

CORRUPTION RAMPANT ON "THE HILL."

All Officialdom in Harrisburg is Putrid in Vice and Crime.

RASCALITY SANCTIONED

Big and Little Abuses Go On Under the Eyes of High Officials.—Promises of Reform Without Performances Admonish People, Only Remedy is Election of John G. Harman.

(Special Correspondence.)

Harrisburg, Pa., Oct. 9. There are plenty of opportunities for reform on "The Hill," without waiting for the court proceedings in the graft cases. In fact Mr. Berry has just inaugurated a new line of improvement in the public service. It isn't a matter of vast importance but it is a "straw" which indicates the course and measures the velocity of the reform wind in official life. In fact you can sometimes get more information from small things than can be obtained from larger affairs. The smaller a crime the meaner it is at least some times.

Public patronage is the currency used by professional politicians to bribe men to perform political crimes. It was "the mysterious influence which changed a minority into a majority over night" in the convention which nominated Pennypacker for Governor in 1902. It was on account of the potentiality of this force in that way that offices have been multiplied so rapidly in recent years. The corrupt State Highway Department is the spawn of that evil. The Bureau of Vital Statistics was created on that account and new and needless clerkships were authorized in all of the Departments in order to supply places for dependent politicians.

This "thirst for place" developed the evil which Mr. Berry has just attacked. It is an expedient to make one office satisfy two men. The plan is as simple as the practice is contemptible. For example there is an office which pays \$5 a day. A man in Pittsburgh or Philadelphia or elsewhere is appointed to the place. He remains at home attending to his own affairs and employs a resident of Harrisburg to perform the work for say \$2 a day. The appointee has a "padding." The substitute enjoys a "snap."

How Official Grafters Help the Party. Both these agents of the "system" work their relatives and friends for the party. The \$2 a day man in Harrisburg who does the work has a large family, as a rule, and not too easy a time making ends meet. His relatives hustle to "hold his job," and the grocer and butcher and baker who serve him are interested. The \$3 a day man elsewhere "tolls not, neither does he sleep," but he chews the string of the pudding and enjoys the luxury of "easy money." Of course he works every possible means to continue the source of profit.

The law forbids this "farming" of public patronage and Mr. Berry has given notice that he will pay no employees who perform no work. He is entirely willing to pay the substitutes the full salary of the office because the law provides for it. But he is not willing to furnish the shysters with money coined from the sweat of the faces of others. The decision has created consternation among the beneficiaries of the "system." Every last man of them is ready to denounce Mr. Berry as a meddler. There are a few against John G. Harman who would pursue the same wholesome policy.

The office holders are having other troubles at present, moreover. The collector of "voluntary contributions" is working the employees just now with a rigor never before witnessed. Within the last ten days every official on "The Hill" has been notified to pay a percentage of his salary into the campaign corruption fund. This is a good deal of a burden every year but this year it is worse than usual. Living is expensive and in addition to the contribution the clerk has to pay the expenses of a trip home to register and another to vote.

The Public Printing Conspiracy. I have referred on two or three occasions to the State Printing job but thus far have been able to discover no signs that the reform impulses of the Governor have turned his energies toward the correction of this abuse. The present State Printer was the highest bidder for that juicy plum instead of the lowest, as the law requires. The way it happened was this. Four or five men or firms bid for the contract and each deposited a bond for the performance of the work in the event the award was to him. The lowest bidder got the contract and the bonds of the others were returned to them.

Thus far the law had been scrupulously complied with. But the scheme set in at once. The lowest bidder made some absurd excuse for refusing to accept the award and it was offered to the next lowest bidder who also declined and the process was continued until the highest bidder was reached who got the contract at an exorbitant figure. One would have thought that the forfeited bond would in some measure recompense the State for the difference in the rate between the highest and lowest bid. But no such result followed. The "system" never contemplates recompense to the State for anything.

Here is what actually occurred. The forfeited bond was promptly returned to the delinquent bidder, notwithstanding the legal obligation to hold it, and the highest bidder was declared State Printer. He simply let one of the lower bidders take up

the work and, it is alleged and I believe, not only he but two of the other bidders get a rake off while the State "pays the freight." It is clearly a conspiracy to rob the State. There could hardly be a clearer case of collusion and yet the Governor takes no steps to stop the crime.

The Legislative Record Job.

Reference has also been made in a previous letter to the corrupt collusion in awarding the contract to print the Legislative Record for the session of 1907. On the day fixed for letting that contract the printer who received it was in the inner office of the officer of the Senate who made the award and another printer sat in the anteroom. About a minute before the time for opening bids the official approached the man in the anteroom and asked if he had a bid to submit. He replied in the negative, the official returned to his office, and soon afterward announced that the contract had been awarded to the only bidder.

