

A PROVIDENTIAL ESCAPE.

Remarkable Story Told by a Veteran Engineer.

The Kansas City Star says: A dozen railroad engineers and conductors met by chance the other day, and an old, gray-haired veteran of the war told a story. He had been an engineer with a big reputation as a "runner" in the years gone by, but, on account of failing nerves and eyesight, was now enjoying an easy berth around the shops. He said:

"It was when the old Y.M. and B. was first opened up." "I was pullin' passengers, and took the first coach over the road. I got a good run, all day work, and was holdin' her down as a good thing."

"Bout a year after we'd got to doin' a good business I had some extra runnin' and lost my turn for a while and run nights all the time. It was my last trip before I'd get back my own run and I was feelin' glad to get on to the day 'trick' again. We'd had some mighty bad weather and lots of water fell. Our track was in pretty good shape, though, and we didn't much fear washouts, so we kept up with the 'card' pretty well. The night I spoke about I was on No. 2. We had a heavy train, but the machine I had was able to 'get there,' and I was on time till we struck a freight that couldn't take the sidin'. They 'swung us down' and we sidetracked until the freight got away. I was pretty warm over losing the time, and when we lit out of there I pulled her right up to the notch and she went for all she was worth. We were making about 25 miles an hour, and when we reached the 'hill' east of Wildcat I worked steam all the way down. We were 'bout half way to the creek when the bell rang. I worked mighty quick, but it was down hill and the rails were wet, and I didn't stop until the pilot was almost over the bridge—or where the bridge ought to be—because when I stopped the headlight was shinin' over a chasin. The bridge was washed away. Gad! you can tell just how 'bout how I felt. My fireman nearly faint and I wasn't far behind him. Well, after we stopped, the conductor, a smart chap, with a fancy lamp and a rubber collar, came a-runnin' up wantin' to know why I stopped.

"Cause the bell rang. What did you pull the rope for?" I says. "I didn't, says he. "Well, who did?" I says. "No one," says he, hot like, "Well, some one pulled it, or I wouldn't a stopped," says I. "The con looked at me a minute, and just then the brakeman came up, and 'Did you pull the rope, Joe?' said the con. "No," says Joe.

"Just a sudden thought struck me and I told the 'brakery' to ask the porter. The 'con' hadn't pulled the bell and the passengers in his car were all asleep until I jerked them endways with the 'air'. I took the conductor around to the front end and showed him the bridge. He was scared to death, and we went back together through the train to see who pulled the bell rope, but every mother's son of them swore it wasn't touched. I begin to get scared again and told them about the bridge and everybody came out to look at it. We couldn't find any one who gave the signal, and after we'd flagged back to the station I got to thinkin' more and more, and I came to the opinion that the bell was rung by Providence. There was 150 people on the train, and if that bell hadn't rung I'd a took them all over into the Wildcat and dropped them about 100 feet into the water. There wouldn't been anybody left to tell about it either.

"The Superintendent locked into the thing after I reported, and had me and Joe up 'on' the carpet twice, but we both held the bell and swore to it. Some chap got up a long explanation: that the bell-rope was tight-stretched, and we struck a low joint comin' down the hill, when one end of the coach sagged, and the rope bein' tight it rung the bell, but I don't believe it. It was Providence that did it, and I know it and I've never sworn an oath since and never will."

**Terrible Suicide.**  
CAMPBELLFORD, Ont., Oct. 23.—Mrs. Beatty, aged about 30, wife of James Beatty, cabinetmaker, committed suicide at noon today by cutting her throat with a razor. While the two eldest children were at school she left the baby, aged about 1 year, and went upstairs to her room and committed the act. Evidently she had prepared for it, as her brooch had been taken off and placed on the washstand and her dress was unbuttoned at the neck. The wash basin was lifted from the washstand and put on a box to the left, and over this she stood and made the fatal cut, as the spouting of the blood on the wall shows, the razor falling on the floor between the box before mentioned and the wall. Considerable blood ran into the wash basin. Then becoming weak she fell to the left on her face, and thus was found, probably not more than fifteen minutes after the deed was done. On the washstand beside the brooch stood a wine glass, in which were a few drops of laudanum, and it is presumed she had taken a dose of this as well. Melancholia, with suicidal tendency, is the cause attributed, as she had been in a despondent mood for two or three weeks, and told her husband that something terrible would occur, but mentioned nothing particular. An inquest is not deemed necessary.

