

things—to a city once destroyed by a great conflagration—told to me and to the public by insurgent elements within the department itself, it has been impressed on my mind by an intelligent and alarmed grand juror that there is a real and constant peril resultant from the rule of a ring in the fire department.

Slush Charge Sustained, He Says.

The general charge that "slush funds" for the obtaining of promotion and wage increases in the city council, the grand juror declares to have been fully sustained by the testimony of the contributors thereto; that civil service lists have been "juggled" to effect promotion of ignorant and incompetent firemen is also unquestioned, he declares. That veteran fire fighters of the rank of captain and upward have been "jobbed" in order to make places for more graft-producing "promotional" and "efficiency" lists has been established in general; that relatives of aldermen and other politicians were "favored" in the purchase of paraphernalia and supplies in huge quantities and at prices that permitted several "splits"—and finally that grafters, big and little, in and out of the department, have so destroyed its efficiency that the fire hazard has increased to a point that imperils everything in the city.

An alarmist view, perhaps, but that grand juror is an insurance man whose interest and experience with "political" fire departments is not confined to Chi-

cago and he has listened to testimony wrung from reluctant members of the fire department over many months.

Recommendation "Pigeon Holed."

Somewhere a complaisant public prosecutor has "pigeon holed" a report from William A. Rittenhouse, one of his assistants, wherein, it was reported, the deputy prosecutor recommended a sweeping grand-jury investigation into the fire department based on the charges made to me as chief justice of the Criminal court by Chief McDonnell, Assistant Chief McAuliffe and Arthur F. Albert, alderman of the 33d ward. That was in January, 1923.

These rebels against a rule of rottenness in the fire department were sent to the state's attorney to make formal charges for the grand jury in affidavit form after I became convinced the condition they charged warranted a sweeping investigation. Nothing was ever done by the public prosecutor, either with the report of Rittenhouse or the charges themselves—so far as I ever learned officially or unofficially, looking toward a full inquiry.

There was an inquiry which is still pending, begun by the special grand jury after the scope of its activities had been broadened to include all angles of municipal graft. Should that jury succeed in completing its inquiry notwithstanding the evil geni of this city there will be made clear the full extent of the grafters' grip on government that has throttled it thus far.

The Fate of a Fighting Grand Jury.

ARTICLE XIII.

High in the history of the community's struggle for good government the twenty-two men of the special grand jury have written their names—names that now should be made known to the citizenry of Chicago and Cook county as those of civic soldiers who have "fought the good fight"—and won!

To have kept their courage and faith with a community sorely stricken with the paralysis of predatory politics and to have broken through all barriers to an honest inquiry into shameful school-graft scandals would have been a noteworthy accomplishment under the best of auspices. It was magnificent to have carried on to and beyond the barred doors of "the boodlers" and betrayers

of public trust who protected them, undaunted by discouragements seldom equaled in a grand jury inquiry and unfaltering in the face of disgraceful defaults by public officials who attempted to evade their duty to enforce the law.

That is the record of these twenty-two self-sacrificing citizens who have worked for more than a year as the special grand jury inquiring into municipal malfeasance and misfeasance in all their rotten ramifications. Better by far to have fought their wonderful war against the menace of the civic cancer and to have failed "than never to have fought at all." But the fight to expose extravagance, waste, graft and corruption in public office has been won—and in the winning these men have quick-

ened the conscience of Cook county citizenship and brought about "a new deal" in Chicago affairs through public opinion—awakened at last, angry and well-informed.

Caused Unchaining of City.

To one not given "the gift of the fairies" to see into the soul of Chicago and read the minds of a million men and women who are public opinion, it is difficult to determine whether that work has been appreciated and appreciated at its full value. Certain it is to one who has been closest to their work that had it not been for this grand jury this city would yet be enchained.

Chained to the rock of a ruthless regime in control of the state, city and county governments through the carelessness of a citizenship which neglected to know what was going on, Chicago learned at last and broke from the bondage of boodle, vice, crime and graft.

And these are the lightbearers who led the way out of a bewildering darkness through their illumination of the disgraceful depths to which local government had descended in the second largest city in America:

John J. Boyk.
J. M. Bourland.
Andrew J. Boyle.
Carl A. Baumann.
Harry S. Budd.
Thos. E. Cambridge.
Irving J. Carter.
Wm. F. Bobzien.
James L. Fyfe.
C. P. Hellesoe.
Joseph M. Harte.

J. D. Adams.
Harry S. Herbert.
H. L. Larimore.
David Johnson.
Bruno E. Matthes.
August H. Meyer.
R. C. Reinholtzen.
Arthur C. Schroeder.
George Ward.
James Ward.
W. E. Wassman.

Secretary Died After Hard Work.

