

# DEAD MEN'S SECTION.

BY J. PERCY BARNITZ.  
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Section Four was the longest section on the Third Division of the C. and J. Railroad. It was so long and so many fatalities had occurred on that stretch of road, that the management decided to call it the Middle Division, thinking thereby to escape the odious name of "Dead Men's Section," which it was called by railroad men the country over. But call it what they would, the management could not free that particular portion of their line from the gruesome appellation.

The sections on the C. and J. are not eight or ten-mile stretches of track, as is the case on Eastern lines, but instead a hundred and fifty-mile stretch is the usual section on this important link in the "Great Trans-Continental Route," and which traverses the Lone Star State from the Red River to the Rio Grande.

Henry Fortune was made division superintendent at Folger, the terminus of Section Three, and the headquarters for the new Middle Division. And he said always, that it was anything but good fortune when he was promoted to that position, for until his appointment at Folger he had never known that the cup of life could be so full of trouble.

Freight brakemen only—with few exceptions—were the ones whom death seemed to single out as his victims. And the majority of those who were killed met their deaths by falling beneath the cars while the trains were running eastward between Gregson's and Warm Springs.

Because of the "hoodoo," which railroad men said was on "Dead Men's Section," it was almost impossible to secure reputable employes for the freight service of the operating department of the Middle Division. As a consequence the personnel of the freight trainmen on that division was composed literally of the scum of the earth. And, therefore, it is not to be wondered at that the life of Henry Fortune, superintendent, was not a happy one. The difficulties he experienced in handling the polygenous freight crews were legion; but they were as nothing compared to the depressing fact that in spite of all precautions death held the Middle Division in a firmer grasp than ever.

Although the Middle Division passed through a land of weary desolation, which, with its flint-like soil; its boundless, unbroken monotony of plains, was enough in itself to depress the spirits of almost any man, yet the superintendent never for a moment supposed that any of his men committed suicide.

There were but few men in his employ that did not use liquor. But liquor could hardly be held accountable for the strange fatalities on "Dead Men's Section." Other trainmen employed on the division besides freight brakemen drank just as hard, and yet there were no more accidents among them than usually occur on the ordinary railroad.

One night in early January the "Mexican Flyer" was wrecked between Warm Springs and Gregson's. The superintendent accompanied the wrecking train to the scene of the disaster. It was a wretched night. A heavy storm of sleet and rain beat down with chilling force on that barren waste of land, and Henry Fortune made it his first duty to see that the passengers were taken to Gregson's, and there made as comfortable as possible in the miserable adobe building bearing the name of "The Ranger's Rest."

The proprietor of this squalid hostelry of the Texas plains was a singular individual. He was a tall, lank, sinister-looking half-breed, whose beady eyes seemed to glow with a malignant passion. A semi-mute, he was unable to articulate intelligibly, but could understand perfectly all that was said to him. There was something about the man that fascinated Henry Fortune, as he watched his shifty, cat-like movements, while dispensing the vile, yellow-looking whisky over his bar to the motley crowd of cowboys gathered in the foul-smelling, earth-



"Dummy Carlos."

floored barroom. Why it was the superintendent could never tell, but intuitively the conviction was suddenly forced upon him, that in some way this evidently treacherous man was connected with the mystery of "Dead Men's Section."

This opinion, once formed, grew stronger in the mind of the superintendent as time passed, and when, some weeks after the wreck of the "Mexican Flyer," a brakeman tumbled between the cars of his train a few miles east of Gregson's, and by good luck was but slightly hurt, he set about to investigate the accident, on the assumption that "Dummy Carlos," the

proprietor of "The Ranger's Rest," was at the bottom of it.

The injured man was taken to the hospital at Templeton, where he was interviewed by Henry Fortune.

"Yes, Mr. Fortune," said the brakeman, "I did have a drink at Carlos' place just before we pulled out of Gregson's—the whole crew had a drink, for that matter. But I don't think it was the whisky that affected me—leastways it never did other times. It was just like this, near as I can remember. I was walking along the top of a lot of box cars towards the front of the train, when all at once everything seemed to shine like gold. Then it changed to white, and I felt that I must run—run as fast as I could. Felt frightened like. And then I couldn't help myself anymore, and ran till I fell from the train."

But Henry Fortune was obdurate in his belief that the sinister-looking mute was to blame for the mortality among his brakemen, despite the fact that he had not one scintilla of proof to that effect, and employed a private detective agency in Chicago to work on the case.