The contract price under the award thus made was nearly three times what the work had been done for the previous session. Of course that is not in itself an evidence of either conspiracy or collusion. But it is alleged that during the period between which the official had spoken to the man in the anteroom and the announcement of the letting the bid had been changed and the price nearly doubled. In other words the bidder having been informed that he was the only bidder and that the award would be to him however exorbitant his price, changed the figures to a price which was little short of grand larceny.

The corridor gossip concerning this conspiracy got so insistent during the session, that an investigation was ordered by the House of Representatives. Representative Hagwood of McKean county was made Chairman of the Investigating committee. He was informed of all the facts and even had a conversation with the man in the anteroom at the time of the letting. But he reported that while the price was high there was no evidence of collusion and besides the publisher had promised to make a better "Record" than any of his predecessors. It may have been only a coincidence that Mr. Hagwood was elected President of the State League of Republican Clubs a few days ago.

All the Departments Are Putrid.

The fact is that every Department of the State government is rotten with corruption. There are not only an excessive number of employees in every office but there is grafting everywhere. The Highway Department makes no contracts for road building or improvement that does not yield a bonus to somebody on the inside. The Health Department has become a veritable asylum for political pensioners. Not long ago the son of an influential citizen of this town came home from school to spend his seven weeks' vacation. He was immediately given employment in the Health Department. After standing around the office for two weeks he was given a "vacation" of three weeks on full pay. Then he returned, worked two weeks and went back to school. He enjoyed a lucrative rest at the expense of the State. But it looks as if that is about the Health Department is for.

Meantime we hear much about prosecuting the capitol grafters and nothing concerning these other looters who are working like rats in a cheese cellar. They tell us that Governor Stuart is a model of official integrity and that he will purge not only the State but the party, of crooks and corruptionists. But what merit is there in promises in the absence of performances. The talk of the prosecution of the capitol grafters is declamation to the galleries. A year ago the boast was that the insurance grafters would be fitly punished. They made us almost imagine Durham in prison stripes. But there has been no prosecution of the insurance grafters. Durham is still the Party leader of Philadelphia and the Republican committee of Chester county, the other day, set Auditor General Snyder up as an exemplar of political morals and civic virtue.

The Machine Can't Reform.

You might as well try to bleach linen by plunging it into a pitch bath, as to reform the official life of Pennsylvania while the Republican machine is in control. The managers of that organization are compelled to continue their iniquities. With them it is graft or gravel. If they can't remain in office they must go to prison and they have debauched the electorate to such an extent that most of their voters have to be bought. Vast sums of money are necessary to buy their majorities. Ballot box stuffing is a hazardous enterprise now and bidders demand compensation according to the hazard. The remedy is in the election of John G. Harman to the office of State Treasurer. Berry began the work of political regeneration and Harman will complete it.

G. D. H.

John O. Sheatz was never a reformer either in the Legislature or out. In the Legislature he voted for some of the most iniquitous measures and out of it he has supported some of the most notoriously bad men. Two years ago, for example, when all reformers were aligned against J. Lee Plummer, Sheatz stood with the machine. To rank him as a reformer is not only absurd but it is actually dishonest.

We rise to remark that nearly a month has elapsed since John G. Harman challenged John O. Sheatz to discuss the question of minority representation on the Board of Public Grounds and Buildings and there has been no reply to the challenge. The delay indicates that Mr. Sheatz's mental machinery works entirely too slow to be effective in the office of State Treasurer.

What could Lieutenant Governor Murphy have meant when he said in his Jamestown speech the other day, "as Pennsylvania and Virginia were at one hundred and thirty years ago to-day, each to strike down the other, which threatened to harm the other, go must Pennsylvania and Virginia be alert now when different foes must be conquered? We haven't heard that there is anything in the matter with Virginia and we can't see how Virginia can help us in our troubles. The remedy which we must apply is an aroused public conscience to guide us at the polls and Virginia can't participate in our elections. It is true that the people of that State can sympathize with us in our lack of civic virtue and self-respect. But we must cure our own ills with our own votes and the time to begin is at the approaching election and the way the election of Mr. John G. Harman to the office of State Treasurer.

The Philadelphia machine shows the same indifference to the interests and will of the people as it did before the outbreak of two years ago. The people of that city restored the machine to power last winter by the election of Mayor Reybourn and it is indulging in a riot of bossism and a deluge of political immorality. If Sheatz is elected the State machine will be quite as daring as that of the city and the looting and grafting will be resumed and continued indefinitely. Happily, however, there is no danger of such a result. Sheatz will be defeated as badly as Plummer was two years ago if not worse. The highlink of the Philadelphia machine just came in time to admonish the people of the danger of restoration in the State.

Manifestly President Roosevelt has gone mad on the subject of Federal authority over the affairs of the States. He wants to completely revolutionize our form of government in order to gratify his inordinate lust for power. But the people are not likely to sympathize with such absurd notions. The history and traditions of the government of the fathers are as dear to the hearts of the people to-day as they ever were and though Roosevelt has been a popular idol he will lose out if he advocates such nonsense as was expressed in his St. Louis speech last week.

