THE MAIL ROBBER.

A Stage-Driver's Story.

Fourteen years ago I drove from Danbury to Littleton, a distance of 42 miles, and as L had to await the arrival of two or three coaches, and I did not start until after dinner, I very often had a good distance to drive after dark. It was in the dead of night. A great deal of snow had fallen and the drifts were plenty and deep. The mail I carried was not due at Littleton by contract until one o'clock in the morning, but that winter the postmaster was obliged to sit up a little later than that hour for

One day in January, when I drove up with my mail at Danbury, the postmaster called me into his office.

"Pete." said he, with an important serious look, "there's some pretty heavy money packages in that bag," and he pointed to it as he spoke. He said the money was from Boston to some land agents near the Canada line. Then he asked me if I had any passengers who were going through to Littleton. I told him I did not know. "But

suppose I have not?" says I.
"Why," said he, "the agent of the lower route came in to-day, and he said that there were two suspicious characters on the stage that came in last night, and he suspects that they have an eye on this mail, so it will stand you in hand to be a little careful this even-

ing."
He said the agent had described one them as a short, thick-set fellow, about 40 years of age, with long hair, and a thick, heavy clump of beard under his chin, but none on the side of his face. I did not know arything about the other. I told him I guessed there wasn't much dan-

"Oh, no, not if you have got passengers all the way through; but I only told you this so that you might look out for your mail, and also look out sharp when you change horses.

I answered that I should do so, and then took the bag under my arm and left the I stowed the mail away under my seat a little more carefully than usual, placing it so I could keep my feet against it, but beyond that I did not feel any concern It was past one when we started, and I had four passengers, two of them rode only to my first stopping-place. I reached Gowan's mills at dark, when we stopped for supper, and where my other passengers concluded to stop for the

About six o'clock in the evening I left Gowan's Mills alone, having two horses and

I had 17 miles to go, and a hard 17 it was, too. The night was quite clear, but the wind was sharp and cold, the loose snow flying in every direction, while the drifts were deep and closely packed. It was slow tedious work, and my horses soon became leg-weary and restive. At the distance of leg-weary and restive. At the distance of six miles I came to a little settlement called Bull's Corner, where I took fresh horses. I'd been two hours going that distance. I going to start, a man came up and asked it I going to start, a han came up and asset in I was going through to Littleton. I told him I should go through if the thing could possibly be done. He said he was anxious to go, and as he had no baggage I told him to jump in, and make himself as comparable. The property of the control of the fortable as possible. I was gathering up my lines when the hostler came up and asked me if I knew that one of my horses had cut himself badly. I jumped out and found that one of the animals had got a deep cork cut on the off foot. I gave such directions as I considered necessary, and was about to turn when the hostler remarked that he thought I came alone. I told him

"Then where did you get the passenger?" said he.

"He just got in," I answered.

"Got in from where?"
"I don't know."
"Well, now," said the hostler. "that's
kind of curious. There ain't been no such man at the house, and I know there ain't

been none at any of the neighbors."
"Let's have a look at his face," said I "We can get that much, at any rate. Do you go back with me, and when I get into the pung, just hold your lantern so that the light will shine into his face."

He did as I wished, and as I stepped into the pung I got a fair view of such portions of my passenger's face as were not muffled I saw a short, thick frame, full, hard teatures, and I could almost see that there was a heavy beard under the chin. I thought of the man whom the postmaster had described to me; but I did not think seriously upon it until I had started. Perhaps I had gone half a mile when I no-ticed the mail-bag wasn't in the place under

my feet.
"Hello!" says I, holding up my horses a little, "where's my mail?" My passenger sat on a seat behind me, and I turned towards him.

"Here's a bag of some kind that slip-ped back under my feet," he said, giving it a kick, as though he would shove it for-

Just at this moment my horses lumbered into a deep snow-drift, and I was forced to get out and tread down the snow in front of

them, and lead them through it. This took me all of 15 minutes, and when I got in again I pulled the mail-bag forward and got my feet upon it. As I was doing this I saw the man taking something from his lap, beneath the buffalo, and put it into reast pocket. This I thought was a pistol. I had caught a gleam of a barrel in the starlight, and when I had time to reflect I knew I could not be mistaken.

