NATURE STUDIES.

The Phunnibeak Bird—Hello, who are you?

The Other Bird—Don't you know me? Why, I'm "The harp that once through Tara's Halls."

The Phunnibeak Bird (shortly)—Oh, tut; tut! You're a lyre! That's what you are.

The Marital Grasshopper.

What is a grasshopper? The latest definition comes from western Australia. Domestic servants are almost unprocurable there, and wives have to do nearly all their own household work. The consequence is that they are compelled to recuperate at the seaside in summer. In their absence the husbands have to prepare their own meals and do domestic duty generally. Husbands so engaged have come to be locally known as "grasshoppers." No doubt the word is the husband of the more familiar "grass widow."—London Chronicle.

Laundry work at home would be much more satisfactory if the right Starch were used. In order to get the desired stiffness, it is usually necessary to use so much starch that the beauty and fineness of the fabric is hidden behind a paste of varying thickness, which not only destroys the appearance, but also affects the wearing quality of the goods. This trouble can be entirely overcome by using Defiance Starch, as it can be applied much more thinly because of its greater strength than other makes.

The Earth and the Moon.

That the earth must shine on the moon even as the moon shines on the earth is obvious. To detect this light from the earth on the lunar surface and scientifically prove its existence is another matter. It is interesting to find that a recent number of a French astronomical paper contains two photographs of parts of the moon illuminated by earth light. They were taken by M. Quenisset at the Juvisy observatory.

No Romance About It.

The stricken man constantly moaned the name of the young woman who had jilted him.

"Tell her," he said to the medical man, "that her cruelty killed me. Tell her I am dying from a broken heart."

The medical man shook his head.

"Aw, go on," he said. "That would be shamelessly unprofessional. Your heart's all right. It's your liver that's the trouble."

Starch, like everything else, is being constantly improved, the patent Starches put on the market 25 years ago are very different and inferior to those of the present day. In the latest discovery—Defiance Starch—all injurious chemicals are omitted, while the addition of another ingredient, invented by us, gives to the Starch a strength and smoothness never approached by other brands.

Nobleman, Probably.

Howell—I see that the heiress has put her money into the lumber business.

Powell—That so?

Howell—Yes, she has married a wooden man.

Criticism should never exasperate us; on the contrary, it should benefit us, and even occasionally amuse us.—Max O'Rell.

HIS LIFE NOT HARD

RAILROAD BRAKEMAN CONTENTED WITH HIS LOT.

Hours of Sleep Put In While on Duty, and Seldom Is the Time of Slumber Occupied at Home.

"I have slept in my own home only once in the last year," said the brakeman of a passenger train which carries commuters chiefly, "and that was only because I was transferred to another run for a few days to substitute for a man who had to testify in a damage suit. It seemed very odd indeed sleeping at home."

"Where do you usually sleep?" was the natural question.

"In the cars, of course," said the brakeman. "Most of us who work on the trains that take care of the suburban travel do all our sleeping on the job, on the company's time, mind you, and we have nearly half of every 24 hours free for full, wide-awake enjoyment of our homes."

"Then you are not of the opinion that your lot in life is hard?" asked his listener.

"Not on your life," said the brakeman. "I might kick on the pay, but I have no kick coming as to hours. Now, take my regular job.

"I live in Jersey City. I have to report for duty a little before eight in the evening in time to get the lights on in my train, which starts out about eight o'clock. We go 32 miles up the line, to the limit of strictly suburban travel, arriving at 9:23. We start back at 11:09.

"There's a good hour and three-quarters to loaf, and we all get a preliminary nap. It comes easy when you get in the habit, and as far as I can see, a railroader can sleep anywhere and under any conditions if he's a mind to.

"We get back to Jersey City at 12:23, and then we get our regular sleep, a good stretch of nearly four hours, for we don't start out again until 4:15. We keep blankets and pillows in the baggage car. You may not have noticed it, but the backs of the seats in the smoking car lift out, and on two seats we can make a very comfortable bed.

"Noisy? Well, the shrieking of locomotives and the rattle of cars over switches seem to affect us as much as the croaking of the frogs and the singing of the tree toads affect the dweller in the country. We get a good, sound sleep of at least three hours, and sometimes more.

"Once in a while the passengers by the early morning train surprise us at our toilet, and I have to hustle to get the tail-lights on and the car lamps lit before the train pulls out. We go 25 miles out on this morning trip, and there's a wait of about an hour and a half before we start in again.

"In that wait we round out our night's sleep and quit work, when we reach Jersey City at about eight, in fine shape for a long day of anything that suits us. Of course most of us work in a nap before we start out again that night, but practically the whole day is ours.

"Two round trips of 50 or 60 miles each makes a day's work, and not a very hard day either. In fact I rarely take a day off, for I have all the leisure otherwise that I care for.

"Even the men who have day runs get in a good lick of sleep on the waits they have. If you must be a brakeman give me a pair of suburban runs cut up as mine are. Deliver me from freight trains; that's all I ask. I tried freighting for a year, and don't want any more of it. It's all work and no sleep."—New York Sun.

Remarkable Wooden Bridge

A wooden bridge 119 feet high over New Found Creek, in Jefferson county, Ala., is one of the engineering curiosities of the present day. Only one other wooden bridge in the world is taller than it.

The bridge is in daily use by the trains of a branch of the Louisville and Nashville. It invariably excites comment from all who see it, and civil engineers are especially interested in the peculiar structure, so tall and yet so stanch and trim.

This bridge is on the Cane Creek branch of the Louisville and Nashville railroad and bridges New Found Creek. It is approached in each direction by a 3 per cent grade. There is no other sign of man's handiwork in sight than this wonderfully impressive wooden structure, its immense wooden beams accentuating its massiveness.

