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Author(s): Harry Reginald King

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A WORD FOR THE POLICE

By HARRY REGINALD KING

Strange times we live in, when the poor forget
Good manners, and the overwhelming debt
They owe the tender masters who permit
Them to engage in trade, or lack of it,
That wealth be garnered for the city's good.
And in this noble privilege one would
Imagine lay sufficient recompense,
But they do better, for at great expense
They are rewarded with a lavish wage
To keep the body and soul together, and assuage
A thirst for pleasure, and spur them on to breed
New generations—born to build and bleed
And guard for those who bleed not, guard nor build.
Strange times! for discontent the world hath filled,
And though it find expression in a strike,
The citizens, the good and bad alike,
Are nowise justified in that they split
Each his own skull, or maimed him, or did spit
On his own face, or smashed his furniture,
Or placed himself beyond the surgeon's cure,
To blame therefor the police, who are in sooth
The guardians of life, property—and truth.

Full well had sped this stratagem of spite,
Had there not been a very Commission of Light
Appointed, wherein Powell and Atkinson,
Two heroes with two minds in unison,
(After one witness had been driven away,
As though an Englishman could see or say!)
With all the rites of jurisprudence proved
No blow was stricken, not a baton moved,

A WORD FOR THE POLICE

And that the police indeed were lambs whose loss
Would summon tears from gentle Sir John Ross!

So let it rest, and God be given thanks,
Who raised two lawyer heroes in our ranks,
And barbed their tongues that justice might be done.
Alas! despite them, lying rumours run
Strangely from house to house, from wall to wall,
Saying, *To clear a street this method of all
Is most approved: each egress must be held,
The prey surrounded, and the signal knelled
At which the Force should savagely advance,
And leave the bloody issue unto chance!*