

NITROGLYCERIN IS A FEATURE IN CRIME

"Yegg Men" Spread the Knowledge of This Up-to-Date Safe Opener Throughout the United States.

(Journal Special Service.)

WASHINGTON, D. C., July 24.—It is nitroglycerin that looms up now as the paramount problem in police and detective circles. True, there is nothing new in the bare fact that "nitro" is used by expert cracksmen. But the commonest, raggedest, dirtiest "yegg man" or tramp thief, now handles it with as much fear as he does his pistol.

"Practically all recent 'jobs' have been the work of yegg men," said "Big Man" Pinkerton the other day. "These criminals reproduce like the lower organisms of animal life," the detective chief went on to say. "Suppose there be one who is familiar with the explosive. He is joined by four others who assist and watch while he works. Each observes how the nitroglycerin is used and goes from the job ready to tackle one on his own account, and so becomes a new leader and a new teacher."

But the yegg men confine their operations to the small towns. In these summer months they are traveling in gangs of four to six, camping in the woods on the outskirts of villages. In the daytime they scatter, peddling shoe strings, brass jewelry and worthless trinkets among the villagers. Incidentally they are spying out possible "jobs." They are well armed, are dangerous and will shoot to kill. After cracking a safe they will ride out of a district on the bumpers or in freight cars. They are as fleet and wary as fens. When in a case it is too impossible to make out a case against him. After being held as a vagrant he is discharged.

Diagnosing "Yegg" Jobs.

It is easy to diagnose a "yegg" nitroglycerin "job." The professional "box-men," "peter-men" and "ropper-men"—by all these names the safecracker is called in criminal lingo—use just enough of the explosive to open a safe or vault without unnecessary noise or destruction. The yegg safe-blower will use enough "oil" or "grease" (nitroglycerin) to tear everything in near radius to splinters. Then, too, his careless, nervous sometimes results in his being holed by his own petard. At Benton, Wis., an unidentified man lately attempted to break into a creamery with the intention of obtaining tools where-with to rob the bank. A bottle of nitroglycerin fell from his pocket, tearing off his right leg and dismembering him.

It is now a war of wits between the professional safe-blower and the expert safemaker. That the latter has the lead at present is evident. A very fact that most of the "jobs" are being done by the "yeggs" in the small towns. The banks of the large cities are equipped with the latest safes of the safemakers' art; the old-fashioned safes have been relegated to the country counting-houses. The old safes are comparatively frail affairs and can be opened sometimes with ordinary tools and a little powder. One or two of the most expert "box-men" some years back by simply placing their ears to the old combination safes could hear the tumblers drop. They thus opened them without tools or explosives of any kind. As the old locks were improved the next step was to drill a hole, insert a heavy punch, strike the "dog" which holds the tumblers in position and hammer it loose. After the safemaker had made still another advance, a drill was applied around the lock and the latter was blown open. But the manufacturer has now so improved by the locking mechanism of the modern strong box that lock-blowing is fruitless.

The Modern Method.

The modern "peter-man" drills a hole in the top of the safe, stops up all door cracks with soap, inserts a funnel, pours in the nitroglycerin—the minimum being estimated to be a pennyworth—and ignites it with a fuse. The explosion is then properly capped at the lower end and wraps the safe up in felt or wet cloth. If he can work entirely around it. This wrapping deadens the shock and prevents the scattering of iron and steel fragments. Everything being ready, the long insulated wire is attached to a portable electric battery, previously deposited in another room. The button is touched, the safe door flies off without unnecessary noise and the "swag" is in easy.

The attitude with which the professional "gopher-man" measures out his nitroglycerin is such that a pal can often remain in the room with the explosion without jeopardizing life or limb. In the recent hold-up at Savannah, Ill., the express messenger effected a return to his car, arriving within the compartment containing the safe just as the latter exploded. He was knocked completely off his feet, but was uninjured.

In the professional train hold-ups nitrate is often thrown at the door of the combination mail and express car. This often results in the blowing out of panels and the smashing of the glass windows. But unless entrance has to be thus forced an express car job can be done as neatly as a bank job, without damage to the car proper.

