

Continuing The Capitol Graft Cases

THE trial of Joseph M. Huston, architect of the Pennsylvania state capitol building at Harrisburg, beginning Nov. 29, has renewed public interest in this famous graft case, which has become a national scandal. The affair has been dragging along now for three years, as it was in the gubernatorial campaign of 1906 that State Treasurer Berry sprung the charge that graft had figured in the equipment of the big building and that instead of its having cost \$4,000,000, the sum appropriated by the legislature to "complete" the capitol, more than twice that amount had been expended on it. Berry's information was fragmentary, as even he did not suspect at the time that actually \$9,000,000 had been paid out for finishing and furnishing the building in addition to the \$4,000,000 spent for the structure itself.

For over six months a committee probed the affair, during which time auditors and experts went over every foot of the building and its contents and the voluminous records involved, and the commission examined 188 witnesses on the stand. The commission held



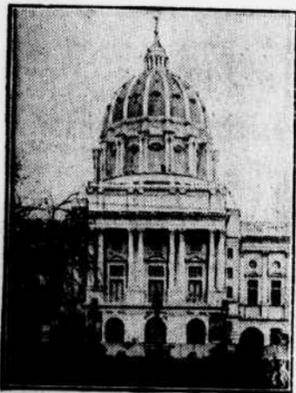
JOSEPH M. HUSTON.

sixty executive sessions and forty-eight public hearings and on Aug. 10 reported to the governor urging criminal and civil prosecutions of the guilty parties.

Warrants were served on Sept. 3 on thirteen persons, and on Sept. 28 the Dauphin county grand jury returned true bills for conspiracy against Contractor Sanderson, ex-Auditor General Snyder, ex-State Treasurer Mathues, ex-Superintendent Shumaker, Architect Huston, Assistant Architect Lewis, Traveling Auditor Irvine, Congressman Cassel and Sanderson's bronze company partners—Kinsman, Bollean, Neiderer and Storm. Charles G. Wether of the firm of George F. Payne & Co., contractors for the main building, was indicted for false pretense. Payne also was indicted. Some of those indicted, however, were shortly after the trial began Irvine was sent to an asylum.

It was on Jan. 27, 1908, that the first case was called, the defendants being Sanderson, Huston, Snyder, Mathues and Shumaker. Conspiracy was alleged in a bill of \$53,318.00 for tables and chairs, the alleged fraud amounting to \$19,000. The commonwealth agreed to a severance for Huston, believing he would take the stand as a state witness and tell what he knew. He refused to do so, however. The other four were found guilty March 15. A motion for a new trial was refused Dec. 13, and the defense appealed to the superior court. Meantime the four defendants were sentenced to two years in prison and \$500 fine.

The superior court in July last affirmed the decision of the Dauphin county court. On the 22d of that month the supreme court granted a stay of sentence pending an appeal to



FACADE OF PENNSYLVANIA CAPITOL.

that body by Snyder and Shumaker. Sanderson and Mathues having since died. Recently the supreme court decided to permit this appeal, which will be argued in May next unless the court can be persuaded to advance the case.

The third trial will be similar to the first in many of its details, involving a bill of \$61,948.50 for 272 Sanderson desks, the alleged overcharge being \$25,072.50. Snyder, Shumaker and Huston were to be tried on this charge, but the court granted severances to Snyder and Shumaker.

THEODORE N. VAIL.

President of the Big Company That Has Secured Western Union.

The deal recently made in which the American Telephone and Telegraph company gained control of the Western Union means the biggest merger since the formation of the steel trust, with a capital stock amounting to more than \$1,000,000,000. The deal is regarded as marking a long stride toward complete control by one corporation of all wire communication in the United States and the possible extension of the telephone service to the far corners of the land without duplication or extra construction.

Theodore N. Vail, president of the American Telephone and Telegraph



THEODORE N. VAIL.

company, is a self made man and forty years ago was a sun tanned farmer's boy working upon his father's farm in Iowa. Today he receives a salary of \$100,000 a year as head of the big company. Successfully he taught school, was a telegraph operator and when twenty-three years of age entered the railway mail service. In 1874 he was general manager of the service, but a year later resigned and attached himself with the telephone interests of which he is today the president.

One on the President.

