

TENDER THOUGHTS.

I hear the wind, I hear the rain, I see the lightning's fiery chain, The storm is swelling through the trees, The waves are roaring on the seas; I hear the awful thunder crash That follows on the lightning's flash— But though all things seem to creep, I cannot think of aught but thee.

HAND CAR 412, C. P. R.

For the last hour the construction train had been traveling slowly; for a whole hour it had cautiously stumbled over the loosened splines with a monotonous chugging clug, chunky clunk that had long ceased to awaken any interest, sympathetic or otherwise, in our drowsy minds.

But the time passed, the train still waited, and we began to grow impatiently, wondering why, in the name of various places and things, they chose to dally in such a dismal, godforsaken spot. It was raining at Rat Crossing; in fact it had been raining slowly, steadily, for two days with a certain desperate pertinacity.

Notwithstanding this lavish excess of water the air seemed no fresher than before the storm, when the thermometer in the caboose registered 57 degs. on the shady side of the track.

The view from the car was not interesting. To the left, as far as we could see, a "usual" endless, unfolding curtain of rain, a "usual" misty swamp stretched away to the south.

The first six miles passed quickly; to right and left the road and the trees flew back, and nothing was heard but the short, quick panting of the engine, the rattle of the wheels over the fish plates.

When they came back they found Jim Reeves' body by the broken lever of the switch; Long Mike, too, they picked up beside him, with a shattered leg and an ugly gash across the forehead.

"I tell you, Morton, that man Matt Murphy was the biggest coward that ever walked this earth, now don't you forget it!"

"That's a—— lie!" The speaker, Jack Collins, was the quietest man on the staff and had acquired a certain reputation for minding nobody's business but his own.

For a moment after his usually emphatic denial no one spoke; the stranger had risen at once, but seeing that Jack did not move he sat down again, filled a fresh pipe, and waited. Jack was sitting on the floor at the end of the car looking down pensively at the revolver that hung from his belt; after a short pause he looked up at the ceiling, and in his usual slow way he told us the story of Matt Murphy's last work on the road.

It had happened two years before; Murphy was then road master at Campbell's Point, and far from being thought a coward, he was looked upon as the only man on the line who had pluck enough to run a snow plow at the head of five engines into a choked cut, and stand firm when every plank fairly quivered under the strain.

"There's a bush fire below the long bridge, Mr. Murphy," he called out; "the wind is this way, and the Pacific Emigrant is due in an hour. What the devil shall we do?"

"Drunk, you blamed idiot!" cried Nolan indignantly; "his wife and kids are on that train. Get out of here, you scoundrel squarer, and blame quick, too, or I'll make your empty head so blessed sore you couldn't see daylight through a leader!"

"Boys," he cried in a voice that seemed to rasp in his throat, "boys, look a-her! I want three good men to go to hell with me! I'll take a pump—!"

He was the first on the car and took the rear handle behind the brake; Long Mike the Finlander, Jim Reeves and "Dumb Dick" jumped on after him, an oil can, a monkey wrench and an ax were thrown on; the men gave them a shove to start, and away they went down the long grade, fifteen miles an hour.

Instinctively—for they merely knew that there was a fire below the bridge and that the train was soon due—instinctively Murphy's three companions had understood what he had before them. They were old hands and knew that this was a desperate venture, a forlorn hope, and that their only chance of success lay in their working well together.

Matt leaned over and slipped the key of the switch to Jim Reeves, who was in front. "If we haven't time to unlock her, Jim," he said so quietly that it hurt the ears to hear him, "jump on the lever and break the chain. Now, fellows, heave away for all you're worth!"

The top of the grade was reached; then came a level run of two miles before the curve to the bridge. Ahead of them on each side of the track the workmen, apprehending some disaster from the enormous volume of smoke that was blowing toward them in purple clouds rimmed with golden sunlight, had assembled before the Falls station; and as Murphy's gang came along, up and down, up and down, every man in that crowd felt his eyes grow moist and his throat dry.

"Boys," he said, "that gang's a-goin' to everlastin' destruction as plucky as any fellows I ever see, every blamed man of them, and I'll bet a barrel of high-wines to a cup of tea they know it, too. Matt Murphy knows it, sure."

For once, although they had their customary effect of bearing prompt compliance with his orders, Dan's threats were superfluous; for once his wishes coincided with the wishes of his men, and from those 500 throats there burst such a cry that the flames ahead seemed to halt for a moment in their forward rush.

the very midst of it. Then the struggle began. The smoke ran along the embankment toward them in great flying gusts, so dense they could barely see the platform of the car; the heat became intense, but they never wavered. Perhaps it was because women were few in the dismal country which had become their home, and that, as is usual in purely male communities, every man invested the gentler sex collectively with a romantic halo, in exact proportion to the distance of their individuality; perhaps it was because some lingering spark of chivalry, driven into the west by the sneers of a higher civilization, had flamed up suddenly in the hearts of these rough journeymen; or perhaps it was merely the humane hope of saving the wives and children of men who had slept under the same blanket, worked in the same ditch, and shared the same biscuit; but, whatever the cause, it was sufficient to silence selfish consideration and make them look upon the sacrifice of their lives as no more than the fulfillment of a necessary duty.

