

THE STATE CAPITAL

MATTERS OF INTEREST TO ALL CITIZENS.

WILL NOT DISTURB PENSIONS

State Board of Public Lands and Buildings Will Not Take the Old Soldiers' Money.

As to Pension Money.

The rule requiring members of soldiers' homes in Nebraska to pay a percentage of pension money to the cash funds of the homes, a rule that was bitterly contested in the courts, has been suspended by order of the board of public lands and buildings pending further orders of that board. The supreme court held that such a rule was legal. Land Commissioner Eaton, chairman of the board, sent notice to commandants of state homes under date of June 27 not to take any part of pension money until further orders from the board.

The board met and discussed the making of some new regulations, but no agreement was arrived at. One member suggested a rule that all inmates of the homes who are able to earn a livelihood or who have means of support be discharged from the home, at the discretion of the board, and that this rule also apply to the admission of soldiers, the intent of the suggested rule being that

HALF MILLION IN TREASURY.

Treasurer Brian is Negotiating for Large Block of Bonds.

State Treasurer Brian has \$500,000, according to his monthly report, available for investments in securities, and with two prospective deals on, he hopes to have the sum invested within a few days. He has permitted this large amount of money to accumulate for the purpose of buying a large block of bonds which are about to be placed on the market. Should he fall on this proposition he will call in the bond men and buy what they have on hand. He has on deposit in state depositories \$599,609.63, all of which is drawing 3 per cent interest, and \$46,205.72 not in depositories on which no interest is being received. Because the state depositories have all the state funds they are permitted to receive under their bonds this money is on hand, but will be deposited immediately after Mr. Brian makes his investment.

The permanent school fund contains \$421,096.56 at the close of the month. The total investments of the state now aggregate \$7,653,377.49, and this amount will be largely increased within the next ten days if the bond deal now in view matures. Following is the detailed report of the trust funds invested:

Permanent school fund.....	\$6,998,250.57
Permanent university.....	184,486.92
Agricultural college endowment.....	444,000.00
Normal endowment.....	56,600.00
	\$7,653,377.49
Bonds of all kinds.....	\$6,992,987.59
Warrants of all kinds.....	660,489.90
	\$7,653,377.49

Statement showing receipts and

BEHIND THE SCENES IN POLITICS

By ERNEST MCGAFFEY



"H

ELLO, Billy!"
"How are you, Jack? Glad to see you got that appointment. What is there in it for you?"
"Four thousand a year."
"Oh, I don't mean the salary—to hell with the salary; but what is there in it for you 'on the side'?"
"Not a cent. Just the salary, that's all."
"Come off! Why, two of that last bunch cleaned up ten thousand apiece before they walked the plank."
"Well, it's a new deal. No side issues for me. Just the little old four thou. That's all."
"Why, you ain't honest, are you, Jack?"
"Well, I never had 'Honest John' tacked onto me for a handicap, but I don't want to go along the street looking back to see if anyone's following me."
"But those fellows are alive and well to-day, and the statute of limitations has run on 'em."
"Yes, maybe; but it would be just my luck to get 'snaked.' My tailor says stripes are unbecoming on tall men, anyway."
"You're foolish, Jack."
"A regular lobster, Billy; but when I'm let out I want to sleep nights, without listening for some one to ring the door-bell and ask 'how about it?'"
The foregoing conversation is verbally a correct transcript between an appointee to a city office and a political acquaintance, the well-known and almost "disbarred" attorney, the Hon. William "Skipshinname." It occurred just as written down, and is merely given to illustrate the general idea prevalent among the crooked, the crafty and the unscrupulous that public office was a private "snap."

"SKATE NO. 1 WOULD INTRODUCE SKATE NO. 2"

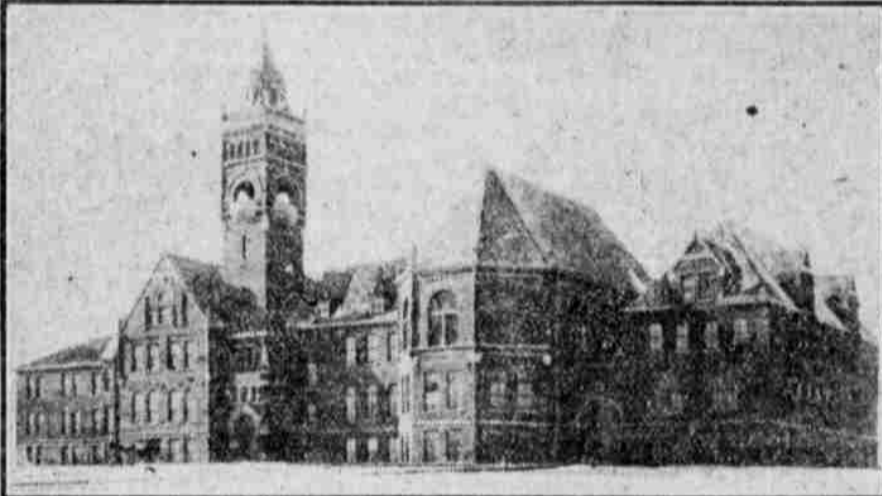


"WHAT'S THE CONSTITUTION BETWEEN FRIENDS?"



