QUEER PRANKS OF LIGHTNING

Strange Happenings on Commercial and Railroad Telegraph Lines.

STORIES TOLD BY RAILROAD EMPLOYES

How a Lucky Electric Bolt Saved Two Railroad Trains from Destruction and Killed a Would-Be Wrecker.

An old telegraph operator, who has worked all over the country, and is now one of the conductors on the Southern road, was started talking by a representative of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat about lightning pranks. He said:

"To the uninitiated the most dangerous spot during a thunder storm is a telegraph office, but statistics will substantiate the fact that no place is safer." Continuing in the same line, the old telegrapher said:

"Between the manufactured and natural electricity there appears, from close observation, to be a sort of affection, and under cover of the slightest storm mutual exchanges of confidences are usually indulged in by them. Modern devices, of course, have brought about this state of affairs, but the most persistent assurances can not convince the timid of this fact.

"Seldom, indeed, will the veteran telegrapher lift his hand from the telegraph key upon which he is spelling out the mystic signs of the Morse alphabet upon the approach or progress of the heaviest storms, while the young aspirant for telegraphic fame will sit through a storm with beating heart rather than show the white feather to his companions by deserting his post.

"It frequently occurs that the dense humidity prevailing just previous to a storm, coupled with a heavy downpour of rain, will entice the strongest electrical currents from the wires, and for the time being 'kills' their usefulness. It is during one of these storms that the electric waves are felt, coming and going, and what danger there is is then most imminent. It was during one of these lulls in business, up in the operating room of the Western Union telegraph office recently, that several experts gathered around the switchboard and watched the lightning come into the room over the numerous wires, strike the lightning arrester and switch off on the ground wire. By actual count seventy-six loud reports were heard and the flashes seen, some of them so heavy that the veterans would unthinkingly duck their heads.

"I recall a humorous story that had for its victim a well known telegrapher named Bogardus. 'Bogy,' as he is called for short, is known in the telegraph profession from Boston to San Francisco and from New Orleans to Toronto, Canada. He possessed a roving disposition, a love for good old Burbon whisky and a mind that was a blank as to the value of money. Although 'Bogy' at one time was one of the finest operators in the business, these three defects kept him always on the tramp and from attaining any position of trust or prominence. Poor 'Bogy' is now in a Chicago hospital rounding up a career that should have been a bright one.

A CLOSE SHAVE.

"The following occurred when 'Bogy' was in his prime. He had recently been 'fired' from the New York office, and for bread and butter had drifted on to a railroad centering in Pittsburg to get a new start. He was always careful of his personal appearance, and while he could shave himself, the cutting of his own hair was an impossibility. Pittsburg, some thirty miles from the little station where he was working, was the nearest place wherein he could have the tonsorial feat performed. To go to the city meant another 'spree' and consequent discharge, and 'Bogy' knew this only too well. But his hair grew, the weather became hot and he fretted and fumed. The comments of the railroad men did not add to his comfort.

"Late one afternoon after a very hot day a thunderstorm of remarkable intensity came up, and the lightning played hide and seek among the relays, sounders and switchboard in 'Bogy's' little ten by ten office. Every moment the storm increased in intensity, and the electric display was grandly sublime. As the cracks of the bolts on the switchboard became more frequent and the flashes more luminous 'Bogy,' not a bit frightened, concluded to put the cut-out plug in the switchboard and thereby save his instruments from burning out in case the lightning became too strong.

"On the instant he applied the plug a bolt of lightning struck a telegraph pole about fifty feet from the office, and the surplus electricity came in the switchboard over the wire, and 'Bogy's' head was wrapped in flame. The shock threw him on the floor and for a minute or so stunned him. Shaking himself together, he arose to his feet, and, feeling no pain, he congratulated himself upon his lucky escape. There was a peculiar odor in the little room that 'Bogy' could not clearly account for, but concluded it came from the burned silk and wax that made up the covering of the office wires.

"'Bogy' had just succeeded in putting his office to rights and had returned to it, after making a temporary connection at the pole where the lightning struck, when a train drew up for orders.

"'Je-e-rusalem!' shouted the conductor, as he caught sight of 'Bogy.' 'Where's your hair?'

