

THE COMMISSIONER'S ADVICE TO HIS MEN—

I. ROUNDSMEN *

WE have called you here to tell you what we expect and have a right to expect of you. Some of those whose places you took we reduced because of inefficiency. We found in two precincts that the roundsmen made few or no complaints on the last tour. They said it was because the discipline of the squads was so good that there was none to make. We sent our new roundsmen into the precincts and we found out that only in one precinct was that true. There we left all the roundsmen untouched. In the other it was not true. Our men made six complaints one night and five the next. Then we removed all the squad men.

We shall judge you largely by the discipline of the force under you. I am disappointed in the way the men patrol yet after all we have said. They don't patrol; they lounge and gossip. Five minutes is ample time for a policeman to talk over any business he has with any one on his post. We expect you to keep your men moving.

We don't want a flood of petty complaints. We shall not judge you by the number of complaints you make, but by the way you keep your men up to their duty.

Some of you owe your promotion to individual acts of bravery. There is one whose promotion we with great regret had to refuse to make permanent. He had

* Remarks addressed at Police Headquarters, New York, November 30, 1895, to twenty-two newly promoted roundsmen. From *New York Sun*, Nov. 30, 1895.

shown great gallantry, but we were compelled to admit that he was not doing his duty as he should.

In other cases we have allowed the proved courage of the man to guide us. But we know that the quality of daring does not always gauge a man's common sense and discretion. It devolves upon you to show that we have made no mistake.

Each of you knows that he owes his promotion to nothing but his own record of merit. No friend spoke for you; no friend can help you and no enemy harm you, as long as you do your duty. One of you who deserved promotion we hesitated about long because a friend kept writing asking for it. We don't like that and we don't want it; take that to heart. And it is not needed.

We want of you first—honesty. We have reduced some men because we could not feel sure they were absolutely honest. We will turn any man out the moment we find that out about him. Next we demand of you courage. Every one of you has got to be as ready to risk life and limb, if need be, as if he wore the uniform of the national army. Cowardice we will never pardon. The board has full confidence in you. Lastly, we want of you vigilance, energy, and common sense. No staying in the station-house on the last tour. Don't be heaping up little complaints about men being off their relieving points. You are to see that the saloons are closed on Sunday, and you are to see to it just as well that burglars and thieves are kept out of your precincts. If we find many burglaries in one, we shall put not only the patrolmen on trial on whose post they are, but the roundsmen as well, whose duty it is to keep them vigilant.

I don't know the politics of one of you. I care as

little for your politics as about your religion. What the board cares for is that you shall be a credit to the force. You have won your promotion on your merits. You will keep it as long as you deserve it. If any one of you proves his title to go up higher, up he will go, be sure of it. We expect you to justify our choice of you all.

2. CAPTAINS *

The board wants you to be, and expects you to be, good patrolmen, and to do your duty up to the handle. Every one of you has been tested carefully. I want each of you to know that there are two questions which the board does not consider. One is your creed political and the other is your creed religious. We care for neither of these, but we do insist upon your doing your duty. If you want to repay us, do your duty.

This is a large city, and in it each of you has drawn one of the prizes. You ought to feel satisfied, and you should show your appreciation by doing honest, conscientious work. There are two branches of the service to which I want to call your especial attention. One is to keep up a continual and unending warfare against crime, and especially that vicious sort which is carried on behind closed doors—pool-rooms, disorderly houses, and violation of the excise law. Keep that up to the handle. Beyond that, you have in addition to keep before your minds the military service of the department. Five of you men were in the late Civil War, and understand what I mean. The other three of you would have been at the front, if you had the opportunity, I am sure.

Sooner or later in this city there will be turmoil and

* Remarks addressed at Police Headquarters, New York, July 16, 1896, to newly promoted captains. From *New York Tribune*, July 17, 1896.

riot. Then you will be expected to do your duty like soldiers on the field of battle. Cowardice or shirking of duty will no more be tolerated than it would be tolerated in the army, in the face of the enemy. If a police captain cannot handle his men in such times as these, he is not wanted. I have taken all that into account in promoting you. My attention was especially called to Captain Moynihan, and the way he acted when a roundsman, in the face of danger during a horse-car strike. This happened years ago, but he then unwittingly laid the basis for his promotion now. It was a conspicuous act, and it is now being recognized.

You men must recognize the twin virtues, courage and honesty. As long as you are good captains, I want you to understand that the board of commissioners will stand by you; but if you are not, no influence on earth can save you. I also want each of you to assist the board in endeavoring to eradicate the guilt and corruption from the department, by reporting such cases promptly that come to your notice. We want to get rid of the men who bring discredit on the cloth. I congratulate each of you.