The detective sent by the agency to the Middle Division assumed the role of a freight brakeman. For two weeks he reported "no progress," and then one night he, too, fell a victim to the "Dead Men's Section," much to the



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disgust, mortification and disappointment of Henry Fortune.

When the detective agency was informed of the death of their operative, and learned that he had met the peculiar and mysterious fate of so many brakemen, they became more determined than ever to sift the occurrence to the bottom, and sent several of their best men to the section of the country between Gregson's and Warm Springs.

In the latter part of February a man claiming to be a buyer of cattle for a Chicago packing house, put up at "The Ranger's Rest," and, on the pretext of awaiting the arrival of important letters remained for several days at the little hotel. He saw that whenever a crew of freight trainmen patronized the bar, Carlos would invariably place two bottles of liquor upon the counter, pushing a square bottle in front of where one or more brakemen stood.

One day when the opportunity offered, the pseudo-stockman filled several flasks from the bottles of liquor standing on the shelves beneath the bar. These were sent to Chicago for analysis, and a few weeks later "Dummy Carlos" was awaiting trial in the jail at Templeton on a charge of poisoning, and the mystery of "Dead Men's Section" had been solved.

A curious story was brought out at the trial of the vindictive half-breed; a story too long to here tell in detail, but which was substantially as follows:

The analysis of the liquor in the several flasks showed that it was all of the same cheap brand of whisky, but the contents of one flask was found to have been heavily steeped with the woolly loco weed, commonly called crazy weed, a plant native to the Great Plains region, and which causes much damage to the stock of ranchmen. The action of this poison on man in small doses is to cause a short period of hallucination or mania, accompanied by defective eyesight, during which the affected person is seized with an irresistible desire to run. It was the administration of this decoction to the brakemen of the Middle Division that had caused them to run along the cars of their train and, being unable to see where they were stepping, invariably fall to their deaths.

Carlos admitted the fact that eight years back, when the C. and J. was first built through that region, he was beating his way on a freight train from Gregson's to Warm Springs, when he was discovered by two brakemen who threw him from the train. Until that time he had been possessed of his full powers of speech, but he was so severely injured about the head that the portion of the brain controlling the vocal cords became in time affected, and he finally lost the power to articulate plainly. The Indian in his nature became aroused, and after he opened "The Ranger's Rest" near the railway station at Gregson's, he determined to become revenged on all freight brakemen running eastward from that point. His devilish, savage cunning led him to use the loco weed as the best means to secure that revenge, as he was familiar with its effect upon the cattle and horses which roamed the plains of Texas. He was declared insane by the jury which tried him, and he was sent to the state asylum for insane criminals for life.

## NAPOLEONIC ROMANCE.

How St. Louis Planned to Rescue the Deposed Emperor.

Was an attempt ever made to spirit Napoleon away from his heartrending imprisonment on the island of St. Helena? What was there in the dim story which comes out of the romance of the Louisiana domain a century after it passed into the possession of the United States that Monsieur Girod, a wealthy planter of New Orleans intrigued to rescue the incarcerated emperor?

These are the strange questions prompted by the story told by Mrs. Carrie Jenkins Harris. Mrs. Harris says that she discovered the basis for the belief that an expedition to rescue Napoleon was fitted out on the coast of Louisiana, near New Orleans, and was only abandoned when the news of the deposed monarch's death found its way to the vast Louisiana territory, which he had ceded to the United States nine years before.

From manuscript in the Congressional Library at Washington Mrs. Harris says she discovered indisputable evidence that Monsieur Girod, a rich planter at New Orleans, whose loyalty to the deposed emperor of the French amounted to a passionate devotion, built a mansion on the old St. Louis street in that city, fitted it up elegantly and kept it ready for the occupancy of a distinguished guest. To his most intimate friends it is said that he imparted the secret that a king was to dwell there.

At the same time that M. Girod commenced this house he bought a stanch ship, enlisted a number of soldiers and sailors and drilled them to scale rocky battlements. The object of the expedition was a secret one, but curious tales were related of it after the need for its mission had faded away. Everything was made ready for the sudden and swift sailing of the frigate, which had been manned with guns and other warlike equipment. Three days before the date set for the vessel to put to sea news of Napoleon's death was received in New Orleans. The expedition was, of course, forthwith abandoned, and a chronic melancholy took possession of his energetic and devoted champion in Louisiana.