"'Bogy,' in affright, clapped his hands to his head and, with a startled ejaculation, rushed for the little mirror in a rear corner of the office. One look was enough. 'Bogy' hadn't as much hair as a month-old baby, and, strange to relate, the electric flame had not injured his scalp in the least. The knock-down blow the lightning had given him had driven the thought of his hair for the moment out of his mind, and until the conductor's surprised exclamation had reached him he thought his hair still needed cutting.

AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.

"Another good story I remember has for its local surroundings a little telegraph station on the Baltimore & Potomac road, near Benning, just outside the limits of Washington. At the time of the occurrence of the incident herein stated an operator by the name of Brady was on duty nights and none loved a practical joke better than he. A constant lounger around the office was an old darky by the name of Poindexter and a big lazy companion named Julius. Numerous plans were devised to make these two worthies steer clear of the office without resorting to force, but all were failures. Now and then Julius would be missed for two or three nights, but 'Dexter,' as he was called for brevity sake, always turned up at nightfall and left with the break of day.

"The telegraph office proper was a small partitioned-off apartment from the waiting room for passengers and contained one chair. On the evening in question a terrific storm broke suddenly over that section and about a dozen persons, 'Dexter' included, took refuge in the station. Considerable of the down-pouring rain came in under the door and swept by Brady into the little telegraph department. A wet floor will act as an effective ground or magnet for the wire in case a person places his hand upon any of the instruments while his feet rest upon the wet floor.

"Brady knew this and also knew of 'Dexter's' habit of falling asleep if left alone for a few minutes. Thinking to give the old darky a shock and a fright, Brady called him to the office and told him to watch things while he attended to something else outside.

"'Dexter,' flattered by the responsibility placed upon him, immediately closed the door and took a seat in the chair. Two minutes had hardly passed when his head fell forward upon his arms, which were spread out on the table, one of which covered the telegraph key, and a loud snore announced the fact that he had fallen asleep, as anticipated.

"The storm raged with unabated fury, and all the storm-beaten people in the station except Brady forgot 'Dexter' in discussing the electrical display in the heavens.

"All at once a vivid flash of lightning was seen, followed by a thunderous peal. At the same instant a shriek came from 'Dexter,' followed by the crash of breaking boards as the thin partition came tumbling down, and out rolled the old darky into the midst of the terrified spectators.

"It was seen that 'Dexter's' coat was on fire and the onlookers at once sprang to his aid, beat out the fire and pulled him to his feet. Then it was found that it was a case of more frightened than hurt, but Brady realized that he had almost fathered a tragedy.

"It was surmised that the bolt had come into the office over the wire, jumped the lightning arrester fastened to the switchboard and came out at the key on which 'Dexter's' arm rested, the wet floor making a sort of ground wire out of the old darky's body.

"It would be hard to say whether 'Dexter' or the dozen and more people in the station were the most frightened. The simultaneous crashes were something terrible to the ear, and all who could get out of that little room had left in a bunch, thinking the building had been struck by lightning and was falling in upon them.

"'Dexter' immediately pulled out for other parts, and although seen in the vicinity, no amount of coaxing could get him to come near the office for some months afterward. He evidently told Julius of his experience, for he, too, disappeared, and for many nights thereafter Operator Brady kept up his nightly vigil alone."

A MEDICINE HAT YARN.

As the following sensational tale came from the lips of a western telegrapher, who made one of the group of railroad men, he playing an important part in the incident, and as his veracity has never been questioned, the tale was accepted at the proper value of unidulted truth, and so passes into the record of tales undoubted from the then wild and woolly west.

"In my early experience with the telegraph business," said he, "I was located at a place called 'Medicine Hat,' a small group of shanties on the Northern Pacific railroad, as operator, ticket and express agent. Medicine Hat could be classed among the towns as being thirty miles from nowhere. What little business was done was on account of a mining village some thirty miles back in the mountains. The entire population of Medicine Hat could have been easily crowded into the little village station.

"One night, after a day of the most sultry weather that I had ever experienced that summer, I was detained at my office on account of delayed trains. A continuous roll of thunder, accompanied by sharp flashes of lightning in the distance, warned me of an approaching storm. I fretted and fumed, as I wanted to get to my boarding shanty, about a quarter of a mile up the country road, before the storm broke. I was leaning back in my chair, musing over the events that had brought me west, when suddenly a voice broke upon my ears:

"'Hold up your hands, quick!'

