

Hero of the Rail.

The locomotive engineer is the popular "hero of the rail," and the popular estimate in this respect is substantially just. Others have to brave dangers and perform duties under trying circumstances, but the engine runner has to ride in the most dangerous part of the train, take charge of a steam boiler that may explode and blow him to atoms, and of machinery that may break and kill him, and try to keep up a vigilance which only a being more than human could successfully maintain. He must be a tolerably skillful machinist—he cannot be too good—and have nerves that will remain steady under the most trying circumstances. If running a fast express through mid night darkness over a line where a similar train has been tipped off a precipice (and a brother runner killed) by train wreckers the night before, he must dash forward with the same confidence that he would feel in broad daylight on an open prairie. But he does not "heroically grasp the throttle" in the face of danger, when the throttle has been already shut, nor does he "whistle down brakes" in order to add a stirring element to the reporter's tale, when by the magic of the air brake he can, with a turn of his hand, apply every brake in the train with the grip of a vice in less time than it would take him to reach the whistle pull.

When there is danger ahead there is generally just one thing to do, and that is to stop as soon as possible. An instant suffices for shutting off the steam and applying the brake. With modern trains this is all that is necessary or can be done. Reversing the engine is necessary on many engines, and formerly was on all; this would, in fact, be done instinctively by old runners, in any case, but this also is done in a second. After taking these measures there is nothing for the engineer to do but look out for his own safety. In some circumstances, as in the case of a partially burned bridge which may possibly support the train even in a weakened condition, it may be best to put on all steam. The runner is then in a dilemma, and a right decision is a matter of momentary inspiration. Many lives have been saved by quick witted runners in such cases, but there is no ground for censure of the engineer, who in the excitement of the moment, decides to slacken instead of quicken his speed. The rare cases of this kind are what show the value of experience, and of men of the right temperament and degree of intelligence to acquire experience lessons readily.

PROBABILITIES OF ACCIDENT.

But the terrible cloud constantly hanging over the engineer and fireman of a fast train is the chance of encountering an obstacle which cannot possibly be avoided, and which leaves them no alternative but to jump for their lives, if indeed it does not take away even that. To the fact that this cloud is no larger than it is, and that these men have sturdy and courageous natures must be attributed the lightness with which it rests upon them. On one road or another, from a washout, or inefficient management, or a collision caused by an operator's forgetfulness, or some one of a score of other causes, there are constantly occurring cases of men heroically meeting death under the most heartrending circumstances. Every month records a number of such, though happily they are not frequent on any one road.

On the best of roads a freight train wrecked by a broken wheel under a borrowed car may be thrown in the path of a passenger train on another track just as the latter approaches. This has happened more than once lately. No amount of fidelity or forethought (except in the maker of wheels) can prevent this kind of disaster. There is constant danger on most roads of running off the track at misplaced switches, many switches being located at points where the runner can see them only a few seconds before he is upon them; but the chance is so small—perhaps one in ten or a hundred thousand—that the average runner forgets it, and it is only by severe self-discipline that he can hold himself up to compliance with the rule which requires him to be on the watch for every switch target as long before reaching it as he possibly can. He finds the switches all right and the road perfectly clear so regularly, day after day and month after month, that he may easily fall into the snare of thinking that they will always be so. But, like other trainmen, the engineer finds enough more agreeable thoughts to fill his mind, and reflects upon the hazards of his vocation perhaps too little.

Stanley.

In the general desire for news of Stanley the announcement two or three weeks since that he had been met by carriers a year ago, was hailed almost as if it were an assurance of his present safety. Yet it must be confessed that the tidings, apart from the fact that they were for the first time seemingly reliable, contained very little that is really encouraging. The place in which the intrepid explorer was met, "west of the Albert Nyanza and south-east of Ganga," the fact that nearly half the expedition had already perished from disease, fatigue, or fighting for supplies, and the further fact that hundreds of miles of the most difficult marching still lay between it and Wadela, its next objective point, afford, when soberly viewed, rather an unpromising foundation on which to build any sanguine assurance of his present safety. The best ground for hope is that recently pointed out by one who was a former companion of Stanley in Africa, that the hold he had obtained upon the minds and imaginations of the native tribes was such that the news of his death would be quickly passed from tribe to tribe and carried to the coast. There is great force in this view. In fact the inference that the death of so well-known an explorer could not have passed unannounced would be almost conclusive, were it not that the same argument applies, though perhaps in a less degree, to the stir that would be caused by his arrival at different centres along the route.

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MAN'S MODERN BRAG.

DR. BOYD REBUKES IT, AND SAYS THAT MORE CREDIT SHOULD BE ASCRIBED TO GOD.