President Taft is not the least bit sensitive about his size and laughs as heartily as any one over stories on this subject. Here is the latest: At a stop on his recent tour he had taken a short walk in the country to view the scenery, but got turned around and lost his way. Finally he sighted a farmer toiling in the sun on the side of a hill, and, wishing to escape the exhausting climb from the road, the president hailed him. Twice the pleasing, ringing voice of the nation's chief magistrate was heard before the attention of the farmer was gained. The president pointed to a nearby gate and made an extra effort.

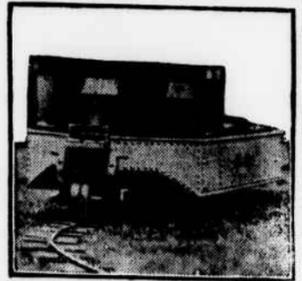
"Can I come in?" he shouted.

"I guess ye kin," bawled the farmer. "A load of hay jist come through it."

ONE RAIL CAR.

Louis Brennan's Novel Gyroscopic Invention Being Shown in England.

Worldwide interest is being taken in the public demonstration in England of Louis Brennan's gyroscopic car, which runs on a single rail, and some of the foremost railway engineers de-



MODEL OF BRENNAN GYROSCOPE.

clare that the invention will revolutionize land transportation all over the earth. The car weighs twenty-two tons, is forty feet long, thirteen high and ten wide and is mounted on one regular truck, but on one single line of four wheels. In this manner it carries forty passengers during the demonstrations with perfect safety, running freely about curves of all sorts of angles.

It was in May, 1907, that Mr. Brennan made his invention public, successfully demonstrating a model a few feet in length. Later he built a full sized car capable of carrying passengers and freight, which is now being shown. A subsidy from the Indian government made the work possible. Upon its completion the experimental car was given the most rigorous tests for over six months, and now the results of these trials are given to the world.

The principle of the gyroscopic car is that of a spinning top, and the car runs smoothly and without vibration. Some thirty years ago Mr. Brennan, who was then in Australia, became beset with the idea that this principle could be applied to railroad construction and operation in a way which would revolutionize land transportation all over the earth, and he has been working on it ever since. Brennan was the inventor of the Brennan torpedo, controlled by the British war department.

The Day We Give Thanks



THANKSGIVING day is a survival from the earliest colonial times, and the records that have come down to us concerning the appointment and observance of these feasts of thanksgiving have special interest. They throw light upon the struggles of the pioneers, they give delightful glimpses of their genuine hearty social life in the midst of their hardships, and they reveal the peculiar views and characteristics from which this country gathered its earliest settlers.

Two hundred and eighty-eight years ago the first Thanksgiving day was celebrated, and it was not at that time intended to be an annual feast or an occasion for general social merrymaking. It was rather a day appointed for entirely religious purposes in order to give the settlers at Plymouth an opportunity to express their heartfelt gratitude for the perils they had passed and for the bounties they were then enjoying. They had escaped from the persecutions of the English church and had been permitted to settle down and make a new home for themselves.

It had been a long year and a hard one. They were surrounded by savages, with whom they were fortunately at peace. Their fields had yielded them enough grain to support them in comfort during the coming winter, and their houses were built warmly and strong. Therefore, with the religious fervor which had prompted them to such sacrifices, they considered it fitting that they should return to God some thanks for what they considered his many blessings. Accordingly Governor Bradford in the autumn of 1621 set aside a day to mark the beginning of a season of prayer and gratitude. Here is what Edward Winslow says about that earliest American day of feasting:

"Our harvest being gotten in, our governor (William Bradford) sent four



THANKSGIVING PREPARATIONS.

men out fowling, so that we might after a special manner rejoice together after we had gathered the fruit of our labors. They four in one day killed as much fowl as, with a little help beside, served the company almost a week. At which time, among other recreations, we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming among us, and among the rest their greatest king, Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deer, which they brought to the plantation and bestowed on our governor and upon the captain, Myles Standish, and others. And although it be not always so plentiful as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God we are so far from want that we often wish you partakers of our plenty."

Thanksgiving day was recommended annually by congress during the Revolution, but there was an intermission thereafter, due perhaps to a growing skepticism, till in 1789, when Washington ordered a day of thanksgiving for the adoption of the federal constitution. Subsequently various days in November were recommended by presidents and governors till in 1863 the regular observance of the national Thanksgiving day was instituted through a proclamation of President Lincoln.