The express train jobs are usually the work of hardened professionals—desperate men with genius, though ill-directed this genius be. Such experts are reputed with true military forethought. After the Great Northern hold-up at Carlisle, Minn., the bandits in their retreat through Fergus Falls stopped to damage the electric power house, thus leaving the whole town in darkness and rendering pursuit impossible.

The safe-blower's kit is receiving new additions from month to month. What the professional "box man" may have at his disposal may be seen from this partial inventory of stock found at the establishment of "Big Man" Pinkerton, a veteran safe-blower and burglar, lately discovered to be operating in Chicago and to be incidentally conducting the business of a jobber of burglar's supplies. In his room was found in wholesale quantities almost every appliance known to skilled "peter

men"—automatic drills, revolvers, electric pocket flash lights, rubber "knives" (sappers), sledges, limbers, wedges, dynamite caps, fuses, insulated wire, saws, screws, braces, drills, files, electric batteries, soap, nitro-glycerin, etc.

The finest kit of tools known to the police of this country was captured not long since from Jerome Markle, alias "Dutch Weber," alias "William Myers" at Colorado Springs. Markle is an expert safe blower and tool manufacturer. His kit consists of 155 pieces and a goodly supply of nitro-glycerin.

The Mysterious Tool Maker.

The majority of burglars' tools used in the Middle West are believed to be manufactured by a mysterious personage known in police circles as "the tool-maker of Illinois." He is said to be an old man who lives in an out-of-the-way hamlet of that state, and who, while all appearances a good, honest citizen, earning a precarious living at his forge, is in reality a toolmaker to safe blowers and burglars throughout the neighboring states. No one in police or detective circles has as yet discovered his place of abode. The stamp of his handiwork is found on almost all burglars' tools captured in that region.

In the safe blower's vernacular the term "tool" refers to what in reality is many pieces of finely finished steel. It is, in fact, a set of tools designed to drill and blow open safes. One of these kits lately captured is estimated to be worth \$200. It consists of a plate with four legs, a set of drills, a blow pipe, oil can, mallet and monkey wrench. In parts this "tool" may be easily carried in the pockets of a man's clothes, but, set up, it could not be contained in a large-sized grip.

The daring of the safe blower is best set forth in this story told by an old detective: A safe was so placed by a banking house that a bright light shone on it at night, and it was thus in full view of the policeman every time he passed by the building on his beat. At least 30 times each night he peered through the window of that lighted room. One morning the safe was found wrecked and rifled.

A counterfeit safe—a flimsy structure of laths and canvas, painted to resemble the original—was found in the space always occupied thither by the real strong box. The latter had been wheeled in a back room and rifled at leisure. The substitution was effected while the watchful "copper" was pacing toward the farthest limit of his beat and back again.

Electricity His Servant.

That the professional "peter man" is pressing electricity into his service is well illustrated by a recent robbery in St. Petersburg, which will no doubt be imitated in this country before many months. The strong room of a wholesale tobacco shop in the Russian capital was broken into in January, 8,000 rubles being stolen from the safe, which had been guaranteed as burglar-proof. A large hole was found melted entirely through the steel door.

The burglars had torn down the electric wires of the building and used the powerful current to fuse the metal of the safe. Only skilled electricians with elaborate apparatus could accomplish such a feat, of course, and it was a neat job.

The blow pipe has been enlisted into the service of the English bank burglar. Not long ago a safe in the postoffice in Tottenham Court road was opened by means of the intense heat which can be generated by an oxy-hydrogen flame. The tools used were merely a bit of India rubber tubing and a cylinder of oxygen gas. The robbers fixed the tubing to the gas jet, turned on the oxygen and obtained a temperature sufficient to melt the steel of a battleship.

One reason why the "nitro jobs" are now most frequent in the rural territory of the "yegg men" cannot be overlooked. The American Bankers' Association, which includes practically all of the important banks of the country, has perfected arrangements with a noted detective agency by which all members are guaranteed special protection. When one of these banks is made the victim of a burglar or forger men are immediately put on the case with orders never to cease until the guilty parties are run down. As proof of the fact that the "gun" of the country are fearful of this combination stand the statistics. Only three attempts have been made to rob the banks of the association since the compact was made. In one case that of the Scandinavian-American Bank of St. Paul—the "swag" was returned with a reproachful note blaming the officers for not displaying in the public lobby the usual badge of membership in the association.

