six feet six and a half inches in height, but his weight was only 245 pounds. He was so tall and thin that he was called the lightning rod cop. In every point except that of height he is outclassed by the Westerners already referred to.

Taggart, in every way except in height, was a larger man than Graham. His measurements were: Height, six feet five and a half inches; chest, forty-seven inches; waist, thirty-seven and a half inches. His weight was 278 pounds.

Still, all modern Goliaths are not found in the police ranks. When Emperor William made his celebrated tour of the Holy Land, two years or more ago, he took with him for spectacular purposes the tallest man in the German Army. This German giant was reported to be seven feet eight inches in height. Prince Frederick Henry, eldest son of the Prince Regent of Brunswick, who recently attained his majority, is the tallest of the Hohenzollerns, being over six feet three inches in height.

Oswald Ballins is now said to be one of the greatest giants of the German Army. He is a Bavarian by birth, twenty-three years old, and seven feet one inch in height and still growing. He weighs 300 pounds and is, unlike most extremely tall men, in perfect health. He was recently married to Miss Beemen, a native of Tonquin, China. Her mother was a German, and her father a Chinese. She is considerably taller than most women, being six feet six inches high, and when last heard from was still growing at the rate of two inches a year.

Hassan Ali, who gives Cairo, Egypt, as his home, is said to be eight feet five inches tall. His head is thirty-one inches long. He married a Mahometan lady who was six feet high at the age of fourteen.

Miss Ella Ewing, the Missouri giantess, who is eight feet four inches in height, recently completed a house for herself at the town of Govin, in that State. Her new house has doors ten feet high, ceilings fifteen feet high, with chairs, tables, beds and every-

thing in proportion. Before this she never had a bed long enough to sleep in with comfort.

The greatest thin giant of recent times was Joseph Blaciszewski, a laboring man in Chicago, who was seven feet eight inches in height, but weighed only 125 pounds. He lately died at the age of forty-one. He came to America from Poland.

Chicago has now a renowned boy giant in the person of one Harry Meyers, who says that he quit the show business a short time ago to become a tramp. He is one of the few tramp giants on record. He is twenty years old, stands six feet eleven inches in his stocking feet and weighs over 300 pounds.

Tennessee has a reformed giant. He is the Rev. Charles Kesterson, a native of Hancock County, in that State. His height is seven feet eight inches, though he says that in the prime of manhood he was over eight feet tall. He is now seventy-five and weighs about 300 pounds. Years ago he was a moonshiner and general all-round terror. Then he was converted, joined the Baptist Church and began preaching. He was still engaged in this work at last accounts.

It is said that the tallest man ever accurately measured was Winckelmeier, who was eight feet six inches in height. Chang, the Chinese giant, the tallest person ever exhibited in this country, was only seven feet six inches high, though he pretended to be over eight feet.

The tallest woman on the American stage is Miss Mary Tull, who, beside her histrionic talent, has won worldwide fame as the favorite model of some American sculptors for their goddesses of liberty. Miss Tull's height is considerably over six feet, which naturally limits her field of endeavor as an actress.—New York Sun.

Hedgehogs and Moles.

Writing to a sporting contemporary a gentleman offers to receive any number of hedgehogs "up to a thousand," as he believes they would do good on his estates in Devonshire. Some people may be disposed to wonder what service can be rendered to agriculture by creatures that do occasionally make a late supper of chickens and partridges. The truth is, the hedgehog has never received full justice. He is, take him all in all, an admirable beast. Everybody knows that the hedgehog eats snails and slugs, but few people, perhaps, have realized that he is also a liberal consumer of moles. Now, there are many estates in Devonshire where the mole employs a band of men to keep his family down, and there are places in Surrey, quite near London, where neither man nor trap can stop the ravages of these creatures on what is intended to be the lawn. Where the soil is sandy the mole lives deep, and he will fling up a chain of veritable mountains in his journeys under one's lawn in the course of a single night. This conduct may be borne with in parks and meadows, but in gardens it becomes intolerable. It may be suggested, therefore, to those householders whose lawns are ravaged by moles whom neither trap nor professional trapper can control that a few hedgehogs in the garden might bring the pestilential moles to some sense of the fitness of things.—London Globe.

Curious Fish From a Driven Well.
Some time ago a driven well was sunk at the Howell Creamery, Pine Island, to the depth of 250 feet. The supply of water obtained equalled only one quarter of the amount necessary, and in order to obtain a greater supply two charges of jovelite, a new explosive, were discharged by William J. Brown, an expert in its use. Both charges were set off simultaneously by an electric battery, and a column of water eight inches in diameter was thrown to a height of 300 feet. Many curious things came up from the bottom of the well, including three curious fish. They were about eight inches long and had neither head nor tail, both ends being alike. They could swim as easily backward as forward and were not provided with eyes or mouth. There were several small orifices at each end of these curious fish. When they came down with a shower of stones from the top of the column of water they bounded repeatedly many feet in the air. One was captured by a Poland, who, curious to see its interior, struck it with a dull hatchet, but made no impression whatever upon the fish, although he killed it. One is still alive in captivity.—New York Sun.

