

A MONSTROUS FRAUD UNMASKED

Comprehensive Review of the Methods of the Burlington Volunteer Relief Department.

PLUCKING EMPLOYES FOR THE COMPANY'S BENEFIT

A Cunning Device to Relieve the Railroad from Liability Incurred by Injuries to Person.

CORPORATION FRAUD MASQUERADING AS PHILANTHROPY

Men Compelled to Contribute Their Own Funds for the Protection of the Company.

SOME STRIKING SAMPLES OF BOGUS LIBERALITY

Men Forced to Sign Away Their Rights or Lose Their Situations—Test Cases in the Courts—A Pliant Judiciary Needed to Affirm the Robbing Scheme.

LINCOLN, Neb., Nov. 4.—[Special to THE BEE.]—There is no branch of railroad work less understood by employers and employees than the operation of the Burlington Volunteer Relief department.

At first blush the department commends itself to the employe and to the humanitarian generally as a most commendable effort upon the part of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad company to protect its employes from the effects of sickness and injury, and to relieve the distress of those dependent upon them when death results from a catastrophe.

But when the facts are once understood the Burlington Volunteer Relief department falls to carry out the popular apprehension of its usefulness. It is the purpose of THE BEE in this article to show up in their true light the facts concerning the operation of this much vaunted department.

It is also the purpose to prove to employes that the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad company uses the relief department as a protection for itself; that it practically compels the employes to contribute their own funds for the protection of the company; that it is in truth a mutual insurance company operated by the railroad company for its own benefit and supported by the employes; that it has no legal existence as a corporation and that it therefore cannot protect itself against the liability which the laws lay upon them and to prevent employes from collecting what would really be due them for injuries received while serving the company.

The Burlington Volunteer Relief department was organized but a few years ago, its inception dating from June 1, 1888. It was organized, not by the employes, but by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad company and the several railroad companies associated with it, as follows:

Chicago, Burlington & Quincy, including the B. & M. lines in Nebraska, the Chicago & Iowa, Hannibal & St. Joseph, Kansas City, St. Joseph & Council Bluffs, St. Louis, Kookuk & Northwestern, Chicago, Burlington & Kansas City.

The employes of the above roads contribute, "voluntarily" of course, to a common fund known and designated as the "relief fund." This fund is supplemented by the contributions of the company for the payment of expenses and for making up any deficiency. The relief department, according to the terms of the agreement drawn up by the railroads interested and to which every applicant for membership must subscribe before he can be entitled to benefits, is under the general charge of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad company.

The officers of the relief department consist of a superintendent, assistant superintendent, medical director (who may be the superintendent or assistant) and a corps of medical examiners. All officers, etc., are appointed by the railroad company. There is also an advisory board of twelve members, to whom all disputes relating to any of the members of the advisory board and to even up matters the railroad company appoints the other six. But the company has provided an additional safeguard for its own interests by providing in the rules that the general superintendent of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad shall be an ex-officio member of the advisory board and its permanent chairman. Thus the company guards its own interests by assuming the authority to cast the deciding

OCCUPIED AT HOME

Frenchmen Looking Over the Local Situation in the Light of Russia's Visit.

PRESIDENT CARNOT IS THE GAINER

His Re-Election Next Year is Now Assured Beyond All Reasonable Doubt.

SALVATION FOR THE MINISTRY ALSO

Fate of the Cabinet, Which Hang in the Balance, is Decided.

POLITICAL EUROPE IS NOW TRANQUIL

England's Prohibitive Course the Only Disturbing Feature—Austria's New Policy Slowly Evolving—May Change the Dresden's Composition.

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PARIS, Nov. 4.—[New York Herald Cable.—Special to THE BEE.]—The Russians having taken their departure, home politics again begin to occupy the public mind. Russian influence continues, however, to be felt. For example, the re-election of President Carnot, whose seven-year term of office expires in December, 1894, was doubtless brought about by the Russian fleet, is now doubted by no one. The president represented France worthily. He has pleased the czar by his great uprightness and honesty. To replace him would produce a bad effect, and therefore he will be re-elected next year.

The Russian visit has also benefited the present ministry, whose fate might have been doubtful. But for the fact that it has profited by the present outburst of popular enthusiasm, the radical members of the cabinet would not get rid of even before the opening of the Chambers, and M. Dupuy and all the moderate ministers will retain a cabinet, which is quite capable of retaining power for a long time.

The political situation in Europe is calm. The events in Morocco are not disquieting, unless England should intervene, which is not at all probable. The only interesting feature is the slow evolution of Austria's policy, which I pointed out a long time ago in these dispatches to the Herald. We are still in the preparatory period, and the work is still confined to the chancellor, but it is not possible to doubt that before spring certain changes will have taken place in the Triple Alliance. JACQUES ST. CECIL.