"In the future," read the note, "please keep your sign where honest grafters can see it, as the American Bankers' Association is too tough for poor grafters. Yours respectfully, John Yegg & Co."

The Star "Peter Man."

And, finally, as to the star "peter man." What has become of them? Edward Kelly, alias "Big Head," is now at liberty. In his prime he carried scales which would locate the interior locking mechanism of modern safes of every description. Jim Dunlap, whose gang got away with "swag" amounting to \$3,000,000, was recently taken in Chicago. The greatest haul of Dunlap's gang was the Northampton, Mass., robbery, when \$1,600,000 was captured in a lump. Dunlap helped the Pinkerton agency recover over \$1,000,000, and when released from prison called on William Pinkerton with the pledge that he would break away from his old associations and start life anew on the "straight and narrow." Pinkerton lent him moral and financial aid with which to start in honest business. But not many months ago he was caught with a kit of burglar tools showing fresh evidences of a "job."

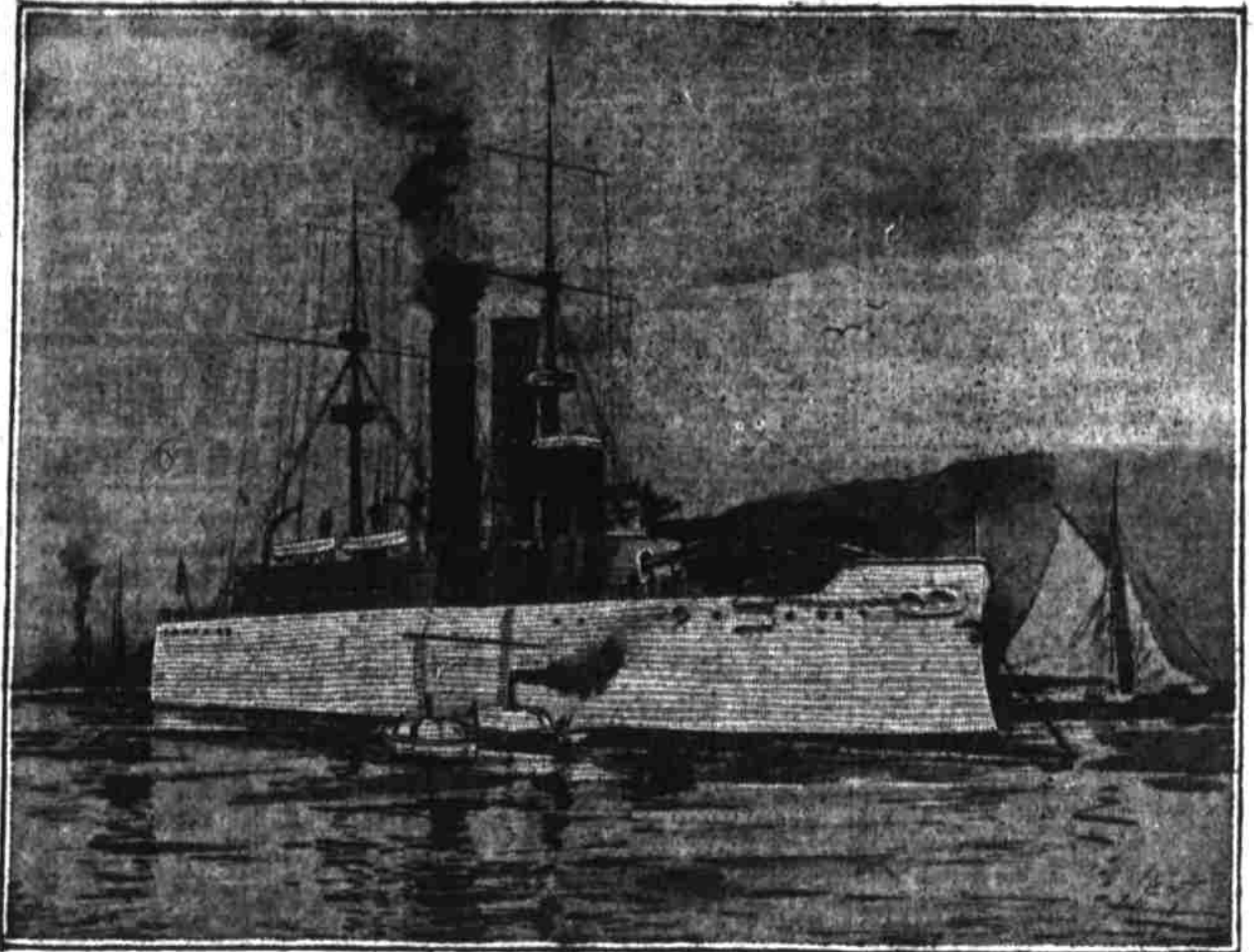
"Paper Collar Joe," another member of the Northampton gang, is at present a London millionaire, living in retirement and a connoisseur.