The Congressman Went to Sleep.
One of the most absent-minded men in the House of Representatives is Mr. Burton, of Ohio, chairman of the committee on rivers and harbors. The other day Mr. Burton, having charge of the appropriation bill, forgot that for the time being he was boss of the House and that it was his duty to say when the weary lawmakers should quit work. When that time came Burton forgot all about it. The speaker looked hard at him, but Burton did not come out of his trance. Finally General Henderson's patience gave out. "The gentleman from Ohio," he shouted, just as if Mr. Burton had been asking for recognition. The Ohioan jumped up, looked bewildered and finally blurted out: "Eh, eh, Mr. Speaker," he stuttered. "I move the House do now adjourn." "Well, he's awake finally," muttered Speaker Henderson, sotto voce, "but some people do need a lot of sleep."—Chicago Chronicle.

King Edward's Curious Property.
King Edward VII. is proprietor of the beds of all British tidal rivers, such as the Thames, the Mersey, the Tyne, and others. He also owns that part of the shore all round the coast line which lies between high and low-water mark.

BOA CONSTRICTOR HUNTERS.

Men in South America Who Hunt the Snake For a Livelihood.

"The boa constrictor is fairly common in the forests of Western Nicaragua and Costa Rica," said one of the canal engineers who was in the city recently, "and there are natives in that section who hunt them exclusively for a livelihood. While we were engaged in the survey work we heard a good deal of these big snakes, and all the white men in the party stood in the greatest dread of them, although they are not half as dangerous as the small poisonous variety. During two and a half years spent in the country I saw only one live boa, but the experience is pretty firmly stamped on my memory and I have no yearning for another. I had gone out, with a couple of native assistants, from a town called Zapan, on the south side of the lower lake, to shoot some plumage birds, and while we were crossing a rather open piece of forest I noticed what I supposed to be a peculiarly malformed limb on a large spicewood tree. It sagged down from the trunk of the tree and seemed to be attached to another growth nearer the ground. I started toward it to investigate, and, when only a few yards away, the thing I had taken to be a limb suddenly raised itself in the air, and I saw that it was a gigantic snake, hanging head down from an upper bough. I had often heard the expression 'paralyzed by fear,' but I never knew what it meant until then. I was so badly scared that I couldn't have moved if the fate of the universe depended upon it, and I simply stood there, stock still, and staring while the boa swayed back and forth a few times and finally glided into the upper foliage. It seemed fifty feet long and as big around as a barrel. I think it was really about twelve. At that juncture my natives came up, and when they heard what had happened they at once insisted upon catching the monster. They made a noose which they attached to a pole, and while I retired to a safe distance one of them climbed the tree and seized the snake by the tail, while the other tried to slip the loop over its neck as it lowered its head. It was too agile for them, however, and escaped into another tree, where it went too high for pursuit.

"The Central American boas are brownish red in color, with black blotches on the sides and back, and the native hunters tan the skin by stretching it over a log. A good skin with no bullet marks and including the head sells for \$10. Mexican, down there, and to avoid holes and mutilation the hunters always catch the snakes in a noose and kill them by a stab under the jaw. They make all kinds of leather articles out of the hide—belts, pouches, leggings, slippers, and even neckties. I made many inquiries during our stay, but I could never hear of a case in which a boa had attacked a human being. The snake I saw was undoubtedly lying in wait for some small animal, and, if one had passed under the tree, would have dropped on its back. The Indians of the region call the boa 'chula,' which is the same word they use for coward; so, you see, they have no great opinion of its fighting qualities."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

A Morgan Clerkship.

Among places eagerly sought after are clerkships in the great banking houses of J. P. Morgan & Co. Fathers with sons just starting out in life watch for openings at the corner of Wall and Broad streets. The waiting list is nearly as long as that of the Union Club in its palmiest days. The head of the house takes a personal interest in the welfare and advancement of his employees, and never engages a beginner at a salary of less than \$1000 a year. Only capable, worthy young men are admitted to his employment, and he feels that a boy who does not deserve \$1000 a year deserves nothing—that is, he does not want him at any price. While clerks in the average banking-business houses are starting off with \$10 a week, and glad to get so much, the lucky ones at Morgan's are receiving \$19.18.

Morgan has made a great many successes out of men under him. Faithful clerks soon buy homes in desirable quarters of the city. Whether the firm puts them in the market or not the writer is in no position to say. Possibly when Morgan makes a million for reorganizing a railroad he declares an official dividend, taking in all the staff. Phil Armour had a similar way with him. He, like Morgan, would not pay a salary of less than \$1000 a year to a clerk in his office.—New York Letter to Chicago Inter-Ocean.