**Nickel for Uncle Sam's Navy.**  
WASHINGTON, October 23.—The Chief of the Ordnance Bureau of the Navy Department is giving his attention at present to the procurement of the nickel present or matte for which Congress appropriated \$1,000,000. Representatives of the firms which deal largely in this ore and metal have been in communication with the Department, and to ascertain the exact capacity of our domestic nickel works several competent steel experts have been sent by the Department to various parts of the country. Chief Folger of the

Ordnance Bureau intends to ascertain the possibilities of the alloy of steel and nickel in other branches of naval construction, as well as in the manufacture of armour-plate, in which it has already shown such creditable qualities, so that he is preparing to have made at the Washington navy-yard a series of tests which will include proof trials of projectiles made from the new alloy as well as the usual tests of elasticity, breaking strength, ductility, etc. It is expected that most of the nickel will be obtained in Canada.

BIRCHALL'S DOINGS.

Old Friends Remembered—He Takes Kindly to His New Guard.

WOODSTOCK, Oct. 23.—Birchall has not much faith in the petition now being circulated praying for commutation of his sentence, although since his wife made a personal appeal to the citizens for help the list of signatures has been increased to respectable dimensions. Birchall has not given up all hope of reprieve, but in case the petition fails he is remembering a few friends about town with presents. He had three rings made and presented them, one to his ex-guard, Entwistle, another to Mr. S. G. McKay, his lawyer, and the third one is for Mrs. West-Jones. They are suitably inscribed. The same jeweller is making two gold lockets for Birchall. He is to have one with a lock of his wife's hair and should he be executed he will carry this to his grave on the 17th November.

His wife will wear the other locket with her husband's photo and a lock of his hair. Birchall is well pleased with his new guard and takes to him kindly. George Perry is a young man of pleasant address, and his manner seems quite pleasing to the prisoner.

DETECTIVE BLUETT'S FLAT DENIAL.

Detective Bluett stated to the *Empire* last night that he had not given the *Globe* the copy of the brief of defence in the Birchall case, as had been alleged. There were a dozen copies of that brief typewritten, said he, "and it would be an easy matter to get one. There is not a tittle of truth in the assertion that that brief was procured through me. I could have made big money out of it had I so desired, but I would not be such a sneak as that. I have stuck to Birchall right through and I think the man has had a deal. I would be the last man in Canada to do anything that would militate against his chances for a commutation of the death sentence."

WILL BE BRAVE TO THE END.

MONTREAL, Oct. 23.—There is a gentleman in this city who is trying to work up sentiments in favor of the condemned murderer now in Woodstock jail. He published this evening in a local paper some extracts from letters alleged to have been received from the famous Birchall since the death sentence was passed. The gentleman in question says he was a confederate of Birchall at Oxford, and having written to the condemned that he believed he was as innocent as the babe unborn, or words to that effect, Birchall replied as follows:

"I know not how to thank you sufficiently. Words fail me when I try to do so. I shall carry that letter in my memory for all time. One thing you might do, like a good fellow, and that is to write to my wife and tell her your opinion of me, as one who knew me so long, that she may see for herself the ideas of a true friend. I know she would be pleased if you would do so for me. She is with her sister staying till the end, on November 14 next. I am comfortable so far as I can be, and well cared for, but it is a miserable existence altogether, far more so than I can say. But I shall keep up to the end, and the memory of the past and its brightest halo will never fade from my memory. If ever you pass through Woodstock, old chap, pause for a few seconds by your old pal's grave, which you will find in the cemetery here. No doubt it will be found without difficulty, and if it's only just to give a passing glance or to chuck a stone upon it, just for auld lang syne. What shall I send you for a keep-sake? I have many things that might be of use to you. I must look over them and see what is the best. You will write to me again, won't you? I shall eagerly await a letter from you in reply to this one. I shall hope that when you return to England, if you happen to see any of the old firm, you will tell them that I was brave to the end, and that the knowledge of their loyal support and friendship in these hours of need were much to stay the hand of misery and pain. Well, what can I say further? Perhaps to wish you luck in this world, for you heartily deserve it in every sense and way, and may success attend you in your life here in a marked way, as I am sure that it will. Indeed, I think of you as

"When fortune fails, and fate doth grimly smile,  
Dear is the friend who's constant all the while."

It was reported to-day that Mrs. West Jones had arrived in town to endeavor to incite Montrealers to petition for a commutation of the death penalty, but the lady could not be found up to a late hour.

The Origin of the Sandwich.

The word sandwich, as applied to that edible, had its origin in Lord Sandwich. He was a great gambler, and during his administration was oftener found at the gaming table than anywhere else. One time in the fascination of play, he forgot to eat for more than twenty-five hours, when suddenly growing hungry, though still riveted to the gaming table, he ordered some one to bring him any food that could be procured, which proved a slice of beef and two pieces of bread. Placing them together for the sake of expedition, he devoured them with the greatest relish. This novel method was published and praised, and afterwards giving to it his name, he bequeathed it as a memento to his countrymen.

