

FIGHTS AND A GIFT.

TWO POLICE RULES VIOLATED TO HONOR LIEUT. JOHN PTACEK.

Bluscoats Witness Spirited Glove Contests and the Presentation of a Diamond-Studded Star at Plzensky Sokol Hall—Members of the Legislature Look On Too—Committee Raises More Cash than Is Needed—The Token Costs a Neat Sum—Presentation and Response.

When Chief Brennan issued the order that there should be no more prize-fights or boxing-matches in Chicago there was a string tied to it. At least so some of his policemen think, and they seem to be seconded in their belief by many Chicagoans who hold positions of prominence.

At a private séance in Plzensky Sokol Hall, Nos. 821-823 South Ashland avenue, there were some decidedly lively glove bouts, in which the chief performers were the professional pugilists "Tommy" White of Chicago and Ryan of Denver and the amateurs John McInerney of Chicago and James Sullivan of Joliet.

And it was all for Lieut. John Ptacek of the Hinman Street Police Station. To do Lieut. Ptacek honor there were fully 100 good law-abiding Chicagoans present, not one of whom would do anything contrary to the wishes or orders of the Chief of Police. Among these good citizens were Dr. Frank Jirka of the Board of Education, Ex-Ald. William Loeffler, State Senator Edward Novak, A. J. Sabath, J. G. Panoch, Ald. J. F. Dorman, Ald. J. Bidwill, Ald. Frank Slepicka, Lieut. Howe of the West Lake Street Police Station, and Lieut. Luke Coleran of the West Thirteenth Street Police Station, together with a score of other policemen and three times as many citizens who, as yet, have failed to lift themselves to such an eminence.

With all these officers present to guard them and rendered additionally safe by the presence of the city and State officers and men with "influence" the spectators had no fear of a police raid during the progress of the boxing bouts and accordingly enjoyed the matches to the utmost.

But it was rather expensive getting the policemen and legislators together. It cost nothing to get into the hall to see the matches. All the expense had been met before by subscription. But though there were no tickets for sale admission was only to the favored few, those who were known to be friends of Lieut. Ptacek and friends of his friends.

Gold Star Studded with Diamonds.

Altogether the expense was fully \$500, and of this ex-Ald. Loeffler gave one-fifth, the remainder being contributed by friends of Ptacek. Not all the money went to pay the pugilists; part of it went for a good supper, which the spectators enjoyed afterwards; the rest of it, \$375, went to buy a gold star studded with diamonds which was given to Lieut. Ptacek.

And that was the way it all came about. The gift of the gold star was responsible for it all. When Lieut. Ptacek was only a Sergeant he was popular, indeed, and when he was promoted he gained additional friends. These friends thought so much of the Lieutenant that they decided to give him a splendid star—one that would reflect credit on the recipient as well as the donors. To get the star it was necessary to get money, and so a committee was appointed to go among the business-men of the neighborhood and raise funds. Lieut. Ptacek's popularity made the task an easy one, and in a few days more than enough money was raised to pay for the star. This was an elaborate one and cost \$375. It is of solid gold, five-pointed, as all police stars are, and on each point blazes a diamond, while in the center is another diamond, big, brilliant, and valuable. The front of the star is handsomely chased and on a dark blue enamel background, surrounding the center diamond, are the words in gold letters:

.....
CHICAGO POLICE, LIEUTENANT.
.....

On the back of the star is the inscription:

.....
TO LIEUT. JOHN PTACEK. PRESENTED BY HIS
FRIENDS.
.....

It is said Chief Brennan has seen the star and that he pronounced it "the best on the force."

The committee which had the matter in charge consisted of Dr. Frank Jirka of the Board of Education; ex-Ald. William Loeffler of the Eighth Ward; State Senator Edward Novak, and Cyril Fiola of No. 817 South Ashland avenue. The committee members soon had more money than was necessary, so they decided to spend the rest in an appropriate presentation ceremony.

Arrangements for a Good Time.

The Plzensky Sokol Hall was secured and all arrangements made to have a thoroughly good time. Much secrecy was maintained and only those who had contributed to the fund and a few of their personal friends were asked to be present, the time set was a few evenings ago. Lieut. Ptacek was kept in profound ignorance but was asked to be on hand, being told that there was a little ceremony to be held in honor of Capt. Barcal, who commands his precinct. When the Lieutenant got into the hall he was considerably surprised to find that he, himself, was the man to be honored. He was led to a prominent seat and Dr. Jirka opened the exercises with a speech, in which he complimented the police officer on the good work he had done since his promotion to a Lieutenantcy. Then the star, blazing with its diamonds, was produced and pinned to Ptacek's breast, where it completely eclipsed the plain metal badge of office.

Lieut. Ptacek responded to the address, thanking those present for the testimonial of their good wishes and saying it would be his aim and ambition to merit the opinion which they held of him. Then there were songs and recitations, after which came the event of the evening, the boxing.

The first contest was between "Tommy" White of Chicago and Ryan of Denver. The men were not out for blood. Even with the protection afforded by the score or more of policemen present they did not want to indulge in any very fierce fighting. The order of Chief Brennan prohibiting boxing exhibitions was obeyed that far. But the men were there to show what they could do, and so they proceeded to show it. For several lively rounds they hit and dodged and fainted and guarded. They know they were before spectators who, as policemen, were nearly all apt to be experts in the art of self-defense. Finally, when the spectators were satisfied and the professional pugilists were tired, the two men retired and gave place to two amateurs.

Amateurs Pounded at Each Other.

These were John McInerney, clerk to Justice Dooley, who presides over one branch of the police court of the Maxwell Street Police Station, and James Sullivan of Joliet, who has won quite a name for himself as an amateur in the use of his fists. The two men put on the gloves thrown down by the professionals and pounded away at each other. Neither was much tired and there was no first blood. Even McInerney's beauty, of which his friends are somewhat proud, was not much damaged, though he did get several good blows on different parts of his face.

After the boxing the doors to the dining-room adjoining the hall were thrown open and the guests filed in. The line was headed by Messrs. Cerveny and Sindelar, who acted as escorts for Lieut. Ptacek and Dr. Jirka. Behind them came:

Senator Novak, Representative Christian Wallock, Cyril Fiola, ex-Ald. William Loeffler, A. J. Sabath, J. G. Panoch, M. S. Garry, Ald. J. Bidwill, Ald. Frank Slepicka, Ald. J. F. Dorman, Felix Golden, Lieutenant of Police Luke Coleran, Dexter Burke, Cornelius Mahoney, Charles Ledorer, C. H. Goll, Vaclav Cada, John Dullard, Michael Conley, Ray Wallock, C. Veseloy, Michael Cohesy, Sergeant of Police Daniel Grace, Joseph Kostner, James McInerney, George Lake, James Kougly, Lieut. Dowor, John Styx, Lieutenant of Police Howe, and Herman Myers.

And all this in spite of the fact that there is a rule of the Police Department forbidding officers from accepting presents—even of gold stars with diamond settings—and that charges were brought against one officer for accepting \$5 earned in the discharge of his duty.