Machine to Lick Postage Stamps.

As a result of the persistent complaints of persons licking postage stamps the French Minister of Posts, Telephones and Telegraph instructed the engineers attached to his department to design a slot stamping machine. Two types are now being experimented with. In one, after the coin is inserted, the machine wets and affixes the stamp automatically if the letter is properly placed. The other weighs the letter, shows the amount of postage required and immediately upon the insertion of the price the stamp is printed directly from inked plates. Both machines are speedy and reliable. Every French postoffice will be provided with several as soon as they can be manufactured.

An Epitaph.

In the churchyard of Leigh, near Bolton, will be found a tombstone bearing the following amazing sentence: "A virtuous woman is 5s. to her husband." The explanation seems to be that space prevented "a crown" being cut in full, and the stonemason argued that a crown equals 5s.—Notes and Queries.

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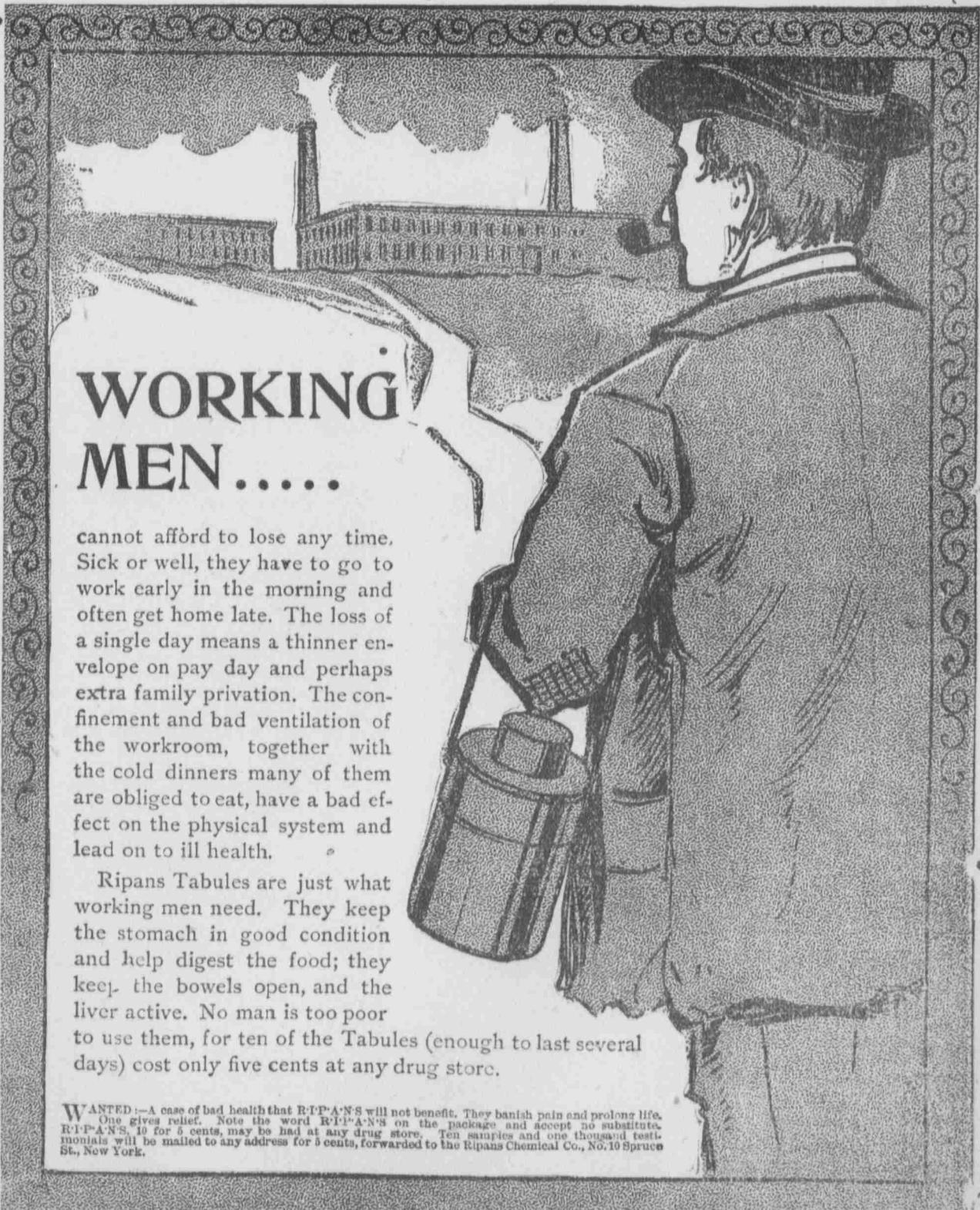
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