About this time I began to think some what seriously. From what I had heard and seen, I soon made up my mind that the individual behind me not only wanted to rob me of my mail, but was prepared to rob me of my life. If I resisted him he would shoot me, and perhaps he meant to perform that delectable operation at any rate. While I was pondering, the horses plunged into another snow-drift, and I was again forced to get out and tread down the snow before them. I asked my passenger if he wouldn't help me, but he didn't fee very well, and wouldn't try, so I worked all alone, and was all of a quarter of an hour getting my team through the drifts.

When I got into the sleigh again, I began to feel for the mail-bag with my feet.

I found it where I had left it, but when I attempted to withdraw my foot I dis-

covered it had become fast in something-I thought it was the buffalo, and I tried to kick it clear; but the more I kicked the more closely it held. I reached down my hand, and after feeling about a few mo-ments, I found that my foot was in the mail bag. I felt again and found my hand in among the packages of letters and papers. I ran my fingers over the edges of the opening, and became assured that the stout leather had been cut with a knife.

Here was a discovery. I began to wish I had taken a little more forethought before leaving Danbury; but as I knew making such wishes was only a waste of time, I quickly gave it up, and began to consider what I had better do under existing circumstances. I wasn't long in making up my mind upon a few essential points. the man behind me was a villain second, he had cut open the mail-bag and robbed it some valuable matter—he must have known the money-letters by their size and shape; third, he meant to leave the stage on the first opportunity; and fourth ly, he was prepared to shoot me if I at-tempted to arrest or detain him.

I revolved these things in my mind, and pretty soon thought of a course to pursue, I knew that to get my hands safely upon the rascal I must take him unawares, and this I could not do while he was behind me, for his eyes were upon me all the time, so I must resort to stratagem. Only a little distance ahead was a house, and an old farmer named Longee lived there; and directly before it a huge snowbank stretched across the road, through which a track had been cleared with shovels.

As we approached the cot I saw a light in the front room, as I felt confident I should, for the old man generally sat up until the stage went by. I drove on, and when nearly opposite the dwelling, stood up, as I had frequently done when approaching difficult places. I saw the snow bank ahead, and could distinguish the deep cut which had been shovelled through it. I urged my horses to a good speed, and when near the bank forced them into it. One of the run-ners mounted the edge of the bank, after which the other ran into the cut, throwing the sleigh over about as quick as though lightning had struck it. My passensenger had not calculated on any such movement, and wasn't prepared for it; but I had

calculated, and was prepared.

He rolled out in the deep snow with heavy buffalo robe about him, while I alighted directly on the top of him. I punched his head in the snow and sung out for old Longee. I did not have to call a second time, for the farmer had come to the window to see me pass, and as soon as he saw my sleigh overturned, he had lighted his lantern and hurried out.

"What's to pay?" asked the old man, as he came up. "Lead the horses into the track, and then

come here," I said.

As I spoke I partially loosened my hold

upon the villain's throat, and he drew a pistol from his bosom; but I saw it in good season and jammed his head into the snow again, and I got it away from him.

By this time Longee had led the horses out and came back, and I explained the matter to him in as few words as possible.

We hauled the rascal out into the road. and, upon examination, we found about 20 packages of letters which he had stolen from the mail-bag and stowed away in his pockets. He swore, threatened, and prayed, but we paid no attention to his blarney. Longee got some stout cord, and when he had securely bound the villain we tumbled him in to the pung. I then asked the old man if he would accompany me into Littleton, and he said, "Of course I will."

So he got his overcoat and muffler, and

ere long we started on.
I reached the end of my route with my mail all safe, though not as snug as it might have been, and my mail-bags a little the worse for the trick that had been played upon them. However, the mail-robber was secure, and within a week he was identified by some officer from Concord as an old of fender, and I am rather inclined to the opinion that he is in the state prison at the present time. At any rate he was there the last time I heard of him.

That is the only time I ever had any mail trouble, and I think that, under all the cir-

The Elephant Myth.

[From the Pall Mall Gazette.]