MEMBERSHIP ENTIRELY "VOLUNTARY"

Rule 30 of the regulations provides: "No employe shall be required to become a member of the relief fund."

In spite of the rule quoted above it is a well known fact that the company does everything in its power to induce its employes to become members of the relief fund. It is known that they employ men for the sole purpose of soliciting employes to become members of the relief fund. They distribute books, leaflets and circulars. Every employe is furnished with blank applications for membership and as a matter of fact every member is given to thoroughly understand that in order to maintain his prestige with the company it will be his interest to become a contributing member to the relief fund.

The real of the railroads in recruiting the ranks of the members of the relief fund may perhaps be explained by an innocent little paragraph in the application for membership, which reads as follows: "I also agree that in consideration of the amounts paid by said company for the maintenance of the relief department, the accept-ance of benefits from said relief fund for injury or death shall operate as a release and satisfaction of all claims for damages against said company, arising from such injury or death which could be made by me or my legal representatives."

Sole Purpose of the Department.

The above paragraph, innocent as it seems to the employe when he hurriedly makes his application for membership, contains in a nutshell the object and sole purpose of the railroad company in organizing the Burlington Volunteer Relief department. The average death benefits are from \$50 to \$1,000, although they may in certain instances run up as high as \$5,000. The switchman who runs over and maimed for life is entitled to draw 50 cents a day as accident benefits as long as he remains in the employ of the company, but there is nothing in the terms of his membership to prevent the railroad company from discharging him whenever it pleases after he has been injured, and there is now on file with the clerk of the supreme court a case in which the railroad company discharged a man after he had been injured, even when the superintendent had given his word that the man should remain in the employ of the company as long as he desired, and then practically violated the agreement by tendering the man a place which he was not qualified to fill.

Good Investment for the Company.

It will require but a few figures from the official records to prove that the relief department has been a paying investment for the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad company and its associate lines. According to the sworn testimony of J. C. Bartlett, general superintendent of the department, the employes contributed to the fund during the first three years of its existence the sum of \$306,539.99. Out of this fund there was paid in that period for sickness and death \$187,885.50. For accidents and death by accidents there was paid during that time the sum of \$193,670.35, making a total of \$381,555.85, leaving a deficiency of \$26,375.35 to be made up by the company. The expenses of the department for the same period were \$63,799.53, which amount was paid by the company, together with the sum of \$1,040.34, as interest on monthly balances. Thus the total investment of the railroad company for a period of three years was \$114,012.08. In other words, by the payment of \$38,000 per annum the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad and all its associate lines insured themselves against possible outlays for damages to their employes. Considering the fact that these systems employ nearly 25,000 men, and that a frightful number of accidents are reported every year, the insurance comes dirt cheap.

How the Company Saves Money.

The quotation of a few more facts and figures from official records will open the eyes of the members of the relief department to the manner in which the railroad company has saved itself thousands of dollars every year under the guise of supporting a department "for the relief of its employes." In order to bring the matter more

THOUSANDS KILLED

Awful Scenes of Destruction and Death in a Spanish Seaport.

CAHO MUCHICAGO'S DANGEROUS CARGO

It Explodes with Fearful Effect at the Quay at Santander.

TONS OF DYNAMITE SET OFF BY FIRE

Buildings Wrecked and Vessels Sank by the Force of the Explosion.

FLAMES COMMUNICATE WITH THE CITY

Almost the Entire Place Consumed—An Appalling Death List—The Governor of the Province Among the Number—How It Happened.

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MADRID, Nov. 4.—The city of Santander, on the Bay of Biscay, was the scene last night of a terrible explosion of dynamite, which killed the governor of the province and a large number of people, including several of the leading citizens, and set fire to the houses, causing immense damage on all sides.

This news was received here at a late hour last night and created an intense sensation. But there was no means of verifying the report or obtaining additional information of any kind owing to the fact that the telegraph wires in the vicinity of the disaster had been blown down by the explosion and people in this city were kept at a high pitch of excitement until this morning. Santander, which is the capital of the province of the same name, is over 200 miles from here.

This morning the news was confirmed and further dispatches were received from the village of Bova, giving an account of a terrible disaster and one, too, which was most peculiar in its origin and its nature.

Didn't Know She Was Loaded.

It seems that a Spanish steamer, the Cabo Muchicago, of 570 tons register, which reached Santander from Cardiff, caught fire yesterday afternoon to the intense alarm of the officials, who feared the flames would cause further damage to the shipping and to the quay to which she was moored, and to the houses in the vicinity. The officials of Santander, however, seem to have been unaware that the vessel was loaded with dynamite, for they sent all the fire department to the scene. The governor, the chief municipal officers and many of the leading citizens were superintending the efforts to subdue the fire on board the steamer, when suddenly cries of alarm were heard from the vessel, and the alarming news spread with rapidity that the ship was loaded with dynamite and the flames were rapidly approaching the quay.