THE CHEAP GRAFTER NEVER HAS ANY FRIENDS

any friends. In the first place, he had not stolen enough so as to lay away anything for high-priced lawyers, so he could neither pose as a martyr, nor go into court and make a fight. Usually he "lost his job for quite a while," his petty speculations were laughed at, and he found himself in the street, an object of contempt and jeers. But when a man had gotten away with forty or fifty thousand dollars, it was an entirely different proposition. He could then put up a good, stiff "bluff." In the first place, it was "up to him" to pooh-pooh all rumors or assertions which had been made against his office. Next, to explain that all this talk about "graft"



Nebraska Military Academy, Lincoln's latest educational institution.

soldiers who are able to work or who have large pensions or other means of support be not admitted, and those of this character be discharged whenever the board finds it necessary to make room for purely indigent veterans. The suggestion was not accepted by the board.

In the discussion it was stated that the former commandant, Mr. Askwith, of the Grand Island soldiers' home, had never enforced the old rule regarding the payment of all pension money over \$12 a month to the support of the home. It was enforced at the Milford home. Commandant Pesson said when he went into office the pensioners there voluntarily came to him and paid over all in excess of \$12 a month. An investigation of the accounts of the Grand Island home showed that little pension money had ever been collected there. The present board supposed the rule had been enforced. In his letter to commandants Commissioner Eaton explained that the board believed the old rule had been enforced and the board thought its new rule would be satisfactory to all concerned because it was more liberal than the old rule. He said the board desired to treat the veterans with fairness and had modified the rule. The court had upheld the legality of the contention that the board has control of the homes and can make any reasonable rule it sees fit, but that for the present the pension rule will be suspended.

Vacancies for Young Men.

Senator Burkett received word from Major J. F. Elliott at Washington that there are fifty-seven vacancies in the rank of second lieutenant in the marine corps. The major stated that he would be glad to allow any young men Senator Burkett might recommend take the examination for the positions. Applicants, Major Elliott explained, must be educated and comply with the physical requirements of the United States army.

Game Laws Fractured.

Chief Game Warden Carter received a report from Seward to the effect that Harry Bradley, who some time ago pleaded not guilty when arrested for illegal fishing, came into court and pleaded guilty. A fine of \$15 and cost was paid by him. Alexander Hitchcock was caught at Lincoln park by the game warden and Deputy Hunger in the very act of working a dip seine.

State Fish Exhibit.

Superintendent W. J. O'Brien of the state fisheries at South Bend called on the state board of agriculture for the purpose of asking for improvement in the fisheries building on the state fair grounds. He desires to give a credible showing for hatcheries supported by the state and finds it necessary to have some large aquariums in the exhibition building. The original plans called for large ones in the front of the structure where they can be viewed, but for some reason were never put in.

disbursements of the state treasury for June, 1908:

Funds.	Balance June 1.	Balance June 30.
General.....	\$ 27,580.32	\$ 13,452.00
Permanent school.....	170,944.90	421,096.56
Temporary school.....	350,986.89	48,242.37
Permanent university.....	50,167.04	29,917.62
Agricultural college endowment.....	45,074.71	48,444.67
Temporary university.....	6,469.92	2,982.62
Penitentiary.....	83.52	82.52
Federation cash.....	41,198.78	4,663.18
Kearney Normal library.....	766.69	143.85
Orthopedic hospital.....	37.94	37.94
Forest reserve.....	2,288.93	2,428.88
Institutions cash.....	12,210.19	10,212.87
Hospital for Insane.....	1,326.63	1,575.02
State library.....	96.84	1,955.09
University cash.....	25,551.32	34,817.99
Peru Normal library.....	8,968.04	2,193.28
Normal endowment.....	.60	21,218.93
Normal interest.....	3,030.71	3,149.91
Agricultural and Mechanical Arts.....	6,689.17	.01
U. S. experiment station.....	6,285.12	1,592.04
Totals.....	\$782,650.26	\$645,806.35

Escaped Convict Brought Back.