The elephant of our childhood no longer exists. Like behemoth and leviathan and other mythical creatures in whom we once implicitly believed, he has been proved to be a figment of the Oriental imagination The authority upon which we make this unwelcome announcement is no other than Mr. Sanderson, who has for many years filled the post of superintendent of elephants to the government of India. and who stands in the same relation to these animals that Sir Joseph Fayres occupies to tigers and venomous snakes. In a lecture recently delivered to the United States institution as Simla, he roundly calls the elephant "positively idiotic in its attempts at escape when captured," and talks of "its want of originality and its positive stupidity in many things." In short, "in the faculty of reasoning it is far below the dog and other animals." Nor will Mr. Sanderson allow the estimates of its great height. Out of many hundreds he has measured in southern India and Bengal, he has not found one reaching ten feet at the shoulder. Yet one disillusion more. The elephant hunters in both Ceylon and India corroborate Sinbad's story that elephants, when they feel the approach of death, retire to a solitary and inaccessi ble valley and there die in peace. But Mr Sanderson, though he admits that no living man has come across the corpse of a wild elephant that has died a natural death, at tributes this rather to their extreme long-evity, which he is disposed to place as high as two hundred years. This explanation, however, seems to us to violate that rule of scientific hypothesis which requires that the cause should be adequate to account for the

In a deaf mutes' convention at Boston there was a pantomimic row over the charge of their President that soliciting agents had kept back 40 per cent. of \$4,500 collected for a proposed home. The scene was a strange one-400 persons earnestly and excitedly gestulating at each other without an audible

Editors.

EXTRACTS FROM A SPEECH DELIVERED BY CHARLES S. FREEMAN TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEW YORK PRESS AS-SOCIATION AT TROY.

Editors are born, not made. You cannot grind them up in heaps as you can do doctors, or lawyers. or clergymen. There is no college where they are taught. There is no curriculum for them to study. There are no professors of newspapers. There are no diplomas and there are no degrees for an editor. Perhaps I should say that none of the ordinary schools in which other profession are taught, answer for the newspa-The best school is the printing office.

est teacher is the click of the type,

and the atmosphere of the composing-room.

The tact of an editor cannot be taught in an academy. There are no books or masters to follow. Like the artist the editor must have genius, and genius is not borrowed or taught. But though you caunot teach editors in schools or academies, you can teach boys. And after you have taught the boy at school, you can teach the editor in a printing-office. But be careful not to insert him at the wrong end of the shop. Start him down among the rollers and the lye-brushes and he will work his way to the When he gets there he will know how to stay there. But if you start him at the sancture, the probabilities are that he will soon find himself in the cellar. It is one of the evils of our times that, not only in regard to this, but equally with regard to all trades and professions, the young men are unwilling to begin at the bottom. The grades of a printing-office should be as inex-orable as the grades of an army. There should be no removal except for cause, and no promotion except for merit. The history of the newspaper press proves the position I here take. The best, the ablest, the most successful editors this land has produced came up from the rule and composing stick I have known scores of tramping jour printers who had every qualification brilliant success in journalism except the one of steady habits; men of wide learning, sparkling genius, and commanding in-tellect. And I never yet saw a strictly educated man who was fit for an editor. They are two starchy and stiff. They are too nice and precise. They are too learned and profound. A profound newspaper would die in a week. Two things are certainly and equally fatal to a newspaper, ignorance and profundity. But I think of the two it can stand ignorance the better. for there are a great many people who are ignorant, and very few who are profound. Daniel Webster undertook to write an editorial for a newspaper. It was seven col-umns long and solid with statesmanship and wisdom. But the editor advised him to deliver it in Congress and let the newspaper It sometimes happens that a school master out of a job, or ambitious of fame, seeks laurels and cash in the editorial sanc-These are the worst failures in the whole lot. They invariably run on their tongues when they write, use ruled paper, dot all their i's, cross all their t's, and parse every sentence before it goes to press. They are designed to succeed better on monthly or quarterly publications, or those which come out once a year, than on the daily press. If anything is calculated to worry the patience of an editor, it is to see a schoolmaster laboring over a paragraph. a schoolmaster laboring over a paragraph. The erasures and interlineations, the stopping and staring, the tearings up and beginnings again, the consultations of the dictionary, the wise look at the wall, the doubt about grammar, and the great doubt about ideas, are frightful to behold. I state an exact truth when I say that I have seen some of these gentlemen spend two precious hours in trying to put a simple statement in a paragraph of ten lines, and fail. A surplus of grammar kills them. And yet the editor must not fail in grammar. His sentences must be clear cut, precise, and perfect. But he must do it without exertion, and with the same ease and freedom that he would engage in conversation. faculty he gets when he goes through the grades. He cannot bring it with him from any other profession. There are possible exceptions, but they are rare, exceedingly rare, and only prove the rule. The shoe-maker had better stick to his last, the schoolmaster to his school, and the editor to his sanctum. No man can be an editor who does not understand all the details of his business. He must be competent to fill any gap, in any place, at any moment. He must know how to do all that is needed to be done on a newspaper. He must be able to write a leader or a paragraph at a moment's notice, or without any notice at all. He must be a man of quick perception, of prompt decision and force of charaeter. He must be a leader. He must command the ship.