"Glancing up I saw a revolver pointed through the little window in the wall through which I sold tickets, and behind it a weird mask with terrible shining eyes. In endeavoring to comply with the command, especially the latter injunction, my chair swung around, my head struck on the edge of the table and, unconscious, I rolled to the floor.

"When I regained my wits I found myself lying on the floor of the outer waiting room, bound hand and foot, with a tall, ungainly looking fellow standing guard over me with a Winchester. The storm had broken over us, and the wind, rain, lightning and thunder were something terrific.

"All at once my trained ear caught the sound of the telegraph sounder, and turning my head I perceived a man at my desk working away at my key. He wore a mask, but this did not disguise the fact that he was a young man. As the characters were ticked off and came to my ears, I knew he was feeling his way as to the location of the delayed trains. I also noticed that he frequently arose and made use of the ground wire from the switchboard, which cut off the main office, in which was located the train runner of the division. At frequent intervals sharp cracks of lightning would re-echo through the room, as the bolts struck the arrester on the switch. But the man worked on totally oblivious of his surroundings.

"Suddenly I caught the drift of what he was sending out over the wire and was horrified to learn that was trying to duplicate and manipulate the train orders so as to cause a wreck. Trains No. 47 and 48 passed each other about five miles up the road from my station, and he was sending out orders with a cool, steady hand to train No. 47 to take a siding about ten miles east of Medicine Hat, and to train No. 48 to pass No. 47 at the regular place.

"These orders would have thrown the two trains, which were heavily laden with passengers and express matter, together near my station.

"I could easily hear the sounder, and from the masked man's orders knew the would-be wrecker was an expert telegrapher and thoroughly familiar with train running. Every now and then the man would raise his hand from the key as a more severe stroke of lightning would come in over the wire, but he was too intent upon his deadly work to desist. The tramp of heavy boots on the platform outside told me that the contemplated wreck was an organized scheme for robbing the express company and passengers. Muttered curses frequently came from the man at the key as his plans for wrecking the train would meet with obstacles in the shape of pertinent questions from operators up the line, who would not follow the new order of things without fully understanding their import.

PARALYZED AT THE KEY.

"My mind was in a horrible whirl, and I frequently strained at my bindings to get my hands loose, but a savage curse from my guard warned me to be careful or my life would not be worth much. On account of the trains being behind time I knew they would be pushed to their utmost speed by the engineers, and if they came together the wreck would be a frightful one.

The storm continued to increase in force, and peal after peal of thunder re-echoed over and about the little station. Still the man at the key kept steadily at work weaving his web of destruction. Suddenly he called out in a voice of mingled satisfaction and devilish glee:

"'Ah, that fixes the matter all right. Forty-seven has signed the orders at the water tank, and in ten minutes they'll be together. Tell the men to spread out up—'

"He never finished the sentence. A blinding flash at the switchboard, a shriek from the man and the office appeared to be one mass of flame. My guard rushed from the building and with a mighty effort I wrenched my hands free and pulled myself through the door out upon the platform. The little station building was as dry as tinder, the oil from the trainmen's lamps added to the combustible nature of its make-up, and in a moment flames were breaking out in every part.

"With loud cries several of the wrecker's confederates dashed toward the little room to pull their leader out, but the heat drove them back, and, as voices were heard up the country road coming toward the station they all disappeared up the line in the darkness.

"A man named 'Humpy' Logan untied my legs, as my hands were useless on account of the great numbness occasioned by the tightness of the thongs, and I quickly explained the situation to him. He hunted up a lamp and dashed down the track and around the curve in one direction, while I swung the lantern upon the train coming down the straight piece of track to the station in the other direction. My lamp was not seen by the engineer, but the burning station acted as a danger signal, and the train drew up slowly, the engineer totally ignorant of the danger he was escaping and only intent upon helping to subdue the flames. Twenty-five words explained the situation to the engineer and a group of passengers that gathered around, and as train 47 slowly rounded the curve from the east, substantiating my story, the organization of a prayer meeting there and then would have been an easy matter.

"The engineers of both trains, with their conductors, held a consultation, and 48 finally backed to the next siding, followed by 47, and the tangle was straightened out.

"The next day the remains of the would-be wrecker were found in the ruins of the station, and the railroad company's physician, after holding an autopsy, declared that the man had only been stunned by the lightning and while unconscious had been smothered and then burned to a crisp.

