

### Railways Ruined by Accidents.

ABOUT \$3,000,000 A YEAR PAID IN SETTLEMENT OF SUITS FOR DAMAGES.

One of the most popular of the suburban railroads carrying passengers out of New York during the summer season went into the hands of a receiver a few days ago, because there were pending against it damage suits to the amount of \$1,000,000 arising from an accident on Labor day—an accident in which a number of people were killed. Not one of the suits has yet come to trial, but such is the closeness with which railroad earnings and expenses are computed, that the net earnings for many years to come would be hopelessly engulfed if only a part of the suits came to trial and if only a fraction of the damages claimed was recovered in court. When one reads of a "terrible railroad accident" on some railroad line, an accident entailing loss of life and perhaps serious injury to many, the circumstance is lost sight of that, after the doctors and nurses have begun their work of skill or philanthropy, there come the lawyers whose clients are to be settled with either by cash compromise or as a result of a jury's decision, and juries, it is well known, are hardly ever partial to railroad companies when private individuals are suing for injuries sustained or for the loss of immediate relatives. It is for this reason that a very serious accident sometimes means the wreckage of the finances of a railroad company. A few minutes' neglect, recklessness or imprudence may cost, in subsequent financial damage, years of labor.

Among railroad men the case of the Toledo, Peoria and Western is a familiar one. In August, 1887, there was an accident at Chatsworth, Ills., on the line, in which 100 persons were killed, and the litigation resulting therefrom has kept the company in the courts ever since. The Monon road, running from Chicago to Louisville, is another sufferer in its finances from an accident along the line, and the Ashtabula accident on the Lake Shore railroad some years ago involved that railroad in many thousand dollars of loss. Railroads have no reserve fund to meet the losses sustained through damage suits from accidents. A contrary opinion prevails, especially among litigants and jurors, who seem to act on the general proposition that railroad corporations keep on hand a large sum for such contingencies as an occasional accident costing anywhere from \$50,000 to \$500,000. The amount of money paid in settlement of damage suits by American railroads cannot be computed with any positiveness, because it varies considerably from year to year, while the condition of the railroads transporting passengers has much to do with it. When roads are in good condition, accidents involving loss of life or serious bodily injury are rare; when roads are in poor condition, such accidents are frequent. The large systems of the country, such as the New York Central, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, the Illinois Central and the Southern Pacific, spend on an average in the settlement of damage suits about \$150,000 each, and the smaller railway companies bring up, probably, the total amount paid to about \$3,000,000 in all. Altogether the American railroads carry collectively in a year 600,000,000 passengers, the number of fatal accidents averages but about 300, and of injuries to passengers about 3,000, or one killed for every 2,000,000 carried, and injured for every 200,000. One of the amendments of the present New York state constitution adopted in 1894 (section 18 of article 1) did away with the statutory power of the legislature to limit a verdict for "damages for injuries resulting in death" to \$5,000.—*New York Sun.*

### An Electric Hen.

The business of hatching chickens by artificial means is carried on so extensively that any improvement in the apparatus or methods is certain to attract the attention of all poultry raisers, says an exchange. The latest invention in this line is an electric apparatus. It is said that in this invention the temperature can be adjusted and maintained to a fraction of the desired pitch. The walls of the incubator are filled in with mineral wool. There is a hot-water tank at the top which keeps up the proper temperature by circulation. In these electric hens, as they are called, a resistance box may be used to heat the water, but they are made so that either oil, gas or electricity may be used. The idea of hatching chickens by electricity explodes the old theory that an electric current added the eggs. This notion went out of fashion a long time ago, with many other things to which our ancestors clung with the utmost tenacity. It is thought that chicks raised in electric incubators have more strength and vitality than when brought out in the ordinary way. Several poultrymen are experimenting with electric brooders, and the results will be looked for with great interest.

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### The Mule Gave It Up

HE KNEW THAT HE HAD MET HIS MASTER AT LAST.

As the road turned around the hill I came up on a mule and a cart and a man. The wheels of the cart had sunk down into a mudhole, and the mule stood with head down and ears lasily working to and fro. As for the man, he lay on his back in the shade of a tree and seemed to be taking solid comfort.

"What's the matter?" I asked, as he sat up and looked at me.

"Mewl has balked," he slowly replied.

"You mean that he has refused to pull the cart out of the mud?"

"Zactly."

"But it's a big load and a small mule," I urged. Why don't you give him some help?"

"It's agin my principles. I've yelled at him and I've licked him till I'm tired, but I'll be dog-goned if I take anything off that load or boost that cart! No, sah—we stay right here till the pesky critter gets up and humps hisself and pulls the cart out o' the mud!"

"Then you are not in a hurry?" I queried.

"No, sah; no hurry 'tall," he replied, as he hitched back to get more shade.

"My son Dan is plowin' out co'n with the cow, the ole woman is fixin' up the fences, and I've a gallon of whiskey and a pound of terbacker in the cart. It's a question of bein' sot, and if I can't stay sot longer'n a \$30 mewl then I'd better move out of Alabama."

Five days later I met the man at Greenville and asked him how the "sotness" came out.

"Oh, yes!" he replied with a grin.

"Wall, I camped right thar' fur two days and nights, a-singin' hymns and restin' up an' hev'in' a good time, and then that mewl, a-secin' that when it came down to sotness he wasn't in it with me, took right holt and pulled that cart outer the mud and galloped all the way home!"—*Detroit Free Press.*

### Bobby's Composition—The Cat.

The cat is a small animal with four legs and a long tail. The cat is covered with cat fur. In the night cats roost on the back fence. They roost lengthways of it, instead of crossways, like a bird or hen.

When the cat wants to say anything it utters a yowl. No other animal yowls, except a baby, and its yowl is different. Mostly cats make their remarks in the night. The baby is not different from the cat in this respect.

Cats have nine lives, but after she has lost one of them she isn't good for much except a cat skin. If I was a cat I would not be afraid of dogs.

Cats' eyes shine in the dark. Once I was up in our garret, and saw a cat's eyes shining. I came down and went to talking to ma about things. She said she thought I went up into the garret to stay awhile. I said "No, I stayed as long as I intended to."

The cat has an Ann Tipathy for rats. Cats eat rats. Tastes differ. The Chinese make porcelain cats with yellow glass and put a candle inside. When the rats see it they go away on the dead run. Of course there is no danger. I forget what I went up into the garret for that time.

The middle of cats' eyes gets big in the dark and small in the light. Girls like cats. A cat goes up a tree frontwards and comes down backwards. They go up because they see a dog, and come down when the dog isn't looking. The more dogs a cat sees the bigger her tail gets. The cats in the Isle of Man don't have any tails, so they are not afraid of dogs.

Once we had a cat whose eyes got so big in the dark that you would have been afraid if you hadn't known what it was. This was the same cat I saw in the garret. But, phaw! I knew what it was right away, as soon as I got down!

That's all anybody knows about cats.

### Not to be Effaced from Memory.

A stranger who was walking through Jackson Park the other day and noting the changes that time and the South Park Commissioners are gradually making in the historic locality was observed to stop under one of the trees, glance at the Wooded Island, squint at the statue of the Republic in the distance, and carefully examine the tree itself.

Then he slowly nodded his head several times, emitted a sigh, and softly said to a bystander:

"I shall always look upon this spot where I am standing now as the dearest spot on earth."

"It was here, perhaps," ventured the other, "that you met the young lady to whom you were afterward—er—"

"It was here," said the stranger, dreamily, "that I paid \$4.75 for a bowl of cold soup, a piece of arbutos beefsteak, a slab of bak's bread and four swallows of coffee."