If every Democrat in Pennsylvania votes for the splendid candidate of the party for State Treasurer next month his majority will be equal to the largest that has ever been received by a candidate with the single exception of that cast for Roosevelt three years ago. And there is no reason why every Democrat should not vote for him. He will be an ideal public official. Capable, courageous and honest he will do whatever is possible to restore the public life of the Commonwealth to the high plane which was once an honor to the people.

If Governor Stuart wants to do some effective reform work through the medium of the criminal courts he has a splendid opportunity to manifest it by beginning on the insurance grafters who were investigated last year. Insurance Commissioner Martin was among those who were condemned in the report of the Committee but so far from that having any adverse effect on Martin's standing at the Governor's office the indications are that he is still in the highest favor. At any rate he continues to hold his office and draw the salary.

Dave Lane is again instructing the voters of Philadelphia to stuff the ballot boxes at the coming election. If the voters of Philadelphia are wise, however, they will pay no attention to Dave Lane's advice. Ballot box stuffers will go to jail this year. The style of treating that sort of calendar has vastly changed within a couple of years. Even crooked Dave Lane won't be immune from punishment this year if there is anything doing in his line of political work this year.

A citizen has not performed his full duty in the election of this year when he casts his own vote any more than a man discharges his full duty when he notified the police that a crime is being committed. He ought to assist the police in preventing crime just as he ought to urge his neighbors to vote to rescue the State from the desperadoes who are despoiling it. Let us all do our full duty this year.

The corrupt and contented City Party men of Philadelphia may have, like the dog, returned to their vomit, but the vast hosts of independent Republican voters in the interior of the State who voted for Mr. Berry two years ago will vote for Harman this year. They have not been purchased, dragooned nor deceived into supporting Sheatz.

THOMAS NELSON PAGE.
Talentful Virginian—Novelist Who Writes of the Old South.
According to Mrs. L. H. Harris, a southern literary critic, Thomas Nelson Page is rapidly losing his vogue and has done his best work. His reputation, says this writer, must rest upon what he already has accomplished. There is a long string of excellent books to Mr. Page's credit, and even if it be true that his best work is all behind him his reputation in American literature will remain an enviable one. Mr. Page is still in the prime of life, being only fifty-four. He is of course a native Virginian. Most of his literary work is strictly of the Virginia flavor. Mr. Page now lives in Wash-



THOMAS NELSON PAGE.

ington, where he has a commodious residence, but his pen continues to paint word pictures of Virginia life. It is the antebellum Virginia and the Virginia of reconstruction days which mostly engages Mr. Page's talent. Born of one of the fine old families of the state, his books are alive with the traditions of the landed aristocrat, the planter, the proud old military man and the pretty girl of the manor house.

It is this constant working over of material from a day that is past which, according to Mrs. Harris, accounts for the vying popularity of Mr. Page's writings. The present generation of readers is said to be more or less indifferent to those historic times when the south was struggling in the throes of civil war and reconstruction. As the writer mentioned says: "He has interpreted what was at the time he wrote the spirit of the south, that armored and helmeted spirit which survived the defeats of the civil war, riding unconquered and unconquerable through bereavements, poverty and the unimaginable humiliation of the reconstruction period."

Fixed All Right.
An automobilist who was touring through the country saw, walking ahead of him, a man followed by a dog. As the machine drew near them the dog started suddenly to cross the road and was killed by the car. The motorist stopped his machine and approached the man. "I'm very sorry, my man, that this has happened," he said. "Will \$5 fix it?"
"Oh, yes," said the man; "\$5 will fix it, I guess."
Pocketing the money as the car disappeared in the distance, he looked down at the dead animal.
"I wonder whose dog it was," he said.

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The Birds Didn't Come Back.
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The frog is a born kicker, but he doesn't kick the bucket every time he croaks.

A Bold Step.
To overcome the well-grounded and reasonable objections of the more intelligent to the use of secret, medicinal compounds, Dr. R. V. Pierce, of Buffalo, N. Y., some time ago, decided to make a bold departure from the usual course pursued by the makers of put-up medicines for domestic use, and so has published broadcast and open to the whole world, a full and complete list of all the ingredients entering into the composition of his widely celebrated medicines. Thus he has taken his numerous patrons and patients into his full confidence. Thus too he has removed his medicines from among secret nostrums of doubtful merits, and made them **Medicines of Known Composition.** By this bold step Dr. Pierce has shown that his formulae are of such excellence that he is not afraid to subject them to the closest scrutiny.

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HARRISBURG	10:00 a.m.	10:00 a.m.	10:00 a.m.	10:00 a.m.	10:00 a.m.
LEWISBURG	1:00 p.m.	1:00 p.m.	1:00 p.m.	1:00 p.m.	1:00 p.m.
STATE COLLEGE	4:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.
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