

# TRUE STORIES OF THE NEWS.

## A \$600 GLASS OF BEER.

John Rogers Takes a Little Drink that Breaks the Record as to Expense and Practically Bankrupts Him.

During the Two and a Half Minutes It Takes Him to Get His Beer, His Dray and Six Barrels of Whiskey Upon It Mysteriously Disappear.

John Rogers, of No. 14 69 Avenue A, went into a little beer saloon at the corner of Madison and Market streets about a week ago and quaffed a "beer." That glass of beer which John Rogers quaffed to quench his thirst after a long, hard pull on his truck all day, was the most expensive glass of hop-brew that ever disappeared behind a mustache. It cost—that single glass of beer—just

\$600.05, with expenses yet to come. And to pay for it has taken every penny that the truckman has in the world. Among the people for whom Rogers works are: Weillier, the liquor merchant doing business at No. 325 North Third street, Philadelphia, and Landman & Bernheimer, at No. 177 Pearl street, in this city. He makes his headquarters at the latter office.

On the 16th of this month Weillier shipped to Rogers six barrels of whiskey, five of which he was to deliver to No. 33 First avenue and the sixth he was to see safely deposited at No. 31 South Fifth avenue. Each barrel contained from forty-four to forty-six gallons of Philadelphia concoction, and all together they were valued somewhere about \$600. The goods came from Pennsylvania by the Clyde line, landing at pier No. 33 East River, and were consigned to the truckman.

Rogers loaded the barrels on his cart, jumped upon the seat, snapped his whip and set off on his journey at a leisurely pace. It was just 4.30 o'clock in the afternoon when he drew up before No. 33 Market street. As has just been said, he had been hard at work all day and he began to hanker, like the boy after the crow, for a good glass of cool, foaming beer.

HE YIELDS TO TEMPTATION. He spied the little saloon at the corner, but it was impossible to drive his team to the door, as some buildings were going up in the street and the thoroughfare was half choked with material. So what does he do but stop his horse before No. 33, close against the sidewalk, jump down and run over to the corner for that fateful beer.

He was gone two minutes and a half, by the clock. In that time he had hopped across the paving stones, called for the drink, blown the foam away to the floor, swallowed his beer, clapped down a nickel

and got back before No. 33 again. Five cents for the beer, \$600. for the whiskey! That is an itemized account of Truckman John Rogers in those two minutes and a half.

For when he got back to the pavement opposite No. 33, truck, horse, whiskey—all were gone.

Six hundred dollars and five cents inside five minutes! That's a pace that leaves the glided youth at the French hall away over by the horizon. No one in the street could be fazed who noticed the departure of the cart. No one had seen it as it drove away. No one could aid the truckman in his extremity.

He looked up the road. He looked down. Then he jumped to the corner and peered through Madison street, both ways. He guessed the truth in a moment.

The old horse which he had been driving along for a half-year had not sauntered away at his own sweet will. He couldn't get out of sight, with a truck and six barrels of whiskey behind him, at a 30 speed, for he wasn't that kind of a horse. Some sneak thief had jumped up on the seat, when he saw Rogers go into the beer saloon, and had deliberately driven away with his haul.

WHERE, OH WHERE IS THAT WHISKY? Four hours later the horse and the truck were found standing quietly before the sidewalk just off the corner of Worth street, where it joins Broadway. The horse and the truck were intact, just as Rogers had

left them in the afternoon. But the 300 gallons of whiskey? John Rogers is looking for them yet.

The instant that he had comprehended how he had been overreached he had gone at hot haste to the nearest police station and sounded an alarm. Inside half an hour every other police station in the city was notified to be on the lookout for a big roan horse with a lumbering gait, carrying a heavy four-wheeled truck, with green racks and body and red under-gearing, and six barrels of Philadelphia whiskey, marked with the name of H. Weillier. Two ward detectives from the Madison street police station were immediately detailed on the hunt. The Brooklyn Bridge and every ferry pier in the city were watched to prevent the thieves from escaping, and a keen hunt after that roan horse and Philadelphia whiskey was set in motion without delay.