Gone from that grand-jury roll of honor is the name of another—Alexander B. Seelenfreund, who dropped dead in a hotel room at Memphis, Tenn., last March after serving seven strenuous months as secretary of the jury.

Throughout those months his indefatigable efforts to expose all the real sources of graft and corruption, the big and powerful beneficiaries of an amazingly efficient machine for making dirty politics and dirty dollars took toll of his health and strength and hastened the heart attack that made him a martyr to civic duty.

Twice in open-court sessions of the special grand jury, called to combat an insidious "influence" that threatened to choke off further investigation, Seelenfreund came before me, keen, courageous and uncompromising in his statement of situations that seemed to him to call for "a showdown." On each occasion he unhesitatingly challenged the chief prosecuting officer—once the

state's attorney and again the attorney-general of Illinois—to prove themselves uncontrolled by "influences," which he declared were at work to shut off further light into the alleged looting of school funds.

Powerful political considerations—the same that had prevented the previous grand-jury investigations into school affairs from accomplishing anything—had been at work for some time. Subtle signs and omens seemed to Seelenfreund and the other jurors to indicate that the proceedings within the juryroom were not unknown to those under investigation; that witnesses whose names were withheld from the press in advance of their appearance at the grand-jury antechamber nevertheless knew in intimate detail not only what information was wanted of them, but gave evidences of having been "coached."

Crowe Pledges Full Efforts.

Hardly had the supervision and control of the special grand jury been turned over to me by the retiring chief justice of the Criminal court in September, 1922, than the state's attorney of Cook county came to my chambers and personally pledged himself to see to it that "no man or set of men" in politics would be permitted to stand in the way of a full, fair and complete investigation of "the mess down at the school board."

"There isn't any one in that crowd whom I care anything about or who has any claim on me strong enough to make me quit this inquiry—no matter whom it may hit. And I'll say to you, judge, that I'm going through regardless of Thompson, Lundin or any one else who thinks he can stop this thing." Thus the public prosecutor of Cook county assured me, apparently in all earnestness.

"Mr. Crowe, I'm very glad to hear you say that," I replied, pointing from the sixth-floor window of the Criminal court building beside which we were standing, "because outside there on that Chicago skyline I can see now the clouds gathering, the clouds that mean a storm of public opinion, against which any man in public life in Cook county could stand out as easily as he could hold back the waves of Lake Michigan. Crowe can't stop this investigation—McKinley couldn't stop it and Crowe and McKinley together couldn't kill it or curb it in the face of the public sentiment that is aroused. There isn't any one big enough to do it, but you and I can keep that grand jury free from

the influence that would kill it and we will try to."

That was Wednesday, Sept. 9, 1922—two days after I assumed the chief justiceship.

Effective Exposure for Time.

There began at once what was for a time the most effective exposure of the plundering of a public trust since the days of the Tweed ring in New York city. Attorney Isaiah T. Greenacre, counsel for the Chicago Teachers' federation and veteran of many investigations in the venalties of vicious politicians in the public schools, had entered the inquiry as a special prosecutor appointed by the state's attorney as an evidence of good faith, following Miss Margaret Haley's sensational statement concerning the silver teapot outside the grand-jury room and her challenge to the prosecutor.

Under the direction of Greenacre and George E. Gorman, second assistant to the state's attorney, to whom Miss Haley had directed her challenge to "take the lid off the silver teapot and find out who filled it and what was in it," no investigation could have been more thorough and complete—for the first month or two. Sensation followed sensation as the probe went deeper and deeper, day by day and the whole rotten cancer that had spread through a sickened school system began to be exposed to the radium light of a publicity that was pitiless.

Many Indictments Returned.

Indictments for the board of education trustees, its attorney, business manager, purchasing agent, superintendent of construction, assistant chief engineer, coal contract clerks, and examiner of printing as well as for those contractors, school supply sellers, coal merchants, phonograph "promoters" and miscellaneous bidders for "school business" whom the grand jury found "probable cause" to charge with the "boodling" of upwards of \$1,000,000, were found and returned.

Then began the big backfire from a spoils system strongly entrenched and well supplied with the sinews of war—a silent, sinister war in the beginning.

Up to the moment when two officials of the school-engineers-custodians' union were sentenced to six months each in the county jail for contempt for refusing to answer the grand jurors' questions concerning what was done with "the silver teapot fund," and another fund said to have been "spent for legislative purposes in the Illinois senate

and house of representatives" — there was nothing in the conduct of the inquiry to be caviled at.

The lifting of "the lid on the silver teapot" presented to Albert H. Severinghaus, vice-president of the school board, and said to have been filled with a fund raised by the school engineers to reward those who made a six-months' retroactive increase in wages possible, was powerful in its effects. Everywhere in Chicago there were the evidences that amusement among Thompson-Lundin leaders in the city hall—and in other offices—had turned to annoyance, anxiety, alarm!