Before the crowd had time to rush back there was a dull roar followed by a fearful burst of flames and a deafening explosion which blew the quay into fragments, set fire to a number of adjacent houses and smashed windows for miles around.

Natives Badly Scared.

The inhabitants, after the explosion, were reduced to a state of most abject terror and the most alarming reports were circulated as to the loss of life caused by the explosion. Some had it that hundreds and others that only a few were killed.

The explosion shook the city and did an enormous amount of damage. Many citizens were killed, including several officials of the municipal and provincial government, who were watching the efforts of the firemen and others to extinguish the fire.

Among the prominent people believed to have been blown to atoms by the explosion was the governor of the province, who was last seen at the front rank of those fighting the fire. Many others who were upon the wharf a moment before the dynamite blew the ship up and the wharf into splinters are missing.

The inhabitants were so dazed by the explosion and by the rapid spread of the flames from house to house that for a long time afterwards they appeared to be utterly unable to make any attempt to prevent any further spread of the fire, which, according to the dispatches from the village, was meanwhile eating house after house and threatening the destruction of the entire city. All towns and villages in the neighborhood of Santander have sent their fire brigades to the scene, and a strong and combined effort is being made to save the property.

Santander is situated on a headland and has a large port in the Bay of Biscay. It is the terminus of a railway from Madrid. It is the port of arrival and departure for many vessels engaged in the South America trade, supplies Cuba with corn for the Castles, bringing back colonial produce. It has a population of between 30,000 and 40,000.

Panic Prevails.

Further details received here regarding the terrible dynamite explosion at Santander say that in addition to the officers killed, the president of the provincial council, and the colonel and chief officers of the civic guard of Santander were seriously wounded by the explosion. It is only announced that the whole city is likely to be destroyed, and a large number of its population. Over 30,000 people will be rendered homeless. A dreadful panic prevails upon all sides. Fire engines have already arrived from many points and the most determined efforts are being made to prevent any further destruction of property.

All those on board or near the dynamite steamer and all those on board the tug boat alongside of her, as well as the officers and crew of the transatlantic liner Alphonse XII, were killed by the explosion.

The body of the civil governor, who was directing the operations on the quay, has been recovered, as well as the bodies of a number of other officials. Among those reported killed is the Marquis Pando.

Identity of the Steamer.

It has been ascertained that the dynamite loaded steamer which caused this terrible destruction was the Cabo Muchicago, belonging to Bilbao, and not the British steamer, as was at first reported. The authorities of the Santander are highly censured on all sides for allowing the steamer to violate the port regulations, which forbid the discharge of explosives at the quay side; on the other hand, it is claimed the authorities were ignorant of the dangerous nature of the steamer's cargo or they certainly would not have been so foolhardy.

THE BEE BULLETIN.

Weather for Omaha and Vicinity—Fair; Cooler; Westerly Winds.

- 1. Great Corporation Fraud Unmasked. French Employed at Home Politics. Terrible Afloat in a Spanish Port. Plattsmouth Has a Lynching Party. 2. Yesterday on the Foot Ball Field. 3. Trying to Raise the Revenue. Silver Men Make a Last Appeal. 4. Last Week in the Social Realm. Viewed by Omaha Women. 5. Mosher's Cases Out of Court. Sioux City Capitalists Reviving. Chicago Councilmen Quarrel. 6. Council Bluffs Local News. Arkansas Train Robbers Captured. 7. Candidates Charge and Countercharge. One Entertaining Letter. Kelly Shows Up Slaughter's Scheme. 10. Grievous Weekly Grist. 12. Editorial and Comment. 13. Co-Operative Home Building. Fate of an Illinois Woman. 15. Omaha's Local Trade Review. Financial and Commercial. Live Stock Trade. 17. Vice President Stevenson at Home. 18. How "the Kids" Did the Fair. Among Hooks and Periodicals. 19. Woman: Her Ways and Her World. 20. What Electricity Has Achieved. Uncle Sam's Great Library.

SAVED THEIR NECKS

Prompt Action of the County Attorney Prevents a Lynching at Plattsmouth.

AFTER MATT AKESON'S MURDERERS

Friends and Neighbors of the Dead Man Eager to Avenge Him.

CAGED THE PRISONERS AT OMAHA

Deputy Sheriff Tighe Brought the Men to the Douglas County Jail.

DETERMINED MOB WAS DISAPPOINTED

Hundreds of Cass County Farmers Bent on Vengeance Waited for a Train that Brought no Victims—An Exciting Tale.

Had it not been for the cautiousness thus played by the officials of Cass county, this would be a bloody morning. A full and detailed account of the lynching of two men, Harry Hill and George Roers, and John Benwell, the accused murderers of Farmer Matthew Akeson.