"In all my experience with lightning that was the luckiest bolt that ever hugged a wire," said the narrator as he finished his story, "and the lucky stars of the people on those two trains were undoubtedly in the ascendant on that terrible night."

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Allen's Foot-Ease, a powder for the feet. It cures painful, swollen, smarting feet and instantly takes the sting out of corns and bunions. It's the greatest comfort discovery of the age. Allen's Foot-Ease makes tight-fitting or new shoes feel easy. It is a certain cure for sweating, callous and hot, tired, aching feet. Try it today. Sold by all druggists and shoe stores. By mail 25c in stamps. Trial package FREE. Address, Allen S. Olmsted, Le Roy, N. Y.

IT WAS POKER AND NO MISTAKE

Cost Big Money to Play Before the Draw Was Introduced.

PLUNGER FROM THE HEAD WATERS

Pot in Which Dave Ash of Mobile Won $80,000 and a Wife for His Son—Some New York Plays.

"I was very much interested in that story that was published the other day about the game of draw poker that Henry Clay played in," said the gray-haired, young-looking man to the New York Sun, "and especially so, as the date of the game was given explicitly as 1848. That particular game was played at least a dozen years before draw poker had been evolved from the old original game of poker.

"They did play poker as long ago as '48, but it was straight poker with no draw. You bet on the first five cards you received in the deal without getting any more, and you made the bet very often without looking at them yourself, wherefore the game was appropriately called 'bluff' as often as it was called poker. Moreover, the stakes were often very high, so that the $35,000 which Mr. Clay is said to have lost betting against four kings and an ace was not an unprecedented wager. Ben Ash of Mobile saw a game in that same year in which the stakes were much higher. Over $80,000 changed hands in one pot, and even that, he declared, was only a small part of the real wager that was made, won and lost.

"Ben was a youngster then, but was old enough to have won the affection of a charming young girl who was the daughter of a French planter named D'Aubigny. He was exceedingly anxious to marry her and she was ready, but there was a formidable obstacle in the way. The paternal D'Aubigny, though born in the United States, was the scion of an aristocratic family in France and had retained all the pride of caste that belonged to his ancestors, while Ash, though a worthy young fellow enough, with a fair social standing, was the son of Dave Ash, the veteran theatrical manager of Mobile, who was a Philadelphia Quaker by birth.

A PLUNGER FROM WAYBACK.

"M. D'Aubigny was a friend of Dave and was a typical southern planter. This, being interpreted, means that he was not averse to cards, and being extremely wealthy he was a plunger from the head waters of Plunge creek. Ash was a stiff player himself, and it was a very usual thing for a game to be going on in his private office after the play was over and the theater was supposed to be closed for the night. And D'Aubigny was often among the players.

"Ben made a confidant of his father, who told him frankly that he saw no hope of winning D'Aubigny's consent, and that knowing the Frenchman as he did he was by no means disposed to urge Ben's case. 'It would only lead to a quarrel,' he said, 'that would hurt your chances more than anything I could do would help them.' But Ben was desperate, and still urged the old man to make some kind of a trial, saying that matters couldn't be worse, for D'Aubigny had already firmly refused, and that he, Ben, could see no chance of moving him. So Dave promised to see what he could do.

"The chance came sooner than he had expected, for only a few nights later D'Aubigny was playing in Ash's room, and there came a duel in the game between him and the manager. They each held four of a kind, and in the old game fours were big enough for a man to bet his entire fortune on. The others in the game dropped out after Ash had raised the bet five thousand, but D'Aubigny doubled his raise as coolly as possible, and they had it back and forth, ten thousand, and then twenty thousand at a clip, till there was over $160,000 in the pot.

"It was tremendous betting, and so far beyond what Ash had ever seen that he was staggered. He was still as confident of his four of a kind as ever, but it seemed like insanity to gamble at such figures. He hesitated, as he well might, when, with $120,000 already up, D'Aubigny raised him $20,000 more, and thought for several minutes before speaking. There was no question of doubt as to the payment involved, for though they were playing in an unlimited game, and a fortune was on the table in the shape of penciled scraps of paper only, a gambling debt was a debt of honor, and each scrawl was as valuable as a certified check. There was, however, a serious question in his mind as to how far he should go, when suddenly he happened to notice Ben's eager face in the small circle of lookers-on.

