

PEOPLE OF THE DAY

Chief of the Canal Builders.

Theodore P. Shonts of Chicago, new head of the isthmian canal commission and president of the Panama railroad, who is to direct the work of joining the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, has a great opportunity to write his name in American history.

Mr. Shonts was picked out for his new post by reason of his experience and skill in railroad construction. He was a lawyer originally, but dropped that for work more to his liking. Chicagoans say that his first work in that line was quite remarkable. He was called in by the head of the Iowa Construction company, which had a contract for building some branch lines in



THEODORE PERRY SHONTS.

Iowa and found itself unable to get the work done on time. Shonts took it up and by his remarkable ability in the way of organization succeeded in rushing the work through. He personally directed the work of so many different gangs that he seemed to be everywhere along the line at the same moment.

It was this striking success which led to his being put in charge of the work on the "Three Eyes" in Illinois. After he finished the construction work on this road he was elected its president. From there he went to the "Clover Leaf."

He is Pennsylvania born, but spent his early youth in Centerville, Ia., where he met Miss Milla Drake, who became his wife. She has been president of the Woman's Athletic club in Chicago. They have two daughters.

Civil War Recalled.

General Matthew Calbraith Butler, who has drawn attention to himself by his marriage near the end of his sixty-ninth year to a widow in New York city, was a senator from South Carolina for twelve years (1877-89) particularly well known. He is a nephew of that Senator Butler whom Charles Sumner savagely attacked in his speech on the barbarism of slavery, thereby causing the murderous assault on Sumner by Preston S. Brooks, his kinsman.

Prominent in Life Assurance.

James W. Alexander, president of the Equitable Life Assurance society, who has been the leader in the movement to mutualize that great institution, has been closely identified with the company for forty years and is widely known as an able financier.

In 1896 Mr. Alexander was invited to give up a small law practice to become

secretary of the Equitable, his uncle, W. C. Alexander, being at that time its president. He accepted the office and has remained an officer of the corporation since that time, being advanced from secretary to second vice president, then to first vice president and upon the death of Henry B. Hyde in 1899 to president.

During the upbuilding of the Equitable society by the late Henry B. Hyde,



JAMES WADDELL ALEXANDER.

its founder, Mr. Alexander was his assistant and confidant. When the elder Hyde died he anchored his stock, with its limitless power of control, by means of a trust deed, so that it might not be sold or disturbed until his son, James H. Hyde, should be thirty years old.

The time when young Mr. Hyde will have power to sell his stock and with it the control of the vast trust assets is not many months away; hence the movement to mutualize the society and give the control of its administration to policy holders.

President Alexander is a native of New Jersey and a graduate of Princeton university. A man of brilliant qualities, he has long been an active and honored figure in the social and business life of New York. Mr. Alexander is a well preserved, compact man of sixty-five, yet his erect form and sprightly bearing give the impression that his silvery hair and mustache are prematurely white.

SEQUEL OF A MINUET

It was on the first day of Peggy's arrival at her summer home that Polly Dexter, her most intimate friend, came bursting in.

"Thank goodness you've come at last!" she exclaimed by way of greeting. "You have saved my life. I wanted you to take part in the minuet which I rashly promised to get up for the yacht club masquerade ball a week from tonight. I've had an awful time with the old thing, and now if you don't help me I shall give it up."

"Poor Polly!" commiserated the teasing Peggy. "Who is to take part?"

"Oh, just the ones you know," replied Polly. Then she added abruptly, "Did you know that the Thurburs had taken a cottage here for the season?" She looked at Peggy curiously as she spoke, but her friend's face was as calm and innocent as that of a baby.

Peggy rose and said in a carefully indifferent voice:

"I certainly did not, although it makes absolutely no difference to me where they are. But I may as well tell you now, Polly," she continued warmly, "if Jack Thurbur is to dance in the minuet I shall not."

"So they have quarreled!" thought Miss Dexter gleefully. "No wonder

looked so down in the mouth. I've a good mind to help him along a bit."

Aloud she merely said: "Oh, there's not much chance of Jack's taking part. I asked him, but he said he would probably be away. Joe Brewer is to dance with you."

"All right, then," said Peggy, once more smiling cordially. "I'd love to take part. What are you going to wear?"

"We will have our hair powdered and wear masks." She gave a little gasp as she said this, and Peggy looked at her astonished.

"Swallowed a fly?" she asked.

"No! A new idea has dawned upon me! Something most exciting! I'm sorry I can't tell you what it is, but I can't possibly! Gracious me! Is it 12 o'clock already? I must fly! I promised Billy I'd go sailing with him at half past 11. It's lucky he is well trained to wait for me."

With a merry laugh Polly ran downstairs and out on to the board walk.

Peggy watched her a moment from the window, and her eyes lingered almost enviously on the two figures that presently cast off in the trim little boat. "I never saw any one so happy as she is since she became engaged to Billy Scott," she murmured. "Oh, dear! I wish I hadn't said what I did that day, but I'll never let Jack know that I'm sorry." She shook her pretty head, and her lips tightened firmly, though there was a suspicious cloudiness in her eyes.

"Mercy! Were you ever so hot in your life?" cried Peggy the night of the ball as she entered the little room where the dancers of the minuet were to assemble. "I am positively certain that I shall smother to death in my mask!"

"You may be hot, but you are most bewitchingly pretty," remarked Polly Dexter as she applied a bit of black court plaster to the tip of her rosy tongue. "Oh, by the way, you mustn't ask any of these men to answer you," she cried. "I have put my magic spell upon them, and they cannot say a word."

"The gods grant Jack doesn't forget," thought Polly gleefully. "He is an impetuous soul. Fortunately he and Joe Brewer are about the same height, and behind all that black mask Mistress Peggy will never know the change in her partner!"

Jack Thurbur looked at his dainty

partner and blessed the quick witted girl who had made it possible for him to hold his sweetheart's hand once more. This minuet would settle it. If Peggy refused to listen to him tonight he would cease to trouble her. But his heart ached at the thought, and he put the idea away from him almost fiercely.

He waited until the stately march and the first figure were over. Then as they stood in graceful pose while the second couples repeated it he whispered softly:

"Peggy!"

The girl started.

"Are you speaking to me, Mr. Thornton?" she replied, slightly emphasizing the pronoun.

"It isn't Mr. Thornton. I am Jack," came the reply.

Peggy bit her lip and half withdrew her hand as she and Jack moved forward to the center of the square. The rich color flooded her cheeks, but somehow after her first movement of angry surprise she could not repress the glad joy that surged in her heart.

"Don't be angry, Peggy," pleaded Jack in a low voice as they once more stood together. "But you absolutely refused to see me, and you would not read my letters, and I had to talk with you somehow."

The girl listened quietly, waving her fan nonchalantly.

They were separated again before she could reply, but in the next figure as Jack knelt at her feet it was in real and not pretending adoration, Peggy knew. Their quarrel seemed so foolish now, so trivial a thing to mar the happiness of two lives! Peggy drew a long sigh as she courted low to her handsome partner.

"Tell me, sweetheart, is it 'forgive and forget?'" whispered Jack as he kissed her hand. "If it is give me the dance that comes just after the minuet."

For answer Peggy looked at him as she moved slowly in the last figure of the minuet. Then as she turned for one final deep courtesy she gently slipped her dance card into her partner's hand.

"It's 'Yes, Jack,'" she said softly.

And there was no envy this time in the look she bent upon pretty Polly Dexter and her dance.—Boston Herald.

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