Had it not been for the cautiousness which the officers displayed, the souls of these men would now be journeying on to meet their maker and the murderer of an old man, one of the most respected citizens of the eastern part of the state, would have been avenged by a mob of men who have hitherto known no harsher sounds than the beating of the herds of the prairie.

As is well known, Hill and Benwell were arrested in Lincoln Friday night and locked in jail, where they were kept until the arrival of the deputy sheriff, a brother of Sheriff Tighe, and Tom Akeson, a son of the murdered man. Then they were identified by young Akeson, who unhesitatingly declared that they were the men who shot down his father last Wednesday night and cruelly beat his mother until she was insensible. After that, and at an early hour yesterday morning, they were handcuffed and taken to the train, the intention being to remove them to Plattsmouth to there answer to the charge of murder. While the train was enroute the deputy sheriff changed his plans, for at Ashland he received a telegram from Plattsmouth informing him that a mob congregating at that city was bent on lynching if they were taken to that place. Then it was that the officer decided to bring the men to Omaha and keep them in the Douglas county jail until the excitement had subsided and it was considered safe to remove them to Plattsmouth.

Yesterday morning the deputy and his men arrived at the Mason street depot and entering a close carriage, were driven to the county jail, where Hill and Benwell were locked in separate cells, Sheriff Bennett and his brother trying to suppress all information concerning their presence in the city.

Farmers Eager for Vengeance.

At Plattsmouth there was intense excitement during the entire day, and early yesterday morning there was a movement on foot to string the two men to a telephone pole as soon as they left the train. People in town were in communication with the farmers in the vicinity of Weeping Water and many country notices were posted to the developments.

As early as 10 o'clock the streets of the little city had taken on a lively appearance and were crowded with the men who comprise the best and most respectable element of Cass county. Hourly the crowd was increased by the coming of farmers from other sections of the county, and when the train due at 11 o'clock rolled in, it is safe to estimate that there were fully 1,000 farmers gathered about the door.

Sheriff Tighe Takes Precautions.

It was with feelings of alarm and dire forebodings that Sheriff Tighe looked out over this crowd. He knew most of the men, and he knew that while they were the best of citizens, they had determined and ready to take the law in their own hands and to take the two murderers, Hill and Benwell, without giving them the benefit of clergy or jury. Having anticipated acts of violence, the sheriff had taken the precaution to swear in twenty deputies, all of whom were gathered about two hacks which were intended to be used in conveying the prisoners from the station to the city jail.

The train was on time, and as it rolled up to the station the conductor looked out from the door of the baggage car and, calling to the crowd, remarked, "Boys, they are men here." This statement, however, did not satisfy the crowd, and hastily appointing a committee of a dozen men, it was sent through the train to investigate and make sure that there was not being an attempt to secrete the men in some of the closets. Having made the investigations, the committee reported and the train went on its way. The crowd dispersed and spread out upon the streets.

Duly Charged with Murder.

In the meantime County Attorney Travis had gone before Justice Archer, where he had filed two informations, one charging both Hill and Benwell jointly with murder in the first degree, while the other charged Benwell with murder and charged Hill with aiding and abetting. It was his intention to have the warrants issued and served as soon as the men stepped from the train, but, as he looked from the window of his office, he concluded that if he waited for the men to arrive there would be a job for the coroner instead of one for the sheriff. Having reached this conclusion, he at once went to the telegraph office, and, without consulting the sheriff, telegraphed to the deputy to leave the murderers at Omaha until the excitement had subsided. This telegram reached the official while the train was at Ashland, and in haste to the officer taking his men to Plattsmouth, he went over the cut-off and a few hours later turned them over to the authorities of Douglas county.

In Plattsmouth this information was not given to the public and the people were left to believe that the men would reach town on the noon train. Consequently during the entire forenoon large crowds of men continued to arrive, congregating in stores and shops, where the line of action to be pursued was discussed. Now and then a party of from 100 to 200 would visit the city jail, look at it and march away with the remark: "It may be strong enough, but it could not stand against a battering ram."

All Went to the Depot.

Just before noon, as by one common impulse, the great throng, which numbered fully 2,000, marched to the depot to meet the train. The sheriff, who was also in ignorance of the disposition which had been made of Hill and Benwell, was also on the ground with his deputies, prepared to pro-

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VIENNA, Nov. 4.—[New York Herald Cable.—Special to THE BEE.]—Emperor Francis Joseph has selected Prince Windisch Graetz as prime minister of the Austrian cabinet to succeed Count Taaffe, whose resignation has been accepted.

Ex-Minister Dead.

[Copyrighted 1893 by James Gordon Bennett.] PARIS, Nov. 4.—[New York Herald Cable.—Special to THE BEE.]—M. Pierre Emmanuel Harad, ex-president of the ministry and ex-minister of finance, died in this city this morning.

[CONTINUED ON SECOND PAGE.]