Backfire on Jurors.

The translation into action of the same secret, sinister character as the things they were investigating, was instantaneous in its insidious effect upon the grand jurors, many of them wage-earners who were giving their mornings to their work and the afternoons to extended sessions of the school investigation, frequently lasting long hours. These were the first to feel the effect of the backfire from "big guns" in a battery of boodlers who "knew how to reach any one."

Six or seven jurors were called in by their immediate superiors and told to "get off the grand jury—or get another job!" Others, businessmen, were told over the telephone and in devious ways to "watch out for civil suits from all those fellows you are indicting"—another told to bid for a school carpet-cleaning contract, which it was hinted was "his for the asking."

An intimation that he "could get a lot of city insurance contracts—maybe as much as \$50,000 a year," was conveyed to one keen and courageous grand juror through a city official, then in the mayor's cabinet. That juror, Carl A. Baumann, an insurance broker and agent for a big eastern company, refused to be bribed in any such fashion and reported his refusal to me, following which wheels were set in motion that made him the intended victim of a "frame-up" by "a blonde woman," reminiscent of the character-assassin's conspiracy against Clarence Funk, the International Harvester company's official, who figured in the famous Lorimer case.

Shadowed by Newmark Agent.

Shortly thereafter a "shadow" set upon Baumann was identified as Robert J. Cochrane, nominal head of the Cochrane Secret Service, a detective agency operated by the busy Ben New-

mark, former chief investigator for the state's attorney, a storm center in the "gambling-war" controversy between the prosecutor and Chief of Police Fitzmorris, since then appointed to the specially-created position of assistant state fire marshal for Cook county, and still later sentenced to six months in the Lake county jail for refusal to answer questions concerning the alleged Small "jury-fixing."

Cochrane, called before the grand jury, readily admitted the "shadowing" of Baumann and the apparent attempt to discredit the juror in his home neighborhood, but refused to tell who hired him! He was sentenced to the county jail and a summons for Newmark was sent out at the instance of the court. The former chief sleuth for the state's attorney fled in a fashion to which the public has since become accustomed—but finally was brought before the jury only to deny all knowledge of the identity of the "client" who commissioned his agency to do the "shadowing."

His was the agency that did all the "secret service" work for Gov Small at the trial of the executive on charges of conspiracy to convert interest on state funds. It also has conducted "confidential" investigations for the state's attorney.

Other Attacks on Inquiry.

There were many other mischievous and malicious attempts to undermine the morale of the grand jury and to discredit its work in ways that were dark and tricks that were, for the most part, vain. They were met by the men

themselves and through the newspapers, whose editors were fully informed of what was going on, and by the court.

Employers of wage earners on the jury responded to an appeal for support of the investigation, published in all papers at my request, and in every instance recognized the prior right of the public to the time and efforts of the men who were performing a notable service.

Only the Opening Skirmish.

All of this, however, was only the opening skirmish in an incredible campaign of calumny, a part of a well-defined, carefully conceived conspiracy to kill the graft inquiry long before it had led into the quarters to which it came after the public prosecutor of Cook county removed himself from the investigation, with the consent of the court and grand jury—and the attorney-general of Illinois was called in to continue and complete the work.

Of the circumstances and considerations which caused Mr. Crowe to request to be relieved of control of the school-graft inquiry, I shall speak in another article. There have been many crises in the conflict between this grand jury and "influence" that failed to kill its effectiveness, even when funds to finish its work were refused by the county board a few months ago.

It has been the fate of this grand jury to be forced to fight for its life from almost the very beginning, and it has been the fortune of the court and the community that this indeed has proved itself to be a fighting grand jury!

A Showdown.

ARTICLE XIV.

Adroitly it has been made to appear at various times since State's Attorney Crowe ceased to function with the special grand jury that certain of his powers, privileges and duties imposed by the statutes and his oath of office were "usurped" by Attorney-General Brundage at the arbitrary order of the chief justice of the Criminal court and the grand jury.

In contradicting this carefully cultivated impression there can be no controversy created for the reason that the original letter, signed by the public prosecutor and sent to me on the night

of Nov. 3, 1922, in which the state's attorney asked the court to supplant him in the school-graft investigation with a "qualified member of the bar which it would be advisable for your honor to select without suggestion from me," is before the writer.

Let it be understood, therefore, that the abandonment of the special grand jury's inquiry into school affairs by the public prosecutor of Cook county antedated by almost a week any appearance of the attorney-general or his assistants before the jury and in addition, specifically relinquished responsibility "or the prosecution of some forty indictments then pending.