WON THE GIRL.

"'I will see that $20,000,' he said slowly, 'and I will make you another bet in addition if you are willing to close the pot on that. We have enough money up now, and this bet will settle a question that is more important than money to both of us.'

"'What is it?' asked D'Aubigny in surprise. He would probably have kept on betting as long as he had anything left to put up, but even he realized that the stakes were already unreasonable.

"'My son wants to marry your daughter,' said Ash, 'and as I understand the matter, she is willing, but you will not consent. Now I will bet you his wishes against yours. If I lose, I will guarantee that there shall be no marriage, and no further annoyance to you from him. If you lose, you give your consent.'

"Well the Frenchman didn't know whether to be insulted or not. His first impulse was to resent the proposition, but Ash spoke again to him so diplomatically and tactfully that his anger was cooled, and after sputtering a bit he actually began to consider the idea. Ash, seeing this, clinched the matter by saying that, of course, if D'Aubigny doubted the value of his cards he needn't call the bet. That quickened the gambling fever, and he finally said: 'Very well. If you do not care to bet any more money I will call you on your own terms.'

"They showed down. D'Aubigny had four fives. Ash had four eights. And Ben married the girl.

"That was by long odds the heaviest game of poker that I know anything about, but I often think that cards were played more recklessly in the old days before the draw was introduced, than it is now. I saw a game shortly before the war in the card room of the old Worden house on the Bowery. One night Jim Lingard, George Bassford, George Boniface, and two or three others were playing poker, and I was among the lookers-on. It was straight poker. Tom Leigh came in. The game was table stakes, and the chips were 50 cents so there was a general laugh when Tom pulled three silver half dollars from his pocket, and, putting them on the table, sat down behind them and called for a hand.

EIGHT WINNING HANDS.

"'That's all I have with me,' he said, joining in the laugh, 'but there'll be a friend of mine in here in a few minutes, and I can get all I want. In the meantime I'll win a little of your money with this.'

"And he most certainly did. He played each hand that he got and put up all the money he had each time. Of course, under the rules, that gave him a show for the entire contents of the pot as long as he made good. Whatever other money was put up afterward would go to the next high man, supposing he won.

"Seven times he did this and seven times he won the pot. At the beginning of the eighth deal he had $900 in front of him and the others were disposed to beat him out if possible. Accordingly Lingard put up an ante of $250. George Bassford came next and put up his $500. Boniface had no hand and he dropped out. So did the others till it came to Leigh, but he shoved his whole $900 into the pot without looking at his cards. This staggered Lingard and he let his $250 go without making good, so that Bassford and Leigh were left to fight it out between them.

"Bassford covered Leigh's money and then said: 'I'd like to raise you, Tom, but as it is all you have, I suppose it'll have to be a call.'

"'Oh, no!' said Leigh. 'I told you I'd have some money here directly. Thayer, let me have some money, will you? Let me have $2,000.' This he said to a man who had just come into the room and who was looking on with a grin.

"'Certainly,' said this man, taking out his wallet. But before he had the money counted out Bassford said: 'Oh, I've called you. I don't want you to borrow any money to bet, because I've got you beat.'

"'Oh, go on and bet,' said Leigh, banteringly. 'Thayer's got more money than 's good for him, anyhow. Bet your hand if you've got anything.' But Bassford wouldn't.

"'I've called you,' he said. 'What have you got?'

"'Two pair,' said Leigh, after lifting his cards.

"'Aha!' exclaimed Bassford. 'It's a good thing for you I didn't raise you. Your two pair are no good.' And he showed down a full hand.

"'Why aren't they good?' said Leigh. 'They're queens.'

"And they were. It was the only time I ever saw a man bet his pile on eight successive hands at poker and win them all. Leigh had nearly $2,600 from his three half dollars and Bassford was so disgusted that he quit the game, swearing he would never play cards again. Whether he ever did or not I can't say, but I never saw him play after that."

LOST A LEG, FOUND A FATHER.

Romance of a Baggage Smasher and Its Almost Tragic Ending.

