

TO REDUCE THE FORCE

SUPT. BRENNAN WOULD ABOLISH DETECTIVE SERGEANTS.

His Plan Is to Have All "Fine" and "Sleuth" Work Done by Patrolmen Detailed for the Day or the Job, by Which Means Expenses Would Be Reduced and the Force Improved, He Thinks—Mayor Hopkins May Again Veto the Northwestern "I." Ordinance.

It is not impossible that the next appropriation bill will abolish the position of detective sergeant in the Police Department. Last year's bill provided for eighty such positions at \$1,212 each, or a total of \$97,020. Chief Brennan is seriously considering the propriety of abolishing the position. The Chief's idea is that the detective department is now run upon the wrong principle. In the first place he believes if one position is better than the average it should be given to men who have worked in the grades below it, and who are, therefore, best fitted for the better position.

He believes an officer who has served as a patrolman, who has traveled beat faithfully for years, and who is thoroughly familiar with police business is best fitted to be a detective. The present detectives under the prevailing system are for a large part men who have never done police duty in any form. They are principally politicians. Furthermore a large number of the present detectives sit around the Central Station many hours of the day because there is no "sleuth" work to be done. They are not patrolmen but sergeants, and they cannot be sent out to travel beat like ordinary policemen.

The plan of the Chief is to extend to the Central Station the system which is now in vogue in the outlying districts. There if there is detective work to be done a patrolman is detailed to the work and he dons citizen's clothes and goes at it. For his detective work he receives the same pay as he did for a patrolman. If such a plan were adopted generally the Chief would have the day's detective force drawn from the outlying districts or from the central detail from patrolmen. At all times a couple of extra men would be held in reserve for emergencies.

The patrol service would be increased or diminished according to the need of detectives, but there would never be a lot of men with no work of any kind. Besides there would be a reduction in expenses. Eighty men at \$1,000 instead of \$1,200 means a saving of \$16,000 a year. If there are already enough patrolmen the saving would be \$97,000. It would be greater than that in fact. The budget provided salaries for eighty; there are now about 100.

Aside from the financial side the new plan offers inducement to good officers to be better officers, and does away with all jealousy. The city ordinance requires that sergeants in the police force shall be taken from the ranks of patrolmen, so as a matter of fact therefore the present sergeants are illegally appointed.

"The Detective Department has been a thorn in the flesh of every administration," said the Chief after outlining the plan. "There has often been talk of abolishing it, and once, I believe, years ago, it was abolished. I am seriously considering the change outlined and shall probably recommend it to the Finance committee. I believe it would tend to better discipline in the department."

Mayor Hopkins said he was not sufficiently familiar with the details of the Police Department to give an opinion as to the value of the suggestions. He said, however, that he had the greatest confidence in the Chief and that if Supt. Brennan advised that such a change should be made he would not oppose it.

The discussion of the question was aroused by an inquiry as to the detective sergeants dropped from the rolls yesterday morning. They are David H. Elliott, Patrick D. Farrell, William Minier, John W. Norton, and Frank G. Corbus, beside five patrolmen who have been acting as detective sergeants—D. W. Sanford, George D. Whipple, Chester P. Smith, Barney L. Mills, and Alexander Ashley. The Chief says these men were dropped because of the order of the Mayor to reduce the force. The Chief says there will be greater reductions and that the men selected for decapitation will be those who have the least to show for a record and men who were taken into the force and given the present positions without having done any police work before.