JOHN ELFRETH WATKINS, Jr.

clared, "and I'd like to see you make me." "But, Maria," expostulated the husband, "when you married me, didn't you promise to obey me?" "I did," she replied. Then slinging up his diminutive proportions, she added: "But I expected you'd grow."

Every educated Russian knows three languages besides his own, and many of them four. Knowledge of the English, French and German languages is considered necessary to culture. A family having small children employ two or four governesses, from whom the children learn foreign tongues before they are taught the more difficult Russian. This command of language makes possible the fact that Russians have a better knowledge of the world's affairs than any other people.

United States Flagship Endeavoring to Perform an Ocean Test of Speed Which Ended Yesterday



The United States flagship Kearsarge, Captain Hemphill in command, crossed the ocean at highest speed possible with natural draft. This is the first time an American battleship has been subjected to such a severe test since the time of the request of Admiral Melville. The trip has great bearing upon the settlement of the impending boiler question before the Naval Board of Construction.

TWO FAIRS MAY BE POSTPONED

A Prominent Exposition Worker
Claims St. Louis Display Will
Delay Until 1905 at the
Earliest.

Would Force Lewis and Clark
Directors to Defer Opening for
at Least a Year Later Than
Date Named.

The probable postponement of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, at St. Louis, until 1905 and the consequent necessity of delaying the Lewis and Clark Fair at Portland, is told by Edward Everett Young, a resident of this city and one of the original commissioners for the big Northwest show.

Mr. Young said: "I have information that leads me to believe that the Fair at St. Louis must be put off for a year, because the foreign exhibitors will not be ready in time, and that they will petition the St. Louis people to announce the postponement."

"Regarding our own Exposition, I can give only my own personal views, but I have always thought it would be necessary to put off the Fair for a year, and that it would be better were that done."

Young Goes East.

Mr. Young leaves in a few days for the East, and will visit the St. Louis Fair officers to learn the situation.

Being pressed for a reason for the belief that the St. Louis Fair was to be postponed, he replied:

"President Francis, of course, would at present deny such intention, but the feeling there, according to my information, is that an exposition would not do well during a presidential year, a view that appears to have reason in it when carefully considered."

SHERIFF SAVED THE DAY

Opie Read, the novelist, was telling of his experience as a journalist in Kentucky some years ago.

"There was a good deal of news," he said, "such as shootings and knifings, but this news was not regarded as important and little attention was paid to it. I remember once when a local feud broke out afresh, when members of the opposing sides met at the county seat."

"There were hot words, a blow was struck, and weapons were drawn, when the sheriff interfered. He loudly announced that he would not tolerate any violence, ordered the parties to separate and when his orders were not obeyed he began shooting."

"I forget whether he killed eight or nine, but I know that in describing the incident in my paper I commended the sheriff for his prompt action and bravery and added the paragraph: 'There is no doubt but for the prompt action of the sheriff there would have been bloodshed.'"

A thrilling adventure on an ice floe is reported from Lagersdorf, on the Danube, where a farm laborer was sent by his employer with a two-horse wagon for a load of wood. Having to cross the frozen Danube at a point where several deep cracks had appeared, the weight of the load caused a smash and driver, wagon and horses remained on a huge ice floe without food for 60 hours before a strong body of men with grapplers could draw the floe to the bank.