When David Ullmer hobbled into the union station with his wife and their 7-months-old daughter the other night to board the Clover Leaf train for Kokomo, Ind., relates the St. Louis Republic, the baggage men and other employes at the station learned that the man, who had worked among them a year, had undergone the hardships of his position because he placed Cupid's dictates before a father's commands. They also learned that a terrible accident, of which Ullmer was the victim about a month ago, had been the cause of a happy turn in his romance.

Ullmer was a check man in the baggage room at the union station. He came to St. Louis about a year ago and was fortunate enough to obtain employment almost immediately. He was industrious, but had little to say about himself. While he did not hold himself aloof, his fellow employes suspected that he was unaccustomed to the hard work he was performing. All that they knew about him definitely was that he was married and lived with his wife at the northwest corner of Twentieth and Eugenia streets.

The man's duties compelled him to meet incoming trains and receive from the men in the baggage cars checks for the trunks that were to be taken from them.

One Saturday evening, about a month ago, Ullmer slipped under a car while running along the platform at the west side of the train shed to meet the moving train. His wife, seated on the porch of their house across the street, saw him fall, but did not recognize him. When Ullmer was taken from under the wheels his right leg was so crushed that it was necessary to send him to St. Mary's infirmary. Mrs. Ullmer was horror-stricken when she witnessed the accident. She swooned when told that her husband was the victim. At the infirmary Ullmer's leg was amputated.

A copy of the Republic containing an account of Ullmer's misfortune and the circumstances reached his father in Kokomo, Ind.

For a year no word had passed between father and son. The father was well-to-do and did not approve of the son's choice of a life companion. The young woman was Miss Emily Woodson of Kokomo. Ullmer concluded that the biblical injunction to forsake father and mother under such circumstances applied in his case and he obeyed it. Then his father disowned him and he decided to try his fortunes in St. Louis.

Parental indignation was no proof against the knowledge of the son's terrible misfortune. When the old man read of it he at once wrote to his son, conveying his forgiveness and urging him to return home with his wife. That was impossible then, owing to Ullmer's condition, but the son was able to reply, and the correspondence was continued until a day or two ago, when Ullmer wrote to his father to look for his speedy return.

In due time Ullmer and his wife and the little baby, whose presence will surprise the grandfather, appeared at the Union station ready for the journey. Ullmer's happiness was unalloyed, in spite of his affliction. His wife's smiles saddened when she glanced at his maimed limb and considered the terrible cost of the reconciliation, but she smiled again when she looked into her husband's face. The little one crowed with delight until nature got in its work and she fell asleep in her mother's arms. Ullmer's erstwhile fellow employes gathered around and congratulated him without seeming to notice his physical affliction. Finally the train pulled out with the three actors in one of life's pastorals.

CONGER AND SAM RANDALL.

Encounter Between the Michigan Leader and the Speaker.

At the beginning of the Forty-fifth congress (1877)—which is of course the same as saying the beginning of the world—or a few days after, I noticed the figure of Omar D. Conger of Michigan, writes Speaker Reed in the Illustrated American. The Oriental prefix struck me vividly, as did the man himself. His manner was saturnine and incisive. We all watched him, we new members, and enjoyed much his caustic way and the sub-acid flavor of his remarks. He was thin and spare, and wore always a swallowtail coat. General Thomas Ewing had come to the house from Ohio filled with enthusiasm to rescue the people from the money power, an enthusiasm which always manifests itself in days of adversity and subsides in days of prosperity. The particular form in which relief was then to come was through the repeal of the resumption act. Even Samuel J. Tilden was in favor of that, being persuaded in his mind, or at least in his letter of acceptance, that a great "central reservoir of coin" must first be accumulated before the distribution pipes could be set to work. Two-thirds of the house were on the side of the general as the event proved, but he began wrong. He was a new member and though the rules were explained to him, neither he nor any other member ever comprehended the rules from any explanation ever given. He began in the "morning hour." In those days Mr. Randall, who was speaker, had limited the morning hour to sixty minutes and so the general was in a "tunnel"—a tunnel with no outlet, if people were so minded. Mr. Conger was so minded, and for days he kept the reformer caged up, and the great work of regeneration was stopped, to the great disgust of the friends of the people. Conger gave no outward and visible signs of joy, but those who watched him could see that a great peace was filling his soul.