Did the deposed emperor know of this effort to free him and bring him to this foremost city of the great domain his hand had signed away to the Western Republic? Is the question she asks. She concludes that it is reasonable to suppose that he was informed of this expedition and was prepared to co-operate with his American friends. He was a comparatively young man when he died, and it is suggested that if his life had been spared and he had landed in the Crescent City he might have made as many changes on the map of the Western Hemisphere as he did on that of Europe. The French Canadians, especially in Montreal, Quebec and Nova Scotia, would have rallied to his standard. Thousands of French citizens of the young Republic would have done the same. It is, according to Mrs. Harris' thinking, one of the "what might have been done" questions the world can ask.

### Britain's Financial Strength.

A good deal of misplaced sympathy is being wasted upon England in the belief, or, perhaps, hope, that the Boer war has brought the nation to financial ruin. Much more reasonable is the attitude of one of the leading German newspapers which congratulated Great Britain the other day upon the ease with which she is carrying on the South African war, with an expenditure that has already reached \$500,000,000. It said this war would have ruined Germany or any other European nation, and the German editor was right. The British people would have made short work of a less intractable enemy than the Boers, but what other European country could have manned and paid such armies and whose efforts would have been made on a rising scale all the time in spite of discouragement? John Bull has always been a staying fighter, and that he will continue fighting until, in Lord Milner's phrase, the Boer country is burned out, there is hardly any doubt.

M. Raffelovitch, the noted economist, says the Louisville Courier-Journal, touched upon Great Britain's finance in his annual publication recently issued in Paris, and warned the world that it was not likely to go to the second place or stay there. Germany was a country that thought it could supplant England in the markets of the world a couple or so of years ago, but though Germany has no war she is in far worse industrial and financial condition that the tight little island across the channel.

### Wedded Life in Sumatra.

The women of Sumatra have little to complain of. Before the nuptials are celebrated the husband is compelled to settle a marriage portion on his wife, and in case he is legally separated from her he can neither alienate this portion nor touch any of the property she may have brought into the marriage contract. Married people live in separate houses, the husband visiting the wife in the evening. The boys live with their mother until their fourth birthday, when they take up their residence with their father. Girls remain with their mother until they marry, which they do at an early age. When a woman becomes a widow she plants a flagstaff at her door, from which a flag flies. That flag is of importance to the widow's fate, for so long as it remains untopped by the winds, she is compelled by etiquette to remain unmarried. When the first little rent in the flag appears—and it may be the most minute—she is free to accept the first suitor who offers. Detroit Free Press.

## OUR GOODS ..WELCOME..

Manufacturer Talks of Trade with South America

"If the business done by all manufacturers in the United States with their customers in South America has increased in the last eight years as ours has it is a matter of about one more decade when American-made goods will have displaced all others in that continent," said a maker of vehicles in New York, after he had read a cabled order from a South American customer for enough carriages to keep his factory running night and day for six weeks to come.

"The newspapers have said much for a score of months or so about the increase of American exports to Europe; they have told wonderful true stories of how we are competing with England in English markets, with France in French markets, with Germany in German markets, but hardly a word has been said until very recently about our advance in the markets of South America and our victorious competition there with England, France and Germany."

"It is a fact that ploughs are being shipped by the trainload from Moline, Ill., to South America, and that a steamship company whose vessels ply between London and Buenos Ayres has contracted for every inch of its space which will be available for the transportation of American heavy machinery for a year to come.

"A certain importing firm in South America has a standing order with a United States firm for a certain number of thousands of shovels to be

## Hogs Ripened His Whisky

Old Pennsylvania Knew the Benefit of Advertising.

There are but few people who can be induced to believe that there ever was such a drink as "hog-ripened whisky," but among the older generation it would be no trouble at all to secure affidavits that such a beverage was well known in this immediate vicinity, writes a correspondent of the Philadelphia Record from Doylestown, Pa. There was, in the days gone by, in a village only four miles from here, a man who kept a tavern that soon became famous through its proprietor's unique inventions and ingenious contrivances to attract attention to his hostelry. Then, as now, to succeed meant the necessity of being well advertised. In his effort to do something new, "Uncle Billy," as he was called, conceived an invention that was potent in making his tavern the most talked about one for miles around. The result, as known to the patrons of the inn, was some good whisky, of some age, that had been continuously agitated while within the oaken casks within which the drinks were kept for "ripening."

