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POLICEMEN AND THEIR DUTIES.

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Mr. Justice Hawkins has recently written an address to police constables, which will be found as a prefix to Mr. Howard Vincent's "Police Guide." It is so excellent in itself, and comes from such a high authority that we make no apology for inserting it at length. Mr. Justice Hawkins has had a larger experience of criminal law, and therefore of the rights and wrongs of policemen, than most judges. He says:—

"In the few words I purpose addressing to you it is not my intention to define every duty of a police constable, but rather to point out some matters that all who desire to become good officers ought constantly to bear in mind; for, by strict attention to them, every man may assuredly raise himself to a high position in the force; and, by neglect of them, he is equally sure always to occupy a low one. First of all let me impress upon you the necessity of absolute obedience to all who are placed in authority over you, and rigid observance of regulations made for your general conduct. Such obedience and observance I regard as essential to the existence of a police force. Obey every order given to you by your superior officer without for a moment questioning the propriety of it. You are not responsible for the order, but for obedience. In yielding obedience let the humblest member of the force feel that, by good conduct and cheerful submission, he may himself rise to be placed in authority to give those orders he is now called on to obey. As to the regulations, a single moment's reflection will teach you that when so many men of different classes and habits are enlisted in one service, some rules applicable to all are necessary for the purpose of ensuring uniformity in discipline, action, conduct, and appearance; therefore it is that there are regulations exacting sobriety, punctuality, and cleanliness, and many other matters to which I need not refer. The slightest disobedience in one begets a bad example to others, and if this bad example is followed by a few, is calculated to disorganize and bring discredit upon the whole body. Let me now say something to each of you as to the mode in which your obligations to the public ought to be performed. Depend upon it, to become a good and efficient officer you must,

when on duty, allow nothing but your duty to occupy your thoughts. You must studiously avoid all gossiping. You must not lounge about as though your sole object were to amuse yourself, and kill the hours during which the public has a right to your best services, and during which constant vigilance and attention to what is passing around you is expected from you. It is this gossiping, lounging habit which sometimes gives rise to the observation that a policeman is never to be found when he is most wanted. Moreover, a man who gives way to such a habit never observes with so much accuracy that which occurs before his eyes, as he who makes it his endeavour to fix his attention upon all that is passing about him. This is a habit not difficult to acquire if you are in earnest; and, when once acquired, you will find the cultivation of it a source of pleasure, and the hours of duty much less irksome. I may add, too, that the man who takes no pains to acquire this habit, for want of attention, generally makes a very bad and inaccurate witness. I wish you to feel the importance of a steady constant endeavour, by your vigilance, to prevent crime as much as possible, and not by your negligence tempt persons to commit it; as you do if you fail in attention to your duty. To my mind, the constable who keeps his beat free from crime deserves much more credit than he does who only counts up the number of convictions he has obtained for offences committed within it. It is true the latter makes more show than the former, but the former is the better officer. The great object of the law is to prevent crime; and when many crimes are committed in any particular district one is apt to suspect that there has been something defective in the amount of vigilance exercised over it. Whatever duty you may be called on to perform, keep a curb on your temper. An angry man is as unfit for duty as a drunken one, and incapable of calmly exercising that discretion which a constable is so often called on to exercise. Be civil and listen respectfully to everybody who addresses you; and if occasionally you are remonstrated with for the course you are taking, do not hastily jump to the conclusion, as some constables do, that the person who so remonstrates wishes to obstruct you in the execution of your duty. Beware of being over-zealous or meddling. These are dangerous faults. Let your anxiety be to do your duty, but no more. A meddling constable, who inter-