

THIEVES WHO RAID THE ROOSTS

THREE HAVE BEEN CAPTURED
BY THE POLICE.

Two of Them Are Boys Who May Be
Turned Over to Juvenile
Court.

Unsafe is the fowl that seeks its roost within the city limits. At any uncanny hour of the night a stealthy hand may rudely take it from its perch, wring its neck and thrust the flopping body into a sack, where many headless hens have gone since the police department, a week ago, directed its energies toward the apprehension of the thieves.

The arrest of John Peterson, as the result of diligent work performed by the police, was but the beginning of a series of arrests that disclosed a wholesale robbery which has been carried on, uninterruptedly, for weeks. Two boys, Bob Turner, and O. Johnson, taken into custody, last night, have confessed to the theft of at least 100 fowls which they sold to restaurants, and meat markets. The list is not complete and the department is setting its trap for other thieves, whose last trip to an unsuspecting hen coop was made Tuesday night.

Turner and Johnson were caught through the information supplied by a man named Crosby. He saw the boys with a sack of chickens going in the direction of a meat market. Knowing their reputation, he informed an officer whose search was rewarded by the discovery of eleven fowls.

Turner and Johnson are at the city jail awaiting the pleasure of the authorities. Their ages entitle them to Juvenile court trials but their crimes may be entered as felonies, so that in all probability they will appear before the higher courts.

Joseph Belnap was made to feel the cunning of Turner and Johnson twice this week. Sunday night his coop was entered and Monday morning he counted a loss of seven choice chickens. Monday night the boys came back for the remainder, so that Tuesday morning, when Belnap opened the coop, he found nothing but deserted roosts and the tracks of the thieves. Being confronted this morning, Turner and Johnson admitted their guilt and stated that they sold Belnap's thirteen chickens to a Chinese noodle house on Twenty-fifth street.

With the same careful discrimination as to choice and manner of execution, the coops of Mrs. Howard and Mrs. James, residents in the vicinity of Twenty-ninth street, were entered two nights ago. The eleven fowls found in the sack at the time Turner and Johnson were arrested were returned to Mrs. Howard.

A more complete inventory of the thefts committed is being slowly compiled by the officers to whom Turner and Johnson are supplying information. Their record includes one hundred chickens, but as twice that number have been recently lost, it may be considerably augmented.

It has not been fully determined the extent of Peterson's thefts. Sergeant Chambers is collecting evidence against him through the information being divulged by the colored proprietor of a Wall avenue restaurant, to whom the culprit took most of his plunder. Butter, fifteen pounds at a time, shoulders of beef, hams, lard, and other kinds of provisions were procured by Peterson with systematic regularity. Every week, for a month, he brought in his haul. At the city jail he acts like a half-witted man, but it is believed that he is more cunning than he appears.

Merchants to whom Turner, Johnson and Peterson sold their plunder disclaim any knowledge of the thefts. No action has been taken against them. The boys, so they declared, came to them, with stories of fat chickens, fed by their folks, for market. In this manner they were able to obtain market prices and thus avoid the suspicion which would come from selling at a low figure.

The last coop to be entered was at the W. Winslow residence last night. The report was somewhat meager but the Winslows suspect foreigners who live in their neighborhood.