What the curious ones discovered about the invention was this: When they went to see the ripening of the whisky they found a hog pen with a plank floor so balanced as to swing like a big barn scale. There was an open side farthest from the feeding trough, and the sides were fenced.

## Just Saved His Life

Truthful Guide Tells of an Adventure in the Adirondacks

The Adirondack guide who wants to retain his patrons year after year must know how to tell good stories around the camp fire, as well as how to guide the greenhorn through the pathless woods, says the New York Tribune. A grizzled veteran of the forest who had charge of a mixed party of New York city men and women last August had well nigh exhausted his store of "strictly true" anecdotes, and one night was forced to draw upon his imagination to supply the constant demand.

"I remember well," said he, "years ago, when I was a young fellow and before I had learned enough about the woods to set up as a guide, that I got lost in the forest. Darkness came on while I was still trying to rediscover the trail, and as the cold was severe, I decided to camp for the night before I became exhausted. To my horror, I discovered upon searching my pockets that I had not a single match left with which to light a fire. It had been raining all day, and the fallen wood was soaked, so that it was impossible for me to rub two pieces of dry wood together, as the Indians do, till they take fire, even if I knew how, which I didn't."

"For the second time I searched all my pockets and even carefully exam-

ined the lining of my coat and waistcoat in the hope that some stray match might have lodged there; but in vain. I did find, however, a small sheet of dry paper. As I drew it forth I felt that my life was saved; for, though I had no match, I had thought of a way to set fire to the paper.

"Hastily constructing a pile of the driest wood and twigs that I could find, I knelt before it, with the paper in my hand, carefully screened from the wind with my body. Seizing then a stout and knotty oak stick, like a policeman's club, I struck myself a violent blow over the head with it. Immediately a multitude of bright sparks danced before my eyes. Instantly I passed the paper cautiously back and forth among the sparks. To my joy several settled upon it. I fanned them gently with my breath. The paper became ignited. Plunging it among the twigs, I soon had the joyful satisfaction of seeing a tiny crackling flame kindle there.

"I was saved! The rest was easy. A splendid bonfire soon lit up the gloom of the surrounding forest. As I bound up a long scalp wound on the back of my aching head, I thanked my lucky stars for the clever expedient which had occurred to me only in the nick of time."

shipped every month, yet the demand is so great that a special order for 12,000 more, to be shipped at the earliest moment possible, was received by cable a few days ago. These orders formerly, and not so many years ago, went to England, France and Germany.

"I have been informed by our agents in South America, who handle many and various lines of goods, that this trade has been transferred from England, France and Germany to the United States because of the superior excellence of American goods, the quickness with which they can be delivered and their comparative cheapness.

"The sale of American products in South America depends upon price, just as it does in England, France, Germany and every other country where the use of American goods is increasing, and the feeling against the United States which is known to exist in certain Latin-American countries disappears when it becomes a matter of dollars. When an article is desired it is bought where it can be had for the least money, no matter where it was made.

"Moreover, the fact that it is of American manufacture gives it a reputation for excellence which similar articles made in other countries do not have."

The late Bishop Whipple's diocese contained 20,000 Indians, and it was his self-imposed task to keep in frequent communication with all of them.

The way the thing operated was simple enough. The hogs were out in the yard nosing around, when they heard the splash of the feed as it was put in the trough. Naturally, as the weight came first on the side farthest from the trough, that side of the floor tilted down under the swine's weight. When they all got over to the trough that side, in turn, went down. And so the plank floor was rocked back and forth every time a hog went in or out.

Connected with this swinging platform was another one which received equivalent motion, of course, through the medium of a long lever. On this second platform were set the casks of whisky which were to undergo the ripening process. Of course, every time the lower floor rocked, so did the upper likewise, and the whisky was shaken around with every motion.

Naturally, Uncle Billy's hogs were fatter than anybody else's, because they were fed so much oftener. Part of the ripening depended on feeding the hogs, so as to make them rush in through the open door and thus shake the platforms.

It sometimes happens that a bachelor envies a married man almost as much as a married man envies a bachelor. The population of the Australian commonwealth, according to the latest returns, is 3,175,366.

It follows as naturally as the making of flour from wheat. If we can produce wheat cheaper than Europe, then naturally we can produce flour cheaper, as we do.

