

PENNSYLVANIA

AND ITS

PUBLIC MEN

BY
SAM HUDSON

CONTAINING
A HISTORY OF HIS LIFE AND THE MEN HE HAS MET



PHILADELPHIA, 1909

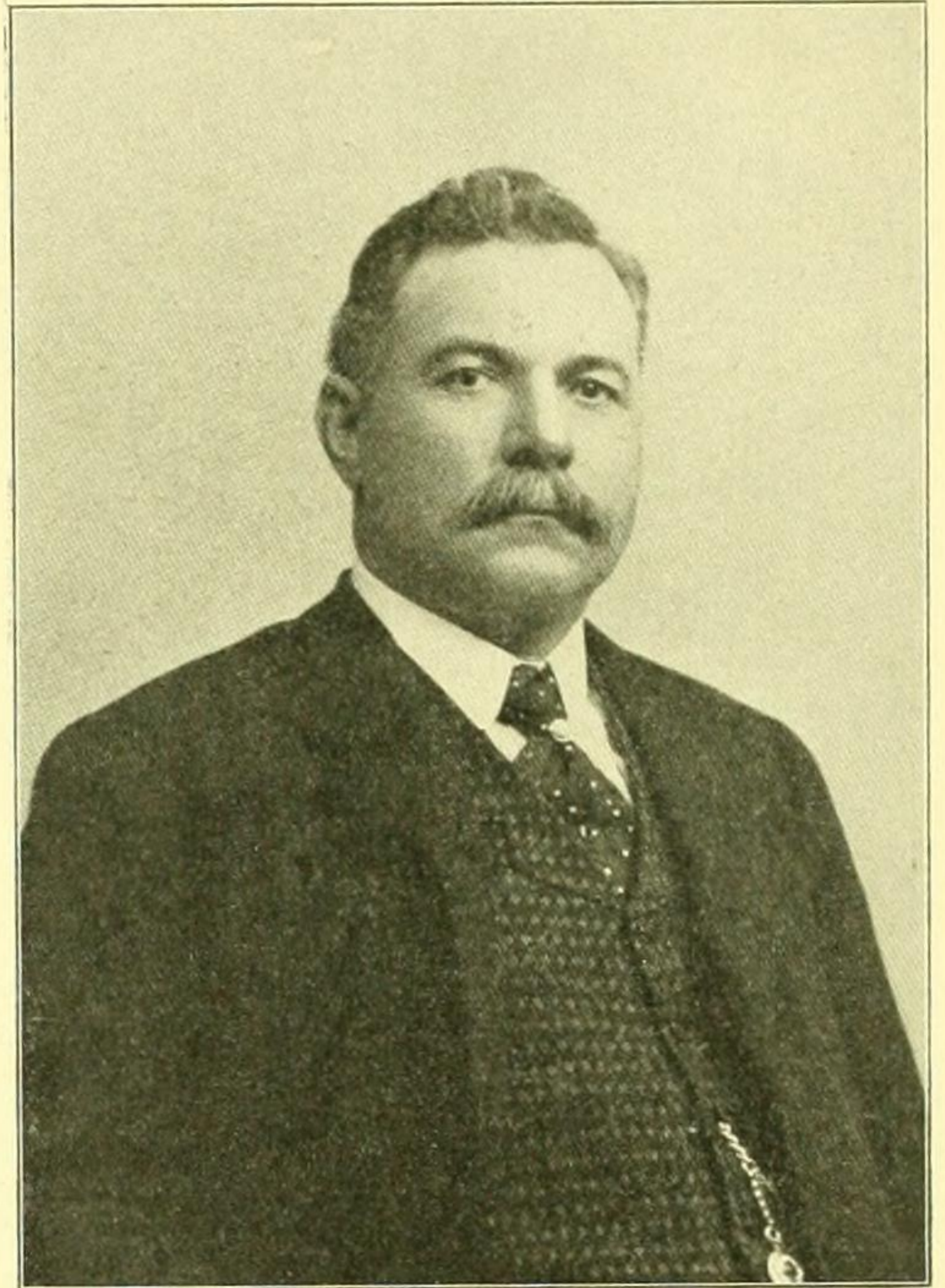
disappearance in February, 1909, was a cause of universal and genuine regret, and was made the subject of articles in all the newspapers of the city as the passing of a landmark. Mr. McGowan, although still active in years and at the head of a popular business, was compelled to surrender the old stand where his reputation was made because the Union League had purchased the property for the enlargement of the club house. The name of McGowan has been associated with good eating in Philadelphia since the "seventies," three famous brothers catering to the appetites of epicures. These were John, Dennis, and George, natives of Ireland. John, the elder, started in the restaurant business under the old St. George Hotel, and Dennis and George were associated with him. Dennis branched out for himself at Seventeenth and Pine Streets, and subsequently removed to Fifteenth and Sansom Streets, where he acquired his fame. George established himself at Eleventh and Lombard, and later at Twelfth and Sansom Streets. Dennis McGowan had no idea of going out of the business of appealing to men's appetites, and having purchased a property on Sansom Street above Fifteenth for \$40,000, he has blossomed forth like a new rose. In the days of the old Volunteer Fire Department Mr. McGowan was an active member of the famous Hibernia Engine Company No. 1, and was a sturdy Democrat of the Fourth Ward.