The president's proclamation does not make it a national holiday. It applies legally only to the District of Columbia and the territories. It is the governor's proclamation that affects the states. The day is observed in all states, but in some it is not a statutory holiday.

The last Thursday in November is always chosen, and many wonder how it happens to be so. Thursday was originally the day selected by the Puritans, & is thought, because, being so near the middle of the week, it gave opportunity for the scattered members of the family to come together and to return without desecrating the Sabbath by travel. November was selected as the month when the fall harvests were all gathered.



AFTER WILLIE'S THANKSGIVING DINNER.

DISEASES OF THE SKIN.

Employment of Liquid Air and Carbon Dioxide in Their Treatment.

The lack of specific remedies for many diseases of the skin has caused a diligent search for new remedies more efficient or less disagreeable than those in common use. An epoch in dermatology was marked by the introduction of Roentgen rays, which exert a curative action in many cases of eczema attended with profuse exudation and intense itching, in psoriasis and in many fungous diseases of the skin and hair. Cathode rays have proved beneficial in numerous cases of lupus, and quite recently malignant tumors of the skin have been cured by these rays.

But in many cases treatment with rays failed to effect a definite cure, and the experiments with other physical and chemical agencies were resumed. An American physician tried liquid air and carbon dioxide and obtained more or less success in cases of tuberculous abscesses, moles, pimples and superficial cancer of the skin. The method of treatment is as follows: Cotton wool wound tightly on the end of a rod is dipped into the double walled glass flask of liquid air and then pressed lightly on the affected part of the skin. The skin freezes and becomes inflamed, and in from ten to twenty days the morbid growth sloughs off.

But liquid air is expensive, and it also acts too energetically. An equally efficient but cheaper and more manageable agent is carbon dioxide, which was first employed for this purpose by Pusey. From the steel cylinder which contains liquefied carbon dioxide the vapor is allowed to escape into a glass tube. Here it condenses into snow, which is compressed by a piston into a hard mass. This can be trimmed to the size and shape of the morbid growth to which it is to be applied, and thus the freezing of the surrounding healthy skin can be avoided.

The temperature of carbon dioxide snow is 130 degrees F., while that of liquid air is about 200 degrees F. The snow is cold enough, however, to freeze the skin into a hard, white mass in a few minutes. Too long an application may cause necrosis or death of the underlying tissues. The skin subsequently becomes slightly inflamed, and a blister, similar to that caused by a burn, is produced. In general, freezing and burning produce similar effects on the skin. In two or three weeks the part that has been frozen falls off as a scab, revealing skin of quite normal appearance or marked by a slight scar. The application of this remedy is not attended with great pain. In the treatment of facial blemishes special care must be taken not to freeze the skin too deeply. The field of application of carbon dioxide snow is extensive. Hitherto good results have been obtained chiefly in cases of lupus, but small tumors, callosities, moles, pimples, etc., have also been treated with success.—Dr. Berggrath in Die Umschau.

Substitute For Leather Belting.

A new belting material has recently appeared for the purposes of power transmission which is said to have advantage over leather, which has always been regarded as supreme for this work. This belting is composed of parallel strands of specially made steel wires, each strand covered with fine hem marlin, the strands being bound together at regular intervals by cross strands of hemp fiber. Each strand consists of from seven to nineteen wires, according to the strength of horsepower desired. The theory is wires, according to the strength or steel with the high coefficient of friction of prepared marlin, resulting in the highest transmission qualities. Among the advantages claimed for the belting is a saving in the size of pulleys, one-half the width of belt being required as compared with common belting, resulting in economy of space and weight, the new belting weighing one-half of leather belting of equal strength.

Use of Kerosene in Polishing Metals.

Any one who has polished a flatiron or steel surface with emery cloth knows how soon the cloth gums and fills up. The cloth in this condition will do little or no cutting. A simple remedy for this trouble is to use kerosene on the surface. The oil floats away a large part of the gumming substance and leaves the emery cloth sharp and clean to do the best work; also it seems to act as a lubricant to keep particles of metal from collecting on the cloth and scratching or digging in the surface of the metal. A very light lard oil is equally good for this purpose, but not always easily obtained. A surface polished where oil or kerosene is used does not rust so easily as one polished dry for the reason that a little oil remains on the metal.—Popular Mechanics.