"But the writers of the letter do not depend upon a priori reasoning to prove that they can make sugar at a profit without tariff protection. They point to the fact that under the McKinley tariff of 1890, when sugar was free of duty, the price of the article was 4 cents per pound. Yet a net profit of \$3 per ton was made by the beet-sugar factories under those conditions, not counting any bounty on the home production of sugar. They boast that they made this profit while working under absolute free trade, and they have a right to be proud of this result of their skill and industry. Many beet-sugar factories had been started in bygone years, back in the sixties and seventies of the nineteenth century, and had failed because the projectors did not understand the business. Since then great progress has been made, both here and abroad, in the cultivation and manipulation of the beet. What was impossible thirty years ago is now entirely feasible. The industry is already on a solid and enduring basis. There are factories in the United States, these gentlemen tell us in their letter, capable of using 350,000 tons of beets per annum at a profit of \$3 per ton, and this would make a profit of \$1,050,000 as the income to be earned under absolute free trade.

"It must be plain to readers of this letter, signed by the captains of the beet-sugar industry, that the people in Washington who are declaiming against the temporary measure which the President of the United States urges for the relief of the Cuban people, are either grossly ignorant of the subject, or are practising gross deception. The tenable ground for them is to say: 'Other people are having protection that they do not need, and therefore we ought to have more than we need.' This would be consistent with the letter of Messrs. Oxnard and Cutting, but nothing else is so."

A "Real Daughter!," Dead.

Mrs. Jincey Bacon, a real daughter of the Revolution, though she does not seem to have belonged to the order, died suddenly at Laurel, Del., Tuesday, being 95 years old and in full possession of her faculties, so that she had confidently hoped to pass the century mark. She was a daughter of Colonel Isaac Pooks, a noted Delawarean and a friend of General Washington, with whom he wintered at Valley Forge.

Crocker's Wicked Double.

The sorry that Richard Crocker has a double who is responsible for much of the remarkable talk recently credited to the Tammany chieftain by the New York papers is suggestive of the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde romance, but Mr. Crocker says his talkative counterpart is a real man, for whom he is going to hunt.

## THE BEET SUGAR INDUSTRY.

A most important article, giving Messrs. Oxnard's and Cutting's views on the Beet Sugar Industry in this country, appeared on the editorial page of the New York Evening Post of December 12th, 1901, and as every household in the land is interested in sugar the article will be of universal interest.

"The Evening Post bids the heartiest welcome to every American industry that can stand on its own bottom and make its way without leaning on the poor rates. Among these self-supporting industries, we are glad to know, is the production of beet sugar. At all events, it was such two years ago. We publish elsewhere a letter written in 1899, and signed by Mr. Oxnard and Mr. Cutting, the chiefs of this industry on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains, showing that this was the happy condition of the trade at that time. If parties masquerading as beet sugar producers are besieging the President and Congress at this moment, and pretending that they will be ruined if Cuban sugar is admitted for six months at half the present rates of duty, their false pretences ought to be exposed.

"The letter of Messrs. Oxnard and Cutting was probably written for the purpose of inducing the farmers of the Mississippi valley to go more largely into the cultivation of beets for the sugar factories. This was a laudable motive for telling the truth and showing the large profits which awaited both the beet-grower and the manufacturer if the industry were perseveringly and intelligently prosecuted. To this end it was pointed out that farmers could clear \$65 per acre by cultivating beets, and might even make \$100. But in order to assure the cultivator that he would not be exposed to reverses by possible changes in the tariff, they proceeded to show that the industry stood in no need of protection.

"The beet sugar industry, these gentlemen say, 'stands on as firm a basis as any business in the country.' They point out the fact—a very important one—that their product comes out as a finished article, refined and granulated. It is not, like cane-sugar grown in the West India Islands, a black and offensive paste, which must be carried in wagons to the seaboard and thence by ships to the United States, where, after another handling, it is put through a costly refinery, and then shipped by rail to the consumer, who may possibly be in Nebraska alongside a beet sugar factory which turns out the refined and granulated article at one fell swoop. Indeed, the advantages of the producer of beet sugar for supplying the domestic consumption are very great. We have no doubt that Messrs. Oxnard and Cutting are within bounds when they say that 'sugar can be produced here cheaper than it can be in Europe.' The reasons for this are that—

"The sugar industry is, after all, merely an agricultural one. We can undersell Europe in all other crops, and sugar is no exception."

"It follows as naturally as the making of flour from wheat. If we can produce wheat cheaper than Europe, then naturally we can produce flour cheaper, as we do.

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