HOW TO READ THE NEWSPAPER

The Scientific Way of Perusing
the News in Your
Daily.

In talking about newspapers not long ago a college professor is reported to have said that 20 minutes a day was all that one ought to give to newspaper reading. It is to be feared that such advice will fortify the skipper and skimmer in their helter-skelter habits. Not that there is no justification for skipping and skimming. There certainly is. The perfect, ne plus ultra reader is the one who can adjust his speed to the importance of the matter which he is perusing, who can float lightly over passages which do not concern him, and plod conscientiously through passages which do concern him, who has acquired the power of rapid

survey without losing power, whenever it is necessary to exercise it, of accurate insight. This kind of reading machine, capable of being adjusted to any required velocity, and to any required degree of thoroughness, will do more work in a day than any other kind of reading machine that can be devised. It remains true, however, that most people skip and skim unintelligently. They fall into ways which are fatal to mental health. They become too cursory. Such people should give their paper more than 20 minutes a day. They need not read everything that the paper contains. The headlines will enable them to pick out those articles which are of particular value to them. Other people will pick out other articles. That is the plan on which the daily paper is constructed. It is not meant in all its parts for all people. What it attempts to do is to give each of its readers the things which he is interested in. When he has found those things he should read them carefully. Unless he does he will find that his acquaintance with current events is exceedingly unsatisfactory. The farmer who plows through the columns of his paper with much more care than speed is, of all men in the country, the best informed on many subjects of political moment. The



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CITY NOTICES.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT OF HALEY STREET.

Notice is hereby given that at the meeting of the Council of the City of Portland, Oregon, held on the 15th day of July, 1903, the following resolution was adopted: Resolved, That the Council of the City of Portland, Oregon, deems it expedient and proposes to improve Haley street from the east line of East Eleventh street to the west line of Holladay Park Addition to Portland, Oregon, by grading the street full width with full intersections in the proper grade, the estimates of the work to be done and the probable total cost thereof.

Said improvement to be made in accordance with the charter and ordinances of the City of Portland and the plans, specifications and estimates of the Auditor of the City of Portland on the 27th day of June, 1903, indorsed: "City Engineer's plans and specifications for the improvement of Haley street from the east line of East Eleventh street to the west line of Holladay Park Addition and the estimates of the work to be done and the probable total cost thereof."

The cost of said improvement to be assessed as provided by the city charter upon the property specially benefited thereby and which is hereby declared to be all the lots, parts of lots and parcels of land lying between a line 100 feet north of and parallel with the north line of Haley street and a line 100 feet south of and parallel with the south line of Haley street, and between the east line of East Eleventh street and the west line of Holladay Park Addition to Portland, Oregon.

The Engineer's estimate of the probable total cost of the improvement of said street is \$1025.00. The plans, specifications and estimates of said City Engineer for the improvement of said Haley street are hereby adopted.

Resolved, That the Auditor of the City of Portland be and he is hereby directed to give notice of the proposed improvement of said street as provided by the city charter.

Remonstrance against the above improvement may be filed in writing with the undersigned within 20 days from the date of the first publication of this notice.

By order of the Council.

THOS. C. DEVLIN,
Auditor of the City of Portland.
July 17, 1903.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT OF SCHUYLER STREET.

Notice is hereby given that at the meeting of the Council of the City of Portland, Oregon, held on the 15th day of July, 1903, the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That the Council of the City of Portland, Oregon, deems it expedient and proposes to improve Schuyler street from the east line of East Thirtieth street to the west line of the county road east of Fernwood, and the estimates of the work to be done and the probable total cost thereof.

The cost of said improvement to be assessed as provided by the city charter upon the property specially benefited thereby and which is hereby declared to be all the lots, parts of lots and parcels of land lying between a line 100 feet north of and parallel with the north line of Schuyler street and a line 100 feet south of and parallel with the south line of Schuyler street, and between the east line of East Thirtieth street and the west line of the county road east of Fernwood.

