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The Dispatcher

They sing the sounding praises of the daring engineer
With hand upon the throttle,
Keenly gazing straight ahead.
They always hail him hero; say he's ignorant of fear;
But he's only minding orders, and his signals, white or red.
But the man who bears the burden is the man you never see—
Seated in a stuffy office far above the noisy street;
Busy brain with figures buzzing, nimble fingers on the key,
And his eyes are never lifted from his long train-order sheet.
And it's Nos. Four and Seven That must meet at Perkins' Switch;
And the engineers plunge safely Through the darkness black as pitch.
Nos. Two and Twenty-seven, Rushing onward like the wind,
But the crews will mind their orders—
Safe the passengers behind.

They praise financial captains who have organized the lines
Into mighty railroad systems over which vast treasure rolls;
Reaching factory towns and forests, climbing up to distant mines;
Stretching over plain and mountain, bringing in the golden tolls.
But the men who keep trains running never pose for public gaze.
Theirs to do amid the clatter—that to them is music sweet—
Of the noisy sounders clearing all the long steel-girdled ways,
As they bend to mark the figures on the long train-order sheet.
Nos. Thirteen and Eleven Meet and pass at Billkens' Bend.
No. Two wait for the "flyer"—
Take the switch at New Rosentend.
Just a flimsy bit of paper,
Words by the dispatcher sent;
And the tourists in the coaches Rest in safety and content.

The papers sing the praises of the managers who glide
O'er the road in private coaches, looking worried, looking wise;
Giving interviews in plenty, filling local men with pride
As they wave them recognition while the special onward flies.
But the man who makes for safety of the magnate and his crew
Is the man that the reporters seldom have a chance to meet.
He's cooped up within his office, far removed from public view,
Growing stooped, and gray, and wrinkled, over his train-order sheet.
You must slow down at Co-hasset;
Weakened bridge—reduce your speed,
Keep control until you pass it.
And the engineers give heed.
Just one man—you never see him—
Bears alone the mighty load;
And his orders carry safely Millions o'er the busy road.

Things That Have Disappeared
The more you think about it the more there are of them. Since first the architect of this department started to mention the "things that

have disappeared" his memory has been jogged many times by readers of the department. Now comes J. W. Williams of Neale, Kansas, with a few cheerful reminders, and his letter will start the "memory works" to going again. Mr. Williams writes: "In your cogitations over the joys of past years in matters of dress, you doubtless forgot the elegantly stitched morocco tops of those box-toed boots, which showed in such bold splendor above the 'French vamps,' in utter disregard of the genteel reminder that it was not good form to wear them on the outside of your pants. Then, again, the rapturous joy over that paper collar caused you to forget the puffy elegance of that nainsook shirt bosom that was only partly concealed by that nattily striped scarf peeping so shyly from under the lapel of your low-cut vest. And again, that 'shoo-fly' necktie fastened to your collar button by that vexingly elusive rubber cord, and those large, green wax cuff buttons bearing the image of the horse's head, the skull and crossbones or the musical bullfrog. And say! Have you forgotten the torturous bands of elastic ribbon you used to wear just above your elbows?"

"Yes, you are right; we may have better things today, but they do not fit into our mental wrinkles with the same degree of comfort that we experience when we lapse into that far-away feeling produced by a memory visit into the past. Is it because we have less to enjoy? Or is it because our capacity for enjoyment grows less with advancing years?"
"I have for several years greatly enjoyed your articles on the past, and hope to have the pleasure of reading many more in the years to come."

Longing

The sun of May
Shines bright today,
And I would like to haste away
From pen and book,
And with a hook
Just bob for bullheads in a brook.

The budding trees
And balmy breeze
Are making me feel ill at ease.
I'd like to get
Away from fret
And once more get my fishline wet.

My office work
I'd like to shirk
And haste to where the fishes lurk
O'er moor and fen
I'd walk again,
Far from the haunts of busy men.

Political

Would that I could
Through field and wood
Walk once again—you bet I would.
Alas, grim fate
Says I must wait,
And toil for coin to pay the freight.

Taboo

"Why does Bilkins wear such a worried look?"
"O, he heard that the office should seek the man and he's worried because he can't understand why he's not been tagged."

Mention of the "sweet girl graduate."
Reference to the dinner we get on housecleaning day.

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