Mechanical Stoker.

The great increase which has taken place of late years in the size of locomotives, has added greatly to the labors of the fireman. This has led to much experimental work in an effort to produce a good mechanical stoker. The Chicago & Alton railroad has formally adopted the Strause stoker, with which they are equipping all their heavy freight and passenger locomotives. Coal is thrown into a bin, from which it is delivered to different parts of the grate by varying the speed of a plunger, which is controlled by a starting lever. The advantages are that air admission is controlled; small amounts of coal are fed at frequent intervals, and larger nozzles may be used and back pressure reduced. The results will be closely watched by the railroad companies.—Scientific American.

FIRST THOUGHT FOR OTHERS

Splendid Act of Locomotive Engineer in Saving the Lives Entrusted to Him.

"That part of the old Marietta and Cincinnati railroad lying between Athens and the Ohio river was formerly made famous by the number of its long and high trestle bridges," says an old railroader. "At one time the railroad was in financial straits and many of the employes were unpaid. Some of the men were desperate, and, as the fact proved, dangerous. On a certain evening a train was approaching one of these trestle bridges. It was known that the directors of the road were aboard, and some villain determined to throw the entire train from the bridge.

"The engineer, letting his train proceed at the usual rate of speed, suddenly discovered that a rail had been displaced on the bridge. He seemed to know instinctively that the momentum was too great to save the whole train and he signaled the brakes down and reversed his engine—to stop, if possible, the coaches before they reached the chasm. Then, opening the throttle valve, his engine sprang forward so violently as to break the connection with the train, and dashed to the awful leap. The bold man, as this was going on, ran out of his window on the engine and opened the escape valve.

"While standing there the engine went over with him. Marvelous to relate, he, falling under the great weight, was preserved by the engine bell at his side. The train, for the rescue of which he had exhibited such indomitable courage, stopped just soon enough to escape the horrible leap after the engine. This man recovered from his hurts and was for years an honored employe of the company."

Good Emergency Brake.

An English railroad official at Burton-upon-Trent has devised an emergency rail groove brake, which has been used with great success on the municipal line of which he is an employe. This is an emergency mechanical brake additional to and entirely independent of any other equipment on the car. It is instantaneous in action and has no graduations; when applied it must be at maximum braking effort. No expenditure of power or sand is required for its application. A malleable iron bracket is attached to the track frame, inside the wheel base and close to coach wheel flange. This bracket supports through a compression spring and pair of links, a malleable iron block carrying a renewable manganese steel skid shoe of a shape to conform to the rail groove. The brake is held away from the track by a steel wire or cable, so that when this is released the compressed spring forces the skid bar into the groove. The brake block also engages the wheel flange and is forced downward with additional pressure. Only the brakes on the rear wheels are released.

Saves Time and Money.

The system of building embankments, by running trains of loaded cars on rails hung from a suspension cable above the line of the embankment, is being used with great success, notably on a long and high embankment on the Lake Hopatcong cutoff of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western railroad. Two cables are strung from a fixed to a movable tower, and suspenders from the cables are attached to the floor beams of a portable track, which is carried forward ahead of the completed bankment a sufficient distance to allow a train of dump cars to be run upon it, and emptied through it. The new method is more speedy and costs less than the old system of building a trestle and burying it in the embankment.—Scientific American.

Engineer's Great Record.

When Joseph M. Alexander, for more than 50 years a locomotive engineer on the Boston & Albany road, retired from active service a few weeks ago he left behind him a record which is said to have no parallel in the annals of railroad operation. In the whole period of half a century he never received a reprimand or a black mark, no error was ever charged against him, and no human life was ever destroyed by an engine driven by him. He never reported late for duty, in one period of 14 years he worked seven days a week without a break, and in many instances he was at the throttle 45 working days in a single month. The distance he covered on the rails was ten times that between the earth and the moon.

Her Baby in a "Telescope."

A tiny baby slept peacefully in a small "telescope" at the Union depot yesterday afternoon. It was a new method of caring for a child on a long journey. The mother, Mrs. Martha Johnson of Kokomo, Ind., explained that she was going to Los Angeles, and found this method saved trouble in caring for the baby.

"I have been around the depot 18 years," George Henry, passenger director, said, "and I have seen babies carried about in all sorts of conveyances. I noticed how the Indians carry their children, but this is the first time I ever saw a child 'toted' about in a suitcase."—Kansas City Star.

Individual Drinking Cups.

On its through trains one of the eastern railroads has installed a sanitary system of supplying water to passengers. In every car a slot machine is installed, which supplied paraffin drinking cups for one cent apiece. The passenger uses this paraffin vessel and throws it away after use.

Leave It to Him.

A Wichita man was fussing because of his aching teeth. "Why don't you go to a dentist?" asked one of his friends.

"Oh, I haven't got the nerve," was the reply.

"Never mind that," replied the friend, "the dentist will find the nerve all right."—Kansas City Jorunal.

Like an Hour Glass.

Nelle—Is that fellow of yours ever going to get up the courage to propose?

Belle—I guess not—he's like an hour glass.

Nelle—An hour glass?

Belle—Yes; the more time he gets the less sand he has.—Cleveland Leader.

Skill to do comes of doing, knowledge comes by eyes always open and working hands, and there is no knowledge that is not power.—Emerson.

A household once supplied with Hamlins Wizard Oil is seldom allowed to be without it. In case of sudden mishap or accident Wizard Oil takes the place of the family doctor. Are you supplied?

Men owe their resolution, and most of their success, to the opposition they meet with.—Renan.

It is always the open season for killing time with some people.

The umbrella dealer has a lot put by for a rainy day.

There is more or less moonshine in the astrology business.

W. N. U., LINCOLN, NO. 28-1909.