It was during this sombre period, while Mr. Randall was trying to help his political friend, that Friday arrived. Now, Friday is the day for private bills, and the rule said that on that day, until the house voted that private business should not be done, public business could not be done. In vain the speaker pointed out that there was not even one poor private bill on the calendar. But Conger would have none of it. The rule said so and so, and things must proceed decently and in order. The speaker got out of patience, and said if there was no private business to be done how could any be done, and added that he was trying to use a little common sense about the thing. "Well," said Mr. Conger, as he turned wearily to his seat, "if the speaker is making an effort in that direction I shall not interfere." And so, at the expense of much laughter, the speaker had his way, and General Ewing had another hour, but had finally to suspend the rules before he could get a real hearing.

Arnold's Bromo Celery cures headaches. 10, 25 and 50 cents. All druggists.

Substantial Memorial.

Mrs. Alfred Corning Clark of Cooperstown, widow of the great sewing machine capitalist, intends to honor his memory by a noble institution at the corner of Rivington and Cannon streets, New York. It is to be a kindergarten and an entertainment hall for the education and meeting of the people in the district. The site has been procured, and this week the houses upon the premises will be torn down by the workmen. On the site will be a great, handsome structure, four stories high, of brick and terra cotta, which will include a model kindergarten of the largest size, a huge entertainment hall, with kitchen, laundry, committee rooms, toilet rooms and store room and a roof garden. At least $500,000, it is said, will be required to build the establishment, which will be one of the great benevolences of the city.

PASSING OF A PROSPECTOR

He Struck it Rich, Wooed a Mate and Took Morphine.

CAREER OF THE FOUNDER OF CREEDE

Plucked a Fortune from the Mountains of Colorado and a Crop of Domestic Strife from the Valleys.

No class of men take their ups and downs more philosophically than the average prospector for hidden wealth in the mountains of the west. The strike of today may prove a barren one tomorrow, but beyond a momentary banishment of great expectations he preserves the serene hopefulness characteristic of his class.

It is passing strange that when a prospector overtakes the fickle goddess, after perhaps years of hardship and privation, a nemesis of domestic discord should camp on his trail and make his life anything but "a grand sweet song." Such seems to be the common fate of men who strike it rich. The domestic discords of the houses of Fair and Tabor are notable instances. A later and equally striking evidence of the melancholy fact is furnished in the death by his own hand of Nicholas C. Creede at Los Angeles. According to the reports, the immediate cause of Creede's suicide was the failure of his wife to keep away from him, both having agreed to live apart.

The passing of Creede recalls the career of a man whose name was a household word in the west a few years ago. He was born at Fort Wayne, Ind., in 1843, but while yet a child his parents moved to Iowa. There he began to rustle for himself as soon as he was "knee high to a duck," as he once said in talking on the subject, and in 1861, being then about 18 years old, he entered the service of Uncle Sam, at first in the quartermaster's department and then as a scout. He received the pay of a first lieutenant in the regular army, and served with a band of Pawnee warriors in campaigns against the Sioux and other hostile tribes for seven years. This service took him all over the states of Wyoming, Colorado, Dakota and Nebraska, a portion of country that was then wholly wild. He was in a good many hard fights, under Major Frank North, with the Indians, but escaped in every instance without a wound worth mentioning.

RUSTLING FOR A STAKE.

After leaving the service he went back to the states, but life was too tame for him there. He had passed most of the seven years during which he served Uncle Sam in the open air—on horseback by day and under a blanket, with a tent, at best, for a shelter at night. It had been to his taste to live that way from the first, and in 1870 he returned to Colorado. Then came the Black Hills mining excitement, when gold was found there, and the rush of fortune seekers forced away the barriers that the Indians tried to keep up. Creede had traveled without seeing anything right over the placer diggings which others found. When he learned about the gold there he at once determined to turn prospector. It was a life just to his taste—a homeless, roaming life, without restraint or responsibility and with a great fortune for its goal.

He went to New Mexico for a first venture, but was not pleased with either the country or the customs and habits of the Mexicans there, so he came back to Colorado and remained there for eight years, part of the time wandering over the mountains and for the rest rustling for a grubstake. He came into what is now Creede in May, 1890, and located the Holy Moses mine. He was grubstaked by Smith & Nalor of Salida. He got into trouble with his partners and negotiated a sale. D. H. Moffat, S. T. Smith and L. E. Campbell bonded it for $75,000. While working they employed Creede at $2 a day, a grubstake and a third interest to prospect for them. They never took up the bond on the Holy Moses, not being satisfied with the returns. The property is now owned by J. J. Abbott.