The Engineer's estimate of the probable total cost for the improvement of said Schuyler street is \$1,247.00. The plans, specifications and estimates of said City Engineer for the improvement of said Schuyler street are hereby adopted.

Resolved, That the Auditor of the City of Portland be and he is hereby directed to give notice of the proposed improvement of said street as provided by the city charter.

Remonstrance against the above improvement may be filed in writing with the undersigned within 20 days from the date of the first publication of this notice.

By order of the Council.

THOS. C. DEVLIN,
Auditor of the City of Portland.
July 17, 1903.

thing we need is, perhaps, not that newspaper reading should be less absorbing, but that it should be more discriminating.—Chicago Tribune.

CITY NOTICES.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT OF WELDER STREET.

Notice is hereby given that at the meeting of the Council of the City of Portland, Oregon, held on the 15th day of July, 1903, the following resolution was adopted: Resolved, That the Council of the City of Portland, Oregon, deems it expedient and proposes to improve Welder street from the center line of East Twenty-eighth street to the west line of East Thirtieth street in the following manner, to-wit:

First—By grading the street full width with full intersections to proper grade.

Second—By constructing sidewalks ten feet wide with six-foot covering planks and wooden curbs.

Third—By constructing wooden crosswalks six feet in width.

Said improvement to be made in accordance with the charter and ordinances of the City of Portland and the plans, specifications and estimates of the Auditor of the City of Portland on the 27th day of June, 1903, indorsed: "City Engineer's plans and specifications for the improvement of Welder street from the center line of East Twenty-eighth street to the west line of East Thirtieth street and the estimates of the work to be done and the probable total cost thereof."

The cost of said improvement to be assessed as provided by the city charter upon the property specially benefited thereby and which is hereby declared to be all the lots, parts of lots and parcels of land lying between the center line of East Twenty-eighth street and the west line of East Thirtieth street and between a line 100 feet north of and parallel with the north line of Welder street and a line 100 feet south of and parallel with the south line of Welder street.

The plans, specifications and estimates of the City Engineer for the improvement of said Welder street are hereby adopted.

Resolved, That the Auditor of the City of Portland be and he is hereby directed to give notice of the proposed improvement of said street as provided by the city charter.

Remonstrance against the above improvement may be filed in writing with the undersigned within 20 days from the date of the first publication of this notice.

By order of the Council.

THOS. C. DEVLIN,
Auditor of the City of Portland.
July 17, 1903.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT OF EAST TWELFTH STREET.

Notice is hereby given that at the meeting of the Council of the City of Portland, Oregon, held on the 15th day of July, 1903, the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That the Council of the City of Portland, Oregon, deems it expedient and proposes to improve East Twelfth street from a point 12 feet north of the south line of East Taylor street to a point 12 feet south of the north line of Hawthorne avenue by constructing a street 20 feet wide in accordance with the plans, specifications and estimates of the City Engineer.

Said improvement to be made in accordance with the charter and ordinances of the City of Portland and the plans, specifications and estimates of the Auditor of the City of Portland on the 15th day of July, 1903, indorsed: "City Engineer's plans and specifications for the improvement of East Twelfth street from a point 12 feet north of the south line of East Taylor street to a point 12 feet south of the north line of Hawthorne avenue, and the estimates of the work to be done and the probable total cost thereof."

The cost of said improvement to be assessed as provided by the city charter upon the property specially benefited thereby and which is hereby declared to be all the lots, parts of lots and parcels of land lying between a line 12 feet north of and parallel with the south line of East Taylor street and the north line of Hawthorne avenue and between a line 100 feet west of and parallel with the west line of East Twelfth street and a line 100 feet east of and parallel with the east line of East Twelfth street.

The Engineer's estimate of the probable total cost of the improvement of said East Twelfth street is \$2,271.00.

The plans, specifications and estimates of the City Engineer for the improvement of said East Twelfth street are hereby adopted.

Resolved, That the Auditor of the City of Portland be and he is hereby directed to give notice of the proposed improvement of said street as provided by the city charter.

Remonstrance against the above improvement may be filed in writing with the undersigned within 20 days from the date of the first publication of this notice.

By order of the Council.

THOS. C. DEVLIN,
Auditor of the City of Portland.
July 17, 1903.