"Steady, boys, steady!" they plunged into it resolutely with the desperation of a wounded bull charging on the spade's blade. "Steady, my men! Up and down, up and down! Stick to her, lads; it'll soon be over now!"

Then the flames closed upon them, and as they lowered their heads before the whirlwind of fire and smoke that was hurled at them they shivered at the crisp precipitation of their hair and beard and felt the hot grip of the fire fasten on them as they writhed in pain. Something struck the car and it reeled for a moment.

"Steady, boys, steady there!" They grasped the handles again and struggled on; by the hollow sound of the wheels they knew that they were on the bridge at last, and it lent them fresh strength. Then something struck them again. "Hard, hard at work there! Jim, Mike, Dick, all of you—pump away, for God's sake, boys! you are nearly there. Turn the crank, boys, and the switch! all together now, heave!"

When they came back they found Jim Reeves' body by the broken lever of the switch; Long Mike, too, they picked up beside him, with a shattered leg and an ugly gash across the forehead.

"You want to know where I heard all this?" he asked. "Oh! I am 'Dumb Dick.' To be frank with you, boys, I have been a special detective on the C. P. R. for several years, and if you're going to be honest, my contract is up as soon as I have handed over Mr. James Bowles over there. Don't you move!"

"You want to know where I heard all this?" he asked. "Oh! I am 'Dumb Dick.' To be frank with you, boys, I have been a special detective on the C. P. R. for several years, and if you're going to be honest, my contract is up as soon as I have handed over Mr. James Bowles over there. Don't you move!"

They Prefer Chinese Husbands. Now you will be surprised when I tell you that the ambition of every Hawaiian girl is to become 15 years old and marry a Chinaman.

A Long Wait. The Philadelphia North American says that "Insurance Agent Adams has been waiting for fifteen years for a letter which has just reached him."

Consumption of Railroad Spikes. There are 200,000 miles of railroad in the United States and it takes five kegs of railroad spikes per mile to keep up repairs, which makes an annual consumption of 1,000,000 kegs.

A DESPAIR STRUCK CHILD.

A Little Boy's First Taste of Life's Bitterness—Aude Awakening. Everywhere the gloomy truth of Schopenhauer's summary of life is felt and seen, but it remained for a Detroit small boy aged 3 years to work out the last analysis of the mockery and the misery of this existence.

His fond mamma was gone down town. The small boy sat on one of the steps to his paternal avenue home in impatient waiting for that fond mamma's return. The moments sped and she came not. To the untutored soul of that small boy seconds expanded into ages—nay, aeons of time. The intervals between horse cars (on one of which the looked for mother was to come) fulfilled the child's conception of unlimited duration—by which phrase the old arithmeticians defined eternity.

Overpressure in the Schools. Passing to the main question, overpressure in the schools is a fact to the same degree that overpressure in other departments of American life is a fact.

Journalism is for the Young. The prominent figures here at the heads of the great metropolitan journals are, almost without exception, men in their prime.

Things Asked of Actors. John Drew was shown a letter in which the authorship of "The Taming of the Shrew" is attributed to Augustin Daly.

Death to Malaria. A decidedly hard frost always puts an end, for that season, to the danger of exposure to malarial influence in the region where it occurs.

CHEAP BOOTS & SHOES. The same quality of goods 10 per cent. cheaper than any house west of the Mississippi. Will never be undered. Call and be convinced. ALSO REPAIRING PETER MERGES.

THE FURNITURE EMPORIUM. PARLOR SET! BEDROOM SET! FOR ALL CLASSES OF FURNITURE FOR Parlors, Bedrooms, Dining-rooms. Kitchens, Hallways and Offices. GO TO HENRY BOECK'S, Where a magnificent stock of Goods and Fair Prices abound.

UNDERTAKING AND EMBALMING A SPECIALTY HENRY BOECK, CORNER MAIN AND SIXTH PLATTSMOUTH, NEBRASKA

F. G. FRICKE & CO., (SUCCESSOR TO J. M. ROBERTS) Will keep constantly on hand a full and complete stock of pure

Drugs and Medicines, Paints, Oils, Wall Paper and a Full Line of DRUGGISTS' SUNDRIES. PURE LIQUORS. E. G. Dovey & Son.

Fall and Winter Goods. We take pleasure in saying that we have the fullest and Handsomest line of

Fall and Winter Goods Ever brought to this Market and shall be pleased to show you a Superb Line

Wool Dress Goods, and Trimmings, Hoisery and Underwear, Blankets and Comforters.

A splendid assortment of Ladies' Misses' and Childrens CLOAKS, WRAPS AND JERSEYS.

We have also added to our line of carpets some new patterns, Floor Oil Cloths, Matts and Rugs.

In men's heavy and fine boots and shoes, also in Ladies', Misses and Childrens Footgear, we have a complete line to which we INVITE your inspection. All departments Full and Complete. E. G. Dovey & Son.