Rogers got his horse and cart, but the whiskey—"It has never come back." And unless it is forthcoming shortly Rogers will be unable to keep the horse and truck much longer, and not only will these have to go, but it will take every dollar he has saved up against a rainy day to satisfy his debt to Weillier.

IT'S NOT ALL A JOKE. Of course, you can make your joke about a man who has 300 gallons of good Philadelphia whiskey at his elbow jumping away from it and recalling himself with a plain glass of five-cent beer. But the predicament

of the truckman is a very pitiable one. He is an honest, industrious, hard-working fellow, struggling bravely to make a happy future for his wife and little children. Of the latter he has three—a girl of six and two curly-headed boys, who are four and two years of age respectively.

It is only six months ago that he bought the truck and the good-will of the business from George O. Moore. He had been a bartender before and had set up for himself a modest beer saloon at No. 1477 Avenue A, on the opposite side of the street from where he lives. He has been compelled to give a chattel mortgage on the fixtures of the place. He had \$60 in his pocket, and he has already given that up. He can keep his horse and cart a little while longer in the possible hope that the missing whiskey will come to light again.

"And if it does not come to light?" asked a World reporter.

"Oh! well," answered Rogers, "I'm young and have two stout arms. I'll get along all right. I have plenty of friends, who will help me out if I go to them, but I don't care to do that. The loss was a little hard to bear at first."

And then he added with a good-humored smile, "I've had two of Byrnes' men on the trail, and two ward detectives. They haven't had much success yet. Now I am thinking of going out and pressing half a dozen jumps in service. They say, you know, that a tramp can smell a drink a

block away. Their scent ought to be pretty keen after 300 gallons of 'whisk.'"

Truckman Rogers generally gets his luncheon in Julius Schopp's place at No. 19 Old slip. Last week he was there as usual, and the proprietor was commiserating with him on his loss. There was a peddler in the place vending chickens whose face was familiar to the truckman.

"Were you the man who lost the whiskey," said the peddler to the truckman.

Rogers said he was that unfortunate, and the other hinted that he knew where there had been some "crooked stuff" put away a few days before. If Rogers would give him \$5 as a starter, he knew a way, he explained, in which he felt pretty sure that the truckman would get back his liquor, for \$45 in addition when the stuff was located. So Rogers gave the peddler

the \$5 and from that day to this no one about the restaurant has seen the peddler's old familiar face again.

Next Rogers had to set a detective to try and catch the peddler. So there was another V, and the detective's expenses added on to the cost of that unfortunate glass of beer. Poor John Rogers is beginning to think that he would have come out cheaper if he had broken a half dozen of sunny Johannibergers, '90, with his friends. And then, too, he would have had some enjoyment out of the expenditure. For that one poor glass of beer is growing more and more expensive every day.

Rogers was the victim of a bold gang of bar-room loafers and dock thieves who are carrying on in the broad daylight as well as under cover of darkness a successful business in wholesale theft. One of the detectives whom the truckman has employed to help him has also to look out for a cartload of tobacco in the leaf which mysteriously disappeared from before its owner's door within a month. Drayman Conway, who hanks for the wholesale druggists James A. Webb & Son, at No. 163 Pearl street, had whisked from under his eyes as they were turned away for a moment about two months ago, three barrels of alcohol valued at \$300, and McNamara, who keeps a saloon in South street, at the foot of Pike, lost within a few weeks several barrels of liquor in the same strange way. Tobacco, whiskey, and alcohol—in the raw, it seems, are not so easily run down as silverware and watches, and the losers of these commodities have a tussle on their hands when they try to identify their missing valuables.

Young America will tell you that his mother will detect the odor of a cigarette on his clothes unerringly, and every man knows that his wife will detect that one glass of liquor he had around the corner with a scent as keen as an Indian's. And yet here are a cartful of tobacco and 300 gallons of whiskey which have rubily disappeared and not one of the dozens of people sniffing about can get even so much as a smell of the stolen goods.