Kennedy Crossan

Contractor

Kennedy Crossan is one of a group of Philadelphia contractors who have made that city famous in their lines. He is a splendid type of the self-made man. Born on a farm in Chester County, Pennsylvania, in 1851, he came from an old family there, his grandfather having fought in the Mexican War. At fourteen he was put to the trade of a blacksmith, and at seventeen desiring to improve his condition, he left home and became a rover. He went direct to Aledo, Ill., then by wagon train over the prairies to Hulmbolt, Kansas, working in a saw mill; then to Leavenworth, where he was employed on a railroad, and later drove a stage between that city and Lawrence City. Then went to Texas with a cattle drover, but tiring of that got a job in Denver, and then returned to Philadelphia, his "knock about" experiences having made a self-reliant and steady man of him. He was then twenty-one and engaged as a laborer with Bush & Keller, railroad contractors, and they recognizing his abilities

soon promoted him to foreman. Later he set up for himself and secured the contract for the construction of a piece of work on the Schuylkill Valley Railroad between Monocacy and Birdsboro. He succeeded in making some money, and was now fairly launched with capital to extend his business. He obtained contracts from the B. & O. R. R. for work at Annapolis and Cumberland, and in 1886 formed a partnership with John Kelles. The new firm secured important contracts for the



building of several sections of the Western Maryland Railroad, and for the Pennsylvania Railroad in Cambria County. He then became associated with Thomas Nolan of Reading, and built the railroad between Meridian and Waterbury, Conn., besides doing other like work in New England. Mr. Crossan, in conjunction with Filbert & Porter, executed the lowering of the grade at North Penn Junction, a substantial piece of work. He was one of the organizers of the New Iron Pier at Atlantic City, and later conceived and erected the Million Dollar Pleasure Pier at the same resort.

He is director of the Fox Chase National Bank; was President of the City Street Railway of Indianapolis; President of the New Haven Iron & Steel Co.; Crossan Construction Co.; Treasurer of the Associated Realities Corporation Co., which is the owner of the new Million Dollar Steel Pier at Atlantic City; Treasurer of the Crossan Corporation

which owns the Hippodrome property next to the Shelburne Hotel, Atlantic City, and Treasurer of the Young's New Pier Auto Co. Mr. Crossan is a Blue Lodge Mason.

Upon the death of Congressman Castor he was given political charge of the Thirty-fifth Ward by the Republican Organization, and is a member of the Republican City Campaign Committee, and at the February election in 1909 was elected a member of Select Council from the Thirty-fifth Ward by a majority that surprised his opponents.

