

A LOT OF OLD GOSSIPS.

MEN WHO KNOW EVERYTHING WORTH KNOWING ABOUT POLICE MATTERS.

No policeman is ignorant of the existence of the "Third House" in the department, and few have failed at one time or another to be subjects of its deliberations and comments. Its members may be called delegates from the several precincts and squads, and they are generally what are known as ordinance officers, who are soft-plank barnacles, who look after violations of the municipal and other codes, and trot errands and are rewarded by exemption from strict patrol duty and a quasi-detective rank.

Their meeting place is in what is known as the office of the Bureau of Information, at the Central Office, which they visit between 8 and 9 A. M. on week days to take from the precinct boxes such orders and papers as may be placed in them for the commanding officer and the other members of the squad to which they belong. There is one man sent on this duty from each precinct, so that at times as many as twenty-five delegates meet at the bureau. Nearly all are typical "Bijahs," and inveterate gossips, and as all are old in police business the prevailing dialect is Matsell-as-she-is-spoke.

The delegates constitute themselves into a Committee of the Whole, and each is expected to retail the gossip, scandal, and predictions of the command he comes from. Any delegate who cannot furnish some spicy gossip is rated as "no good," and the result is that a premium is placed on romance, and tellers of cold facts are pounced upon.

The return of the delegate from Headquarters is anxiously awaited in the Captain's room as in the section room. He is expected to carry his budget of news to the Central Office, and bring back its equivalent, just as the husband of a country housewife is expected when he starts for the store with a load of ties or a basket of eggs to bring back groceries or something else. Nothing is amiss for these gossip mongers, from the private affairs of the station-house bed-maker to speculation as to the filling of a vacancy in the Police Board by the Mayor.

The meetings of the board furnish both preliminary excitement and material for comment before and after they occur, and the delegate who cannot at an instant's notice make up a slate to fill vacancies in any station house is likely to be sneered at by the "Third House" and snubbed in his precinct.

Their rivals are the precinct or ward detectives, who eschew gossip and sift stories. Tell one of them a doubtful story and he'll ask you, "Where did you get that; from a member of the 'Third'?"

BRIEFS VERSUS ELOQUENCE.

It is not always the eloquent argument that wins the case for the lawyer when no jury is to be convinced. More frequently it is the carefully drawn brief, which the Judge takes with him to the privacy of his own chambers and looks over at his leisure. And these convincing briefs are not always drawn up by the lawyer who does the eloquent pleading. More frequently, in fact, they are not. Often they are the result of the labors of some lawyer who does not figure at all prominently in the case, and may have no other connection with it beyond drawing up the brief. He may not even be in court when the case is tried.

There are lawyers in this city, and comparatively a good many of them, who seldom appear in court with cases of their own, and do little office work for clients of their own. And yet they are not the young lawyers, striving to get a foothold in the profession. They have no lack of patronage, but it comes from their fellow-members of the bar. They are lawyers who make a business of constructing briefs, and a paying business it is, too. They are known by reputation far and near in the profession, and many a brilliant lawyer prefers to turn his important case over to some one of them to have the brief prepared rather than trust to his own efforts in that direction.

THE UMBRIA'S PASSENGERS.

Among the cabin passengers brought in by the Cunard liner Umbria from Liverpool yesterday were Dr. Z. B. Babbitt, Mr. G. E. Broodfield, Mr. Josiah F. Burns and Mrs. S. G. Burns, the Rev. Mr. Calder, Mr. and Mrs. Campbell, Mr. W. H. Carnsew, Capt. Cheape, Mr. F. K. Copeland, Mr. and Mrs. Davidson, Mr. S. Herbert Faulkner, Mr. and Mrs. W. Frost, Mr. B. Duncan Gibb, Mr. H. F. Russell Howland, Dr. J. S. Hyland, Dr. R. H. Kline, Mr. J. C. Lees, Mr. Standish Lowe, Miss Alice M. Mountain, Mr. Alfred de Pinna, Major Russell, Dr. T. E. Scholes, Mr. Benjamin Ward, and Mr. William Yule.