What Shall We Eat?

The editor of "Science" discusses at length the value of the different articles of food which generally enter into daily con-sumption. "Chocolate," he says, "from its large proportion of albumen, is the most nutritive beverage, but at the same time, from its quantity of fat, the most difficult to digest. Its aromatic substances, however, strengthen the digestion. A cup of chocolate is an excellent restorative and invigorating refreshment even for weak persons provided their digestive organs are not too delicate. Cardinal Richelieu attributed to chocolate his health and hilarity during his later years. Tea and coffee do not af ford this advantage. Albumen in tea leaves, and legumin in coffee berries are represented in very scanty proportions. The praise of tea and coffee as nutritive substances is, therefore, hardly warranted. Tea and coffee, though of themselves not difficult of digestion, tend to disturb the digestion of bituminous substances by precipitating them from their dissolved state. Milk, therefore, if mixed with t tea or coffee, is more diffi-cult of digestion than if taken alone, and coffee alone without cream promotes diges tion after dinner by increasing the secretion of the dissolving juices. The volatile oil of coffee and the empyreumatic and aromatic matters of chocolate accelerate the circulation, which, on the other hand, is calmed by tea. Tea and coffee both excite the activity of the brain and nerves. Tea, it is said, increases the power of digesting the impressions we have received, creates a thorough meditation, and, in spite of the move-

ments of thoughts, permits the attention to be fixed upon a certain subject. On the other hand, if tea is taken in excess, it causes an increased irritability of the nerves, characterized by sleeplessness, with a general feeling of restlessness and trembling of the limbs. Coffee, also, if taken in excess, produces sleeplessness and many baneful effects very similar to those arising from tea drinking. Coffee, however, produces a greater excitement and a sensation of rest-lessness and heat ensues. For throwing off this condition fresh air is the best anti dote."

The First Ocean Steamer.

The South American correspondent of the London Times introduces a long letter on the circumnavigation of South America by the following: "The 23rd of April, 1839, will be forever memorable in the annals of New York. On that day I had taken my passage on board the St. James, one of the last sailing vessels of the Transatlantic Mail Line, which was to convey me to England, starting on May-day. On that same 23rd of April, at about 9 o'clock in the morning, I became aware of a more than usual stir and clamor under my hotel windows in Broadway. I went out and moved along with the crowd for some time before I could make out anything about the cause of the commo-tion. 'Here she is!' 'In the East River. 'Just anchored,' were the cries, and the multitude set off like a great tide in the direction of the Battery. What was it? It was the Sirius—the first steamer that had accomplished the voyage across the Atlantic, and thus reduced the distance between the British and North American coasts at least two-thirds. The rejoicing in the city was loud and hearty, as one may imagine. Still, the first tumult of exultation abated towards I o'clock in the afternoon, when, for a considerable part of the population, it was in those days dinner-time. But later in the day, towards 4 or 5, the uproar rose again louder than ever, and the rush to the land ing places was even more tumultuous, while the cry, 'The steamer! the steamer!' was bandied about at every street-crossing. It was again a steamer, from Europe—the Great Western—which, leaving Liverpool four days later than the date on which the Sirius had started from her Irish barbor, had also come to her anchorage off Staten Island within a few hours of her rival. A more momentous achievement, and one more auspicious for the intercourse between the O'd and the New World had never before been recorded, nor has it since been equalled in importance even by the laying of the transatlantic telegraph cable, nor can it be surpassed in magnitude unless a suspension bridge be thrown athwart the ocean from shore to shore,"

Matrimony in Ireland.