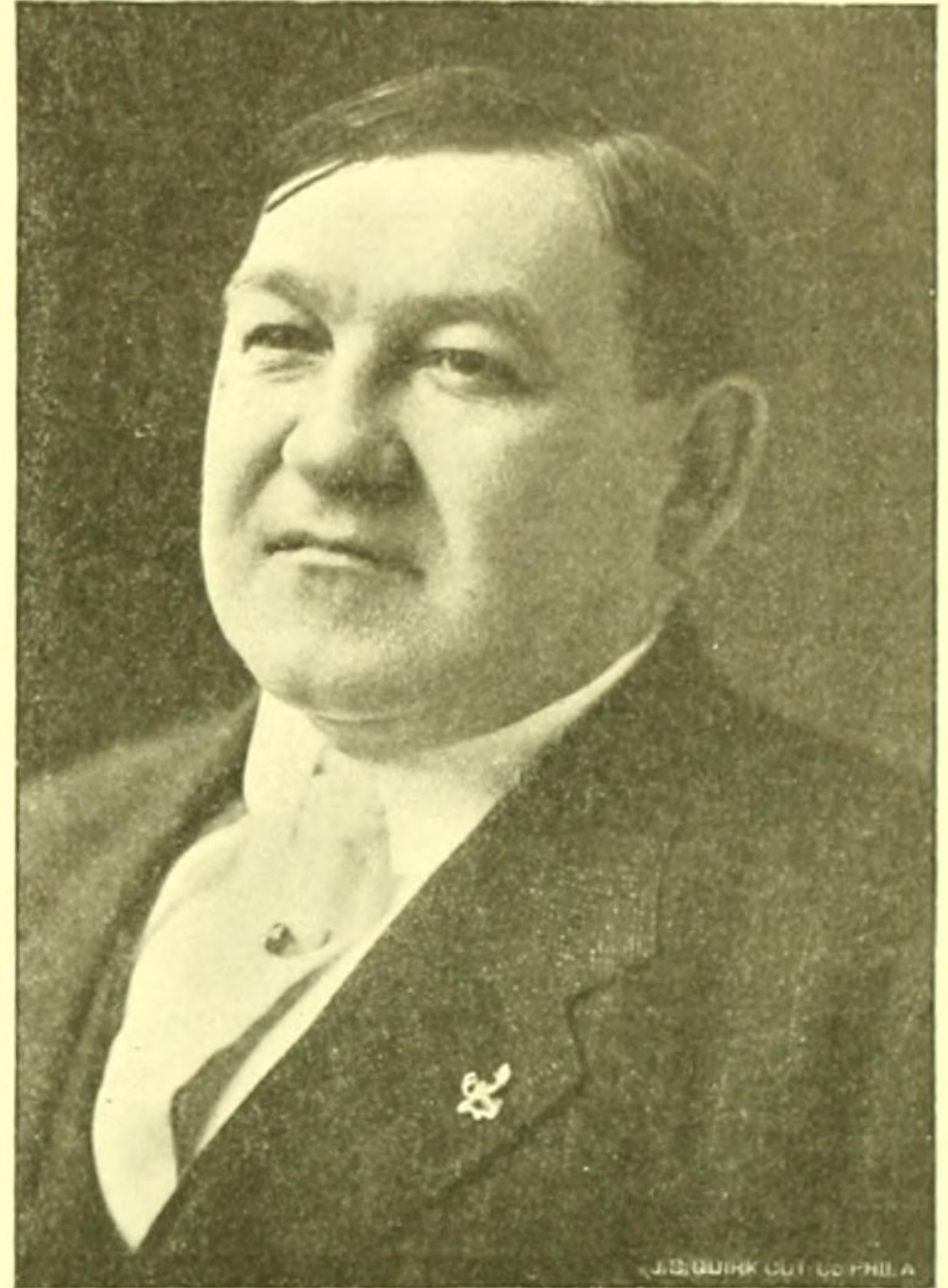
George Washington Sturmer

Engineer-Orator

George Washington Sturmer, popularly known as the locomotive engineer-orator, is the son of the late Captain Solomon Sturmer, widely known both in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania and in West Virginia, where he had large property interests. His father was a gallant soldier of the Civil War, serving in the One Hundred and Twenty-third Pennsylvania Volunteers. He was the founder of the town of Sturmerville, Luzerne County. George W. Sturmer was born at Pittston, and after going through the public schools was sent to Europe for a German education in 1865. He studied five years at a cadet school at Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, and one year at the famous Heidelberg University. Returning home, he engaged with his father in the boot and shoe business. This he found too confining, and so mastered the trade of a machinist, and finally engaged as a locomotive fireman with the D. L. & W. Railroad, and was promoted to an engineer, which occupation he still pursues. He entered politics as a Republican during the Garfield campaign of 1890, making his first speech in West Virginia. He at once established a fame as a political orator, and has been on the platform for every Republican Presidential candidate to this time. He took a prominent part in the reform movement in Philadelphia in 1905, and holds the record of having delivered 257 speeches in that exciting campaign. In 1906 he returned to the regular Republican organization, and was made chairman of the Stuart City Party Republican League, thus adopting the City Party title. The league was attacked by that party and the Dauphin County Court sustained the objection. He then made the league a straight Republican organization, and its ticket polled 13,200 votes. In 1908 he was commissioned to go to Western Pennsylvania to look after the political interests of Senator Penrose. He contributed largely

through his connection with the patriotic orders and the locomotive engineer's organization to the re-election of the Senator. He also was drafted as a speaker by the State and National Committees in the Taft-Bryan campaign, and spoke in New York State, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois and West Virginia.

He has the reputation of being the best-known and most effective labor orator in the



country. He was the founder of the Betsy Ross Monument Association, it being his supreme ambition to see placed a monument over her remains in Mount Moriah Cemetery. He is connected with several fraternal organizations, being a prominent Mason, past representative in both the Junior Order American Mechanics and Patriotic Sons of America, and is also a member of the Woodmen of the World and Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. He has been running the Royal Blue Line trains on the B. & O. Railroad between Philadelphia and Washington for twenty-three years.

He was chairman of the B. & O. employees' banquet tendered to the late Thomas Fitzgerald, June 2, 1904, at Fairmount, West Virginia, one of the greatest banquets ever given a general railroad manager in the United States, and attended by all classes, from president of the road down to engine wiper.