THE TOWN OF CREEDE.

While working on the Holy Moses, Creede located the Amethyst. It paid him as much as $1,000 a day for a time and caused him to become famous over the continent as a multi-millionaire.

The town of Creede in its day was one of the liveliest and most picturesque mining camps which ever sprang up in a mining country. At the time its first great mines were opened there had been no phenomenal mining excitement, since the rush to Gilpin county, in the '60s, and the Leadville activity, which came in the '70s. The attention of the world was attracted to the silver camp of Creede. Hundreds of prospectors rushed to the town. There were hundreds who wanted to invest and some who desired to locate and live in the place. While the boom was at its height there were more kinds and classes of people in the camp than any mining town has ever known before or since.

Creede was in no way a remarkable man, and was by no means even popular with his townsmen. It was by hard work on the part of a few people that his name was given to the town, and then only by dividing the place in half and calling the neighbor Jimtown.

The marriage which caused the death of Creede grew out of a late-in-life love affair, and what the Creede pioneers regarded as an elopement. It smacked of a rough mining camp romance in its every detail. Ten or twelve years ago, when Creede roamed the mountains a poor and lonely prospector, he made the acquaintance of his present wife. She ran a travelers' boarding house in Del Norte and was married.

In winter when the deep snows in the mountains made prospecting well-nigh impossible, "Captain" Creede drifted into Del Norte. He usually made his headquarters in the house of the woman. Once he returned with difficulty in the midst of a snow storm, which had almost bound him in the wilderness and ridges and canyons. The experience brought on pneumonia, and, neglecting her own business, the landlady of this boarding house spent day and night by the bedside of the stricken prospector until she nursed him into health. She was not any too prepossessing then, being large, angular and over-addicted to manufacturing her own facial complexions. But she was kind to old Creede, as the boys called him, and when his ship with its cargo of silver came in the prospector rewarded her.

MINING CAMP ROMANCE.

In the fall of 1891 Creede discovered the Amethyst vein in what was then known as Sunnyside section, now Creede, giving him rich ore before his first year's assessment work was done. When the output reached $1,000 a month a notion that he could afford to keep a home and wanted one took hold of him. He built a cabin at the head of West Willow gulch, in upper Creede, and made a quiet trip to Del Norte to call on the kind landlady of his prospecting days. What promises he might have made her are their own secret, but when N. C. Creede returned to his new made log abode in West Willow gulch the Del Norte boarding house woman accompanied him. She became Creede's housekeeper. She remained in that capacity until Creede's savings amounted to $5,000. She then went to Del Norte and secured a divorce from her husband in that town. In the early fall of 1892 she was married to N. C. Creede in the Hot Springs hotel, Las Vegas, N. M., by a justice of the peace. While on their honeymoon Mr. and Mrs. Creede went to Pueblo and bought a cottage close to the state lunatic asylum. There they remained until the bridegroom's bank account reached $1,000,000, and then they moved to the more fashionable Los Angeles.

A Colorado mining paper says Creede's real name was William Harvey. The reason for his change of name is said to have been nothing at all disgraceful to himself. He and a brother courted the same girl, and when his brother resorted to trickery to win William Harvey quit his family and native town, changed his name and went west.

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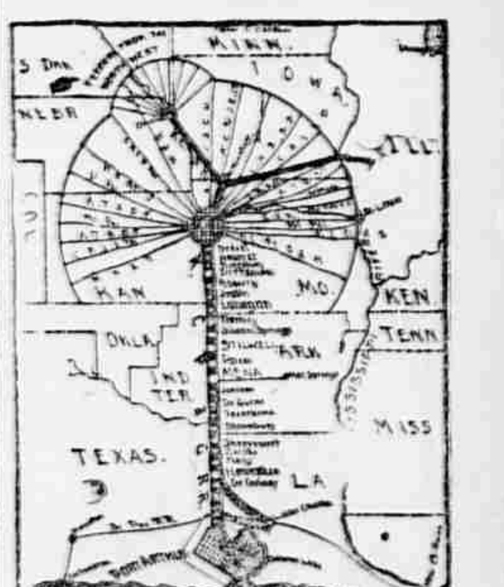

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