A Discovery in Dentistry.

An electric current from artificial teeth has been reported by a British dental authority. Pain in the patient's tongue had puzzled doctor and dentist, when an electrician, to whom the matter was casually mentioned, examined the teeth, finding that they were fixed to the composition plate by two metals. A galvanometer test showed that these metals, moistened by the saliva, generated a current strong enough to cause ulceration and severe pain.

Method of Preventing Rust.

A rust preventing coating for iron used by a German manufacturing company consists in coating iron and steel ware first with lead, then electrolytically with zinc and finally heating this coating, so as to obtain an alloy of the two metals, which has the same potential as zinc.

MODEL MR. BOWSER

Peace Descends Like a Dove on His Household.

HIS QUIET DAY AT HOME.

In Fear and Trembling Mrs. Bowser and the Cook Wait For the Explosion That Never Comes—Even a Tramp Gets a Smile and a Dime.

By M. QUAD.

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As a rule Mr. Bowser comes down to breakfast to do more or less growing. He has had trouble in finding his collar button, necktie and cuffs, and after a long hunt his missing hairbrush has been discovered under the bed. He sits down at table to mutter over the rolls, jaw about the coffee and declare that his poached egg is a year old. When he departs for the office it is with the feeling that he is a martyr and that the world owes him a debt of gratitude for suffering as he does without becoming desperate and murdering somebody.

The other morning Mrs. Bowser received a surprise. There was no row heard upstairs after she came down, and when Mr. Bowser appeared he was calm and placid. He even had a smile on his face. The coffee and rolls and egg were all right. Not a threat to cripple the baker for life or slaughter the grocer on sight. After several furtive looks at him and after noticing that the cook was scared and puzzled, Mrs. Bowser asked:

"Didn't you sleep well last night?"

"Never better," was the reply.

"Haven't got a headache this morning?"

"Not a sign of one."

Bowser Real Obliging.

She couldn't make it out and was wondering over it when he said:

"I'm not going to the office today. There's little doing, and there's a few



BOWSER SURPRISES A TRAMP.

things around the house I want to see to. You spoke about having a bureau moved into the back bedroom."

"But—but let it go for now. You—you might strain your back."

"Oh, it will not take five minutes. The front steps should have a coat of paint before the autumn rains come on."

"But there's a painter working in the house next door."

"He wouldn't want to break off for a little job like that. There are also a few places in the cellar I want to touch up with whitewash, and I notice that the kitchen door sags and should be planed off."

Mrs. Bowser thought of the days when Mr. Bowser had stayed home to play the handy man and the awful consequences that had followed, and tears came to her eyes and her heart was like lead. She had a dollar and a half in her purse that she had saved up, and she was about to offer it to him to go along to the office as usual when she looked into his face, and it seemed to her that it had somehow changed. It was soft and gentle and confiding, and she determined to take the risks.

The first thing after breakfast Mr. Bowser went out and bought paint and a brush and got into his old clothes and began work on the steps. There was no undue haste and no row. In an hour he had almost finished. Then he went into the back yard for a stick to stir his paint, and during his brief absence a delegation of five Salvation Army lasses called to solicit a cash contribution. They were standing in a picturesque attitudes when he returned.

Heavy Weather Predicted.

Last spring, when Mr. Bowser had just finished the steps and found Mrs. Bowser's minister walking up them, he yelled at the good man in a way that blew his hat off and jumped him over the fence. Here, now, were five young women wandering over the painted surface, and yet when he saw them he raised his hat, made a contribution of \$2 and gallantly opened the gate for them to pass out. Both Mrs. Bowser and the cook witnessed the sight from a window, and the latter turned to her mistress and whispered:

"If I were you I'd telegraph your mother to come as soon as a flying machine would get her here. There's going to be ructions before this is done."

Mr. Bowser repaired damages, and

the street peddlers yell at him without getting mad over it and by and by was ready for the bureau. Mrs. Bowser had every reason in the world to believe that he would walk upstairs and jump at that article of furniture and seize it by the neck and yank and haul and pull and bang until it was a wreck beyond repair. She followed him to make appeals, but they were not necessary. He reached out with gentle hand and benign countenance, shoved the bureau out of one room and down the hall into another, and, lo, it came to rest as a hummingbird alights on a hollyhock. She wanted to give him a word of praise, but her throat choked up and she could not speak.