The young ladies of Ire'and ought to be ery grateful to Dr. Corbet, the member for Wicklow, for the anxiety which he displays on their behalf. On Friday night he gave notice that on Monday he would ask the chief secretary if his attention had been called to the marked decrease in the number of marriages in Ireland during the year 1879 as shown by the "statistical abstract for the United Kingdom in each of the last fifteen years." It appears that the number of marriages has fallen to 23,313, or below the av erage of the twelve preceding years by 3,596, being 149 less than the total for Scotland, where the population is below that of Ireland by 1,702,298. Mr. Corbet, with all the gal lantry of his race, is naturally perturbed in his mind at the fearful state of things which these figures show. He cannot understand how the hitherto amorously inclined Hiber nian has been outdone by the calculating Scot, and therefore he demands form Mr Forster an explanation of the phenomenon What precise course the member for Wicklow would have the government adopt in or der to encourage matrimony it is hard to see. Perhaps a short act on the line of the disturbance bill to grant compensa-tion to maidens for the disturbance of their feelings consequent on dilatoriness of their suitors, might meet the views of the home member. Young men who have attained the age of five-and-thirty without being married might be scheduled and made liable to pay compensation to any young lady who could prove before a competent tribunal that she had not had a "reasonable proposal" made to her. An enactment such as this would, no doubt, affect the marriage market, but it would be too bad if any of Mr. Corbet's fair constituents in Wicklow wer the first to avail themselves of the benefit of the act by proceeding against the honorable member himself.

Protection from Lightning. ...

A knight of the olden time in full armor was probably as safe from the effects of a thunder-storm as if he had a lightning rod continually beside him; and one of the Roman Emperors devised a perfectly secure re-treat in a thunder-storm in the form of a subterranean vault of iron. He was probably led to this by thinking of a mode of keeping out missiles, having no notion that a thin shell of soft copper would have been quite as effective as massive iron. those Emperors who, as Suetonius tells us, wore laurel crowns or seal-skin robes, or descended into underground caves or cellars on the appearance of a thunder-storm, were not protected at all. Even in France, where al attention is paid to the protection of buildings from lightning, dangerous accidents have occurred where all proper precautions seemed to have been taken. But on more careful examination, it was usually found that some one essential element was wanting. The most common danger seems to lie in fancying that a lightning-rod is necessarily properly connected with the earth if it dips into a mass of water. Far from it. A well-constructed reservoir full of water is not a good "earth" for a light-ning-rod. The better the stone-work and cement the less are they fitted for this special purpose, and great mischief has been done by forgetting this.

An old English miser named Rhodes who began making money as a rubbish gatherer, and lived and died in squalor, has bequeathed \$300,000 between the Royal Free Hospital, London, and the National Lifeboat Institution, leaving his relations penniless. The will stands, but the charities have given the five next of kin \$5,250.

The Irish Constabulary. In Ireland the parish constables disap-

peared in the reign of George III., and were

replaced by constables appointed by the

justices, sixteen being appointed for each barony and Protestantism being a necessary