A convict named Ingram from Lancaster county, who escaped from the Nebraska penitentiary nearly nine years ago, is back in the penitentiary once more to serve one month of an unexpired term. As he lost two months' time by escaping, he will have to serve three months instead of the one unexpired month that was before him when he left. He was serving a term of one year for burglary and was employed as a trusty about the grounds when he decided to desert the place. He lost no time in committing a burglary in Kansas and was sentenced to ten years in the state prison at Lansing, Kas. At the expiration of his service there he was brought back to make good the sentence of the law in Nebraska.

Sheldon Will Serve.

Governor Sheldon of Nebraska has agreed to serve as one of the vice presidents of the international congress on tuberculosis that is to be held in Washington under the auspices of the national association for the study and prevention of tuberculosis, from September 21 to October 12. The arrangements for Nebraska's participation in the congress and in the exhibition to be held in connection with it are in the hands of a committee of which Dr. A. S. Von Mansfield of Ashland is chairman. Dr. Charles O. Glesse of Holdrege is treasurer and Rev. Stephen P. Morris of Omaha is secretary of the association.

A conference was held between Adjutant General Schwarz, Major Davidson and Governor Sheldon concerning a proposition of the militiamen to secure an island in the Platte river as a rifle range. The officers pointed out to the governor the fact that the new ammunition for the Springfield rifle is very dangerous, the needle-pointed bullets carrying about three miles. While the present range southwest of the penitentiary is fairly satisfactory, the slightly raised elevation of a slight would send the ball over the hill and into Lincoln.

If he was in a position where contracts were to be let "to the lowest bidder" it was his business, if a "grafter," to see that his "man" was the lowest bidder, or to have a "combination" among the bidders so that the contracts would be divided among two or three favored firms or individuals; or to work in some one as sub-contractor, or in various ways "get a finger in the pie," so that he could "help up" somebody for "a divvy." Where individual officials had the entire control of their offices, their opportunities for "graft" were, of course, extensive; where officials were co-associated in city work, there had to be either a complete and general understanding as to "crooked work," or there might be underhand work by one or two men which was hidden from the rest.

The public had weird and unique ideas about "graft." The fact that "grafting" was carried on in city hall and city departments to a greater or less extent during every political administration was a fact that was undeniable. Sometimes an administration was especially corrupt; sometimes the administration was headed by a man who was even by his bitterest enemies acknowledged to be strictly honest. But as no one man could oversee the ins and outs of every department in the city, there was bound to be some "grafting," however petty, somewhere in the various offices or departments.

But the public generally seemed to be of the opinion that the instant a man was appointed or elected to office his entire nature changed. The people imagined, apparently, that a business man whose integrity, through many years, had never been questioned became "crooked" the instant he took the oath of office. And because of this, the most insulting and libelous statements were being bandied back and forth by irresponsible parties, concerning men who were honestly and conscientiously doing their duty in public offices.

Citizens who appropriated without any legal right the sidewalks in front of their stores for shipping purposes—men who would follow an alderman for weeks in order to get a bay-window put in a downtown shop contrary to the ordinances, people who hung about the city hall from dawn to twilight trying to get a railroad pass, would enter a public office with the air of Daniel going down the elevator into the lions' den. And if a question was asked them when they stated their business, they always imagined it had a hint of graft in it. Well, now, let me tell you: These folks that are always scenting "graft" in every public office and officer—these "Holy Willies" that assume such an "uncle guld" air, they are often the people that will bear watching themselves.

The fact of the matter was that that real "graft" was handled by men who worked it so that nearly always it was entirely legal, in the strict letter of the law. A measly five or ten-dollar bill handed here and there for some favor was a mere bagatelle. And as for "graft" in politics, the legislatures of the various states are as mighty universities to kindergarten compared to city administrations. As for the United States senate—but that is the "king row" on the political checker-board, and not a matter for comment in this article.

Money is the cheapest and least dangerous form of "graft." I mean money that buys favors; bribes, in a word. Big "graft" concerns itself with "shares," "stock," "interests"—things that cannot be traced so easily to corrupt sources. Big grafters are afraid of cold cash. They want something that can be

manipulated so that the ugly word "money" can be eliminated in case of an exposure. Cash is a hard commodity to "juggle," but shares and stocks can be better explained to a jury. So only the ignorant or most brazen of the big "grafter's" go after the money in the form of U. S. bank bills. Records are tall tales; and money taken wrongfully and unaccounted for often returns to plague the hypotheater with a penitentiary sentence.