Even a Tramp Cashes.

The noon lunch was a picked up affair, and cook had predicted a cyclone, but none followed. Mr. Bowser meekly and cheerfully ate what was set before him, and when a tramp called at the door he was given five cents in cash instead of being flung over the fence and chased down the street.

There was a whitewash outfit down cellar, and after lunch Mr. Bowser hauled it out and began touching up the walls. Almost at the first go he got a splash in his eye. He gave a jump, but caught himself. He did not yell for Mrs. Bowser—not a swear word, not a threat to tear the house from limb to limb. Mrs. Bowser was listening at the stair door, and she turned pale with apprehension. The cook saw it and said:

"You'd have better taken my advice. When the change comes it will be sudden and awful!"

Before the whitewashing was finished Mr. Bowser fell into the coal bin and over the ax, but he placidly rose up, and nothing occurred to cause the walls of the house to tremble to their foundations. If he even thought he'd belabor the furnace with his brush he dismissed the idea as soon as formed.

Model Mr. Bowser!

The kitchen door was the next thing taken in hand. It had to be taken off to be planed. Ordinarily Mr. Bowser would have loosened a screw or two and then put forth a tremendous effort and wrenched the door away, but now he was patience itself. He spent ten minutes looking for the screw-driver, another in finding a plane, and the door was handled as carefully as a peachbloss vase. It was planed off, rebung, and it opened and shut as softly and as joyously as a clam—not a kick, not a wrench, not a yell. No wonder Mrs. Bowser's voice trembled as she viewed the completed work and asked:

"Do you feel a roaring in the ears or anything of that kind?"

"No, dear. My ears are all right."

A leg of the deal table in the kitchen had been wabbling for two months. Mrs. Bowser had intended to call in a carpenter, but had procrastinated. Now Mr. Bowser's eyes fell upon it, and he went after glue and hammer and nails. The cook stepped outdoors to be clear of the flying splinters, and Mrs. Bowser made an excuse to go upstairs, but it was a false alarm. Not a splinter flew; not a table leg went hurdling through the air; no one rushed for the ax and chopped and smashed and clapped. The wattle was cared for as a nurse handles a fevered babe, and after half an hour the table stood on its four solid legs and took on a new dignity.

The clothesline posts in the backyard had been pulled from a perpendicular by the tension. They were leaning toward each other in a friendly but ungraceful way. Mr. Bowser went out with the spade and reset them. Every moment it was expected to see him tear those posts out by their roots and heave them into the alley and then raise the neighborhood with blood-curdling whoops, but there wasn't a tear or a whoop. He even hummed the air of a gospel hymn as he worked.

The Cook Gives Notice.

Everything was finished now, and dinner was ready. Not a kick or complaint; not a word against the mother-in-law or any talk of divorce and alimony. When the meal was finished the cook beckoned Mrs. Bowser into the kitchen and whispered:

"My trunk is all packed, and I leave tonight."

"But why?"

"It's him. He's changed all over and it's this blessed night you'll be chopped into fine pieces with the ax. If you want me to I'll stop at the station and have four policemen come up and take him away to the crazy house."

Half an hour later Mr. Bowser was looked for at the front door. He sat on the step with his arm around the cat he had tried so often to kill, and both of them were sound asleep.

The Remnant of a Man.

The speaker said, "Lend me your ears." I lent 'em, though I had my fears. Oh, such a world of wicked men! I never got 'em back again. The ears he had seemed very fine. Why should the rascal care for mine?

I riveted my eyes on him, And then my sight grew very dim. The rivets he could not undo, Although he tried a week or two. I'm sure you will not feel surprised When I remark I miss those eyes.

Soon after at a dinner gay I gave my arm to young Miss May. She thought it was a souvenir. You see I haven't got it here. She took my arm, but left my sleeve. It's hollow, as you will perceive.

For young Miss May I ceased to care And fell in love with Rose, so fair. I lost my heart with courtly gravity. An old tin can now fills the cavity. I put some beads inside the can. I'm sure that was a hearty plan.

I married Rose. It must be told She proved to be an awful scold. She took my head off. That was sad. It was the only one I had. Oh, I'm a remnant of a man! Deny it, reader, if you can. —Frank R. Walton in Judge's Library.