qualification. In the time of William IV. these were in turn swept away, and the

Irish constabulary force was raised. By

this act the independent appointment of

constables by county justices was put an end to, and all candidates were appointed through provincial depots. With the difference that the provincial depots were soon after concentrated in one central depot in Dublin, that regulation remains in force up to the present time. The candidate for the Irish constabulary must be over five feet nine inches high, and between the ages of 21 and 23. He must be recommended by a magistrate or an officer of constabulary, who is supposed to vouch for his character. He is then examined by the county inspector in reading, writing from dictation, and the elementary rules of arithmetic, and his papers are sent to the commandant of the depot in Phœnix park. If he has made no mistake and his writing is satisfactory, he is entered among the candidates of the firstclass. If he makes even one mistake he takes his place with the second, and as the list of first-class candidates must be exhausted before the candidates from the second-class are called up for medical examination, and there are generally over five hun-dred names on the list, the man who is not perfect in his examination has very little chance of becoming a sub-constable. In the meantime inquiry has been made into the character and position of the family of the successful candidate, and if that is satisfactory he is in due course called up to Dublin, where, having undergone a medical examination, he is taken on the strength of the depot and begins his police training. His life in the depot, so far as his drill is concerned, is exactly the same as the life of a recruit with his regiment for the first six months, in which time he has generally gone through the three squads and been drilled in the battalion, besides going through a course of musketry. Every day he is obliged to attend school for an hour, however proficient he may have been found when he offered to join the force; moreover. three times a week he has to attend a school for a couple of hours, where instruction is given to him in his po-lice duties. His powers under various statutes are explained to him by the detective instructor, and he is taught the proper mode of action in the prevention or detection of particular crimes. He therefore joins whatever county force he may be appointed to with a better preparatory training than that of any other police in the world. He may be sent to any part of Ireland except his native county, in which he can never serve. But he frequently applies to be quartered in an adjacent county, and his request is never retused. Arrived at his station he is paraded with the other men each morning, the constable inspecting his arms and appointments. The whole party are then interrogated as to their knowledge of the descriptions of criminals in the "Hue and Cry," and every day questions are asked as to their general duties. out of the depot the men receive no instruction in drill, except when an opportunity offers by a number being brought togethe at fairs and so forth. In the daytime, when on duty, the Irish policeman carries no wea-pon but his staff, except in a few districts, where men armed with staves alone would not be safe. Here they carry their short swords. Two men are sent together on every duty. This arrangement is necessary for the safety of the men and for corrobora. tion of evidence. For it must be remembered that while in England a constable has the people at his back, in Ireland it is quite different, and unfortunately any amount of evidence necessary for the contradiction of one policeman would be readily forthcom-At night the constables are armed ing. At night the constables are armed with rifles and swords. Without these arms they would be about as effective for the prevention of outrages as a body of cripples, and without their drill they would be at best an armed mob. Even with their discipline, their steadiness and courage, they sometimes find an Irish mob whose passions are roused very dangerous to them. Long before the revolver came in as a common weapon, a party of thirty-six armed policemen were killed to a man at Carrickshock by a crowd to whom they refused to deliver up a tithe proctor. The nationalists are right in attacking the armament of the police. Had they not been armed and drilled in 1867, with the splendid discipline which enabled parties of five men to beat off the attacks of thousands upon the isolated cabins that are dignified by the name of barracks, the Fenians would have had a different story to tell and England would have spent millions upon the military suppression of a widely planned rebellion. Had they not been armed and disciplined in the late process-serving campaign, where in places they found themselves confronted by thousands of angry armed men with pitchforks and scythes, the west of Ireland would be at this moment in confusion, to say the least. Few knew how nearly there was a bloody engacement when in Conne-mara fifty constables marched into a circular hollow filled with two thousand furious peasants to protect a bailiff in posting a notice on the door of a house in the centre. Had not the flanking detachments of constabulary charged the crowds with the bayonet and taken possession of the hills commanding the little glen, the fifty men would never have left the spot. The Irish constabulary could be concentrated in twelve battalions in twenty-four hours.

COURT scene: "What's gone of your husband, woman?" "What's gone of him, yer honor? Faith, and he's gone dead." "Ah! pray, what did he die of?" "Die of, yer pray, what did he die of?" "Die of, yer honor! He died of a Friday." "I don't mean what day of the week, but what complaint?" "Faith, and it's himself that did not get time to complain." "Oh, ay—he died suddenly?" "Rather that way, yer honor." "Did he fall in a fit?" No answer. "He fell down in a fit, perhaps?" "Why no: not exactly a fit yer honor." swer. "He fell down in a fit, perhaps?"

"Why, no; not exactly a fit, yer honor.

He fell out of a window, or through a cellar door—I dou't know what they call it."

"Oh, ay—and broke his neck?" "No, not quite that, yer worship." "What then?"

"There was a bit of sthring, or cord, or that like, and it throttled poor Mike."

"Quite likely. Call the next case."