Another thing that seems to be overlooked is that legislation will not cure "grafting." True, it can and does punish the individual; but nothing but an aroused spirit of higher citizenship will effect a general cure of the evil. If you want to know how many people in your city and county are out after "something for nothing" get into a political position which either actually gives you chances for bestowing favors, or apparently offers the opportunity. Ninety-five per cent. of the people who call on you come for the purpose of having you do them some favor, either for themselves or others; and they are not at all particular about how the favor is done, so that it be done. For myself, I know I was bombarded day and night after I got into office with requests that ranged all the way from the impudent to the ignorant. Requests to aid in the way of evading or ignoring city ordinances were matters of daily occurrence. And the charming thing about it was that the parties assumed that this was a matter of course in the routine business of the city hall. It was not merely "what's the constitution between friends?" but "what's honesty between acquaintances?"

"Skate No. 1 would introduce 'Skate No. 2, and the latter would unfold a scheme to 'pull off' something in some other department of the city hall, which was not only against all canons of decency as regarded common honesty, but so ridiculously apparent that no one but an ignoramus would concoct such a plan. Now these things happened so often that if you got mad at each occurrence you would be in a state of semi-apoplexy half the time. The only thing to do was to cut the interview short by saying 'I haven't anything to do with that department; if you have any business with that end of the city go there yourself.'

But when you come to pin down any great amount of "graft" in most of the city administrations' offices you failed, from the simple reason that there was comparatively little of it. Was it because greater publicity and greater vigilance was being had through a hostile press and a watchful opposite party? Or was it because an improvement was being made in the character of the men elected and appointed? Or was it both? At any rate, there was a steady advance for the better during the cycle of at least eight years of my experience in politics. Given an able and vigilant man at the head of a city's affairs, and "graft" will be reduced to a minimum during his term of office. Given any other kind of a man, and once more "graft" will lift its hydra head. It is a curious thing about manifestation, that the tendency to make "a little on the side" seems to be apparent in all administrations, but is either dormant or active as the man at the helm is either alert or inattentive. Like yellow fever in Cuba, it is always present, even if only one case of it.

The cheap "grafter," when found out, never had

was the work of political enemies or "a discharged employe seeking revenge." A very fine article of "rosy talk" was usually indulged in by a "grafter" who "was on the run."

Then, when he was finally indicted, his lawyers would consent to tell what an outrage it was that their client should be so persecuted. All criminal proceedings which seek to bring a "grafter" to "book" are known by his lawyers as "man-hunts." The big "grafter's" friends flock to the courtroom, and quite frequently the utmost courtesy is extended to him by officials high up in jail circles; especially if he be of the same party as the jail officials. If he happens to be on the other side of the political fence, these courtesies are omitted.

After a big "grafter" is convicted there is the usual appeal to the higher courts and a lot of skrimishing to keep him out of the penitentiary, but he gets there just the same. He may, after serving a year of his sentence, become so ill that he will have to be pardoned. If he has returned part of the money he stole, this is a chance not to be overlooked. But if he is "stiff-necked" and insists on hanging on to what he got, the chances are not so favorable. Only a ridiculously small percentage of the big "grafter's" have been punished. Some of the biggest of them all have absconded their graft legally. But it was "graft," nevertheless. On many, the statute of limitations has "run," and prosecution made impossible. But it is cheering to relate that "grafting" is not quite so fashionable as it used to be by reason of these prosecutions; and much as the "reformer" has been held up to ridicule, it has been the reformer and the reform organizations that have made "grafting," if not unpopular, at least dangerous.

Petty "grafting" can never be wholly stamped out, as it can be handed around by means of presents, privileges, etc., in such a way that it cannot be traced so as to provide ground for criminal prosecutions.

The technical term "graft," while peculiarly applied to politics, is not confined to that sphere only. Business, banking and railroad circles have the disease. In city administrations the spot where it is liable to make most insidious headway is in city councils. There it may be found either indirectly or directly apparent. And it is there, after all, that it is most dangerous, because affecting an entire city. If a public official steals from his office, it is not such a direct injury to the public man as the man who "sells out" to jam a franchise through a council.

And so, in the last analysis, the eyes of the reformers and the citizens should be fixed steadily on city councils. The best candidates for aldermen are none too good; the salary should be such that a man could give all of his time to the work and be well and even handsomely paid. If the public expects a man to give \$5,000 worth of time in the city council for \$3,000 salary, they are merely putting a premium on "grafting."

The day of the brazen "grafter" has gone by. The new regime is making for better things. The only way that "grafting" can flourish nowadays is by having a city administration in full accord with the most influential newspapers of a city, apply the "graft" legally, pocket the "rake-off," point to the "statutes in such case made and provided," and so far as the public is concerned, "let the galled jade wince."