A Niece of P. Purcell, M. P., Said to Have Eloped with One Stewart.

CORNWALL, Oct. 19.—The *Standard* says there is great anxiety in two households in this vicinity as to the whereabouts of Miss Bella Forestelle, daughter of Mrs. Forestelle, of West Water street. Miss Forestelle is a niece of Mr. P. Purcell M. P., and has dwelt with her uncle and aunt at Fairfield since childhood. Her life has been a happy one, and money has been lavishly expended on her education, and nothing that she has desired was ever denied her until about three months ago, when it became apparent to her guardians that a warm friendship had sprung up between the young lady and her uncle's bookkeeper, George Stewart, a man many years her senior. From that time she was forbidden to have anything to do with him, and he was dismissed. After this all passed smoothly enough until Saturday, when the young lady started for town on a visit to her mother. That was not her purpose, however, as was afterwards shown. She told her mother that her aunt had given her permission to return with some young lady friend (on a visit to her) to Ottawa, and that she would start that evening. Her friends, she said, would drive from Fairfield to the depot, where she would meet them. All the afternoon was devoted to packing her trunks, and when the cabman drove up to the door to take her to the 10.57 train her mother and sisters kissed her good-bye and wished her a pleasant visit, never thinking that it was likely to be the last time they would see her for an indefinite period. During the evening, Stewart, who was also in town, called at her mother's home: he was rather coolly received. He acted strangely, and her mother noticed it, but her fears were overcome by her daughter's assurance that there was nothing between them. Nothing wrong was suspected until Sunday afternoon, when Mr. Mildren, the present bookkeeper for Mr. Purcell, called at Mrs. Forestelle's to take Bella down to Fairfield. Explanations and enquiries brought out the facts that the young lady had gone west in company with Stewart. Her mother is nearly heart-broken over the affair. Mr. Purcell is in New Brunswick and knows nothing of the occurrence. He idolized his niece, and it is said that the misguided girl would have fallen heir to Fairfield and its extensive grounds as well as a large amount of money had she remained with her uncle. It is not known where the couple have gone to, as no word has yet been received from them.

The Way Smithson Got Married.

Mr. Smithson (an improvement on the celebrated name of Smith) wished to take Miss Brownly (another improvement) to the opera. He had been in terms of intimacy with the family for about five years, but "never spoke of love"; on the contrary, he had frequently declared his intention of leading a bachelor's life. One morning he called and was admitted.

"Oh, James!" exclaimed Miss Jane, "where have you kept yourself so long?" This took Smithson a little aback, for he had spent the preceding evening with the family. Before he could answer, however, Jane's brothers and sisters (ten in number) had gathered around him. Summoning all his courage, he said, "I have come to ask you—

"Not here, James—now—now—oh!" "That is," stammered Smithson, "if you are not engaged."

"Oh, oh? water, quick!" "What's that?" inquired her father. "Who says she's engaged?" "I didn't mean—" said Smithson in confusion.

"Of course not," continued Mr. Brownly; "you've always been our favourite!" Then advancing, and taking poor Smithson's hand, he said, "Take her: she is a good girl, and loves you to distraction. May you both be as happy as the day is long."

Thereupon father, mother, and children, crowded around Smithson, and wished him joy; and company coming in at the moment, the affair was told to them as a profound secret. So Smithson got a wife without popping the question, almost before he knew himself. But we cannot help thinking he was hurried into matrimony.

A Level-Headed Boy.

A boy about 15 years of age applied to a factory on Atwater street for the job of running a small engine in the place of a boy who had quit.

"Have you run an engine?" was asked. "Yes, sir." "You understand how steam works, do you?"

"I do." "You know that water makes steam?" "Of course." "How is water got into a boiler?" "By an injector."

"Suppose you have too much water?" "Then I can't get steam enough until I draw it down."

"Correct. Suppose you haven't enough?" "Then look out for an explosion."

"Correct again. Suppose you found the water almost gone and couldn't start the injector, what would you do?" "Come up stairs and notify you to get your insurance policies out of the safe and make a sneak before she busted!"

"You seem to be all right, young man; you can come on in the morning."

New Use for the Electric Chair.

Officials in the prisons frequently have considerable difficulty in securing a faithful photograph of criminals whose pictures are needed for the rogues' gallery, as the subject has occasionally a trick of distorting his features just at the moment of exposure. It has been suggested that by fastening the sitter in a chair in connection with a powerful electric current the difficulty will be overcome. It is thought that any temporary insubordination will be quickly checked by a judicious but sufficient shock.

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Lindsay, June 10th, 1890.—22

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