"A Cure for Nineteenth Century Boasting" was the subject of the Rev. Dr. W. W. Boyd's evening discourse to the congregation of the First Baptist Church at Newark. His text was taken from Daniel, iv., 30:—"Is not this great Babylon, that I have built by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty?"

"An oriental type of the modern boaster, the greatest of Babylonian kings, from the roof of his gorgeous palace surveys his golden capital, whose chief splendor is due to the public works built by the forced and unwearied toll of the poor, and exclaims, 'Is not this great Babylon that I have built?' If in the ancient monarch," said Dr. Boyd, "this sentiment reached its climax, in the boastful modern materialist history repeats itself. Discoveries, inventions, mechanisms are the themes of his unending song. To the master workmen he renders honor hardly less than divine. Human achievement is the burden of his self-praise, and his motive in thus worshipping art and science is to deify man.

HUMAN FINITNESS.

"The cure for this materialistic boasting is to understand and confess the necessary limitations of man's power and genius; in other words, to recognize God as the master workman and man as only His apprentice. Nature, the world within and the world without, is the workshop. In it man can do absolutely nothing that God does not first teach him. Every tool, principle, quality he uses is supplied by the master workman. To discover is not to create. The laws man utilizes have existed from creation's fiat. Their application by man is not original. The nervous organism had its telegraphic communication between mind and matter, muscle and brain, ages before man discovered its utility. The human body illustrated every principle and appliance in mechanics years before the era of invention. God planted the seeds of all the to be in nature to ripen under man's toll, but he created both seed and soil. Moreover, there are limits to man's skill in the very nature of things themselves. Perpetual motion is evident in Nature, man has not yet discovered its secret. No chemistry as yet has been able to crystallize the sap of corn into sugar. Man may copy up to a certain point; beyond that he cannot advance a hair's breadth. The unity in nature is surprising, the same mathematical formula expressing the springing of leaves from the stalk of a plant and the movement of the planets in their orbits. Art itself is founded on mathematics; music is a science of numbers; painting, in form and colors, depends on mathematics. But this science man has learned from God's universe, and the idea of number was born in and with him. Art is sublime, but only because it embodied eternal laws and is 'the transcript by human hands of the thoughts of God.'

PRaise GOD INSTEAD.

"Due praise must be given to the patient toilers in the realm of mind or matter, who discover the secrets of nature and utilize their knowledge for noble ends. But highest honor is only to be rendered to Him who put those wondrous things within the reach of man's short arm, gave him power to wield them for the common good and did not conceal them from us in the profound and unsearchable depths of his own being. The results of human genius are but the source of gratitude, but not of a self-boastful spirit that shuts God out of His own creation. Utilize every force, law, principle and quality in man and outside of him in human progress, enrich the mind with all treasures of learning, adorn cities and homes with the masterpiece, but let no human achievements, however great and praiseworthy, increase the materialistic tendency of our age, already 'Titanic in its strength and impiety,' that seeks to exalt man by attempting to degrade Him who made man in his own image. Human finiteness may well be humble in view of its limitations and the vast unknown, and perhaps unknowable, that envelops it on all sides."

Love in a Cottage.

"Chally," said Amarantha Jane, "I notice that your spirits recently seem to be bubbling over with happiness. I am glad to see it, but do tell me, dear, what has caused it?" "I will," said Charley, as he encircled her waist and imprinted a kiss on her inviting lips. "You know for a while I was melancholy, blue as indigo—had no appetite, was bilious and dyspeptic, but the use of two bottles of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery has brought me out and I am 'bright as a button.' I feel like a new man now. Jane, name the day soon; there is more of this medicine in the drug store."

The gourmand's ailment is not unlikely to prove meat for repentance.

Wine, Women and Song.

but the greatest of these is, "women." "Wine is a mocker," and song is good to "soothe the savage," but women respond to every active power and sentiment of the human mind when in good health. But when afflicted with disease you will find them tantalizing, coquetish, cross, and hard to please. For all "female complaints," sick headache, irregularities, nervousness, prolapsus and other displacements popularly known as "female weakness" and other diseases, peculiar to the sex, Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription is the great world-famed remedy.

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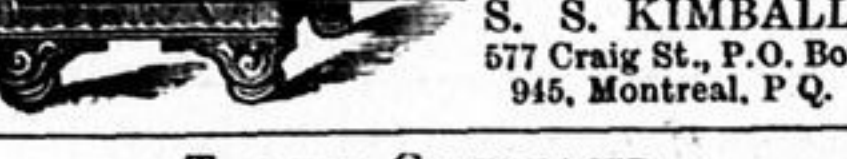
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