

Some New Wrinkles for Fighting Fire

(Continued from Seventh Page.)

places so filled with smoke that an unprotected man could not exist therein at all.

In front of the eyes are little round windows about twice the size of a silver dollar. These windows are made of stout isinglass, protected on the outside by wire. Air is supplied from a light nickel reservoir carried at the back of the helmet and constantly kept charged with compressed air, an ordinary bicycle pump being used in the charging. At the regulation pressure of eighty pounds the helmet will carry enough air to supply a man for several hours.

Protected by it a fireman can carry hose into places where formerly he could not possibly venture; he can explore with safety the most dangerous cellar; he can go anywhere without risk, so far as smoke or noxious gases are concerned, meanwhile keep-



SMOKE HELMET.

ing constantly in touch with his comrades outside by means of a whistle attached to the front of the helmet and worked by an ordinary rubber air bulb, such as is used on throat sprays.

Burglar Tools for Firemen.

Another "tool" carried by Truck 20 is in some respects as interesting as the fire helmet. This is a "door-opener," a burglarious device that would land any one not belonging to the department in jail if it was found in his possession by the police. It is guaranteed to open almost anything except the door of an iron safe and it might even make things interesting for a safe door.

The door-opener is about three feet high and works on the principle of the jack. Its main part is a stout steel bar, one end of which rests on the ground and the other against the door that is to be forced. A

lever that slides on this bar "jacks" the door with such force and rapidly that the firemen are inside the building almost as soon as the wheels of the truck that has brought the men have come to a standstill. To help the "jack man" along, there are generally two other men, one of whom manipulates a claw-hooked crowbar and the other an axe. The crowbar is used to wrench off the padlock that is usually found on store doors and the chap with the axe is on hand to give the door a vigorous tap so that it will spring open the moment the jack has forced the bolts.

If by some chance a door should be found that could resist the "jackscrew," the battering ram is rushed to the rescue. It is a huge iron post, about six feet long, with two handles on either side. When a couple of husky firemen swing this against door or wall, something has to give way and give way suddenly.

For cellar fighting a set of novel "pipes" has been designed. They are long, curved iron tubes with nozzle ends. The hose is attached to the open end and the nozzle is then poked down into the cellar, enabling the firemen to flood it and to point their hose in any direction without exposing themselves to suffocation from the smoke that almost always pours up in dense black columns from cellar fires. There are also subcellar pipes, by means of which a stream of water may be thrown and controlled twenty-five feet underground by the firemen working above. One of the cellar pipes has a revolving nozzle that works like the familiar lawnsprinkler, throwing a complete circle of water in every direction. This is used when the firemen are not certain as to the exact location of the flames below.

One of the most interesting of all the new fire-fighting wrinkles is a lifeline gun somewhat similar to those in use on the coast in case of shipwreck. Its possible value when persons are imprisoned by the flames is obvious.

Indians and Railroads

As the traveler passes through the big Sioux reservation in Montana on the overland express, relates the Atchison Globe, he is impressed with the uniform respect with which the Indians treat everybody connected with the railroad.

"The Indian is no fool," said a Great Northern official with whom I discussed the subject. "He knows when he is well treated and seldom expects anything unreasonable. This railroad has never knowingly done an Indian a wrong. We paid liberally for the right to cross the reservation, and any differences that arise are treated with consideration. We never try to impose upon the Indians in any way, nor do we permit them to impose upon us. When trains first began to run through the reservation a number of ponies were killed by accident. We promptly paid for them and the owners were satisfied. A few cunning Sioux thought they saw in the situation an opportunity to make money and drove their ponies to the track to be killed and paid for. We discovered the trick and appealed to the chief, who promptly suppressed the iniquity. This is the nearest approach to a misunderstanding that we have had."

A good story is told of a big chief who wanted to trade 100 ponies for a locomotive. He did not appreciate the utility of the track and thought he could dash over the prairies at will with the iron horse. It took some time and patience to get the idea out of the chief's head, but he finally relented. It was, however, a great disappointment.

Another story is connected with payment for the right of way through the reservation. It may not be quite accurate in letter, but it is true in spirit. The through express from St. Paul to Helena had not

been running long when a strange incident happened out on the prairie.

A solitary Indian, feathered in stately fashion and mounted on a horse of rare beauty, occupied a conspicuous position beside the track and gave the engineer a friendly signal to stop. Off went the steam and a gentle touch of the airbrake brought the long train to a standstill.

The red man explained that he represented his tribe in a matter of right-of-way. There had been a mistake and the railroad ought to pay some more money. In this formal and diplomatic manner the Indian explained, the matter was presented for adjustment, in full confidence that the great white chief who built the railroad would be just to his Indian friends.

For the engineer this was a poser. He had no idea that he was a diplomat, but he was, all the same. He called the conductor, and all three discussed the case. The white men knew nothing of the merits of the matter. The Indian talked like one who understood his business and was telling the truth.

The amount involved was only a few dollars and the conductor looked as wise as possible. He was a man of common sense sharpened by frontier life. With due deliberation he wrote out a receipt, which the Indian ambassador signed and the engineer witnessed. The money was paid out of the cash collections, and the conference was at an end.

The red man mounted his horse and applied his spurs. The engineer stepped into the cab and pulled a lever.

For an instant a party of eastern capitalists occupying an observation car were face to face with the Indian horseman. The white men received a lasting impression of majestic dignity and grace. The red man was dazzled by a vision of luxury of which he had never dreamed.

The extremes of civilization and savagery had met and parted in friendship. The Indian, according to tribal custom, reported the success of his mission with solemn formality and suppressed joy.

The train conductor, according to the regulations of a modern corporation, made a notation to the auditor on a blank form provided for the purpose, explaining why he was short in his cash, and asking that his report be held in abeyance until he could secure the approval of his irregular act by a higher official.

The approval came, with a statement that the Indian was right. There had been a mistake in the right-of-way settlement. It was also stated that the president of the railroad had intimated that while rules are sacred things there are times when common sense may serve a good purpose.

Plum Creek Massacre

NEBRASKA CITY, Jan. 8.—To the Editor of The Illustrated Bee: In your Christmas edition you published an article written by M. B. Davis on the Fort Kearney & Oregon route. Allow me to correct Mr. Davis as to the massacre at Plum creek. Mr. Davis says in his article that the stagecoach was attacked on August 1, 1864, at Plum creek and the entire party of eleven was killed.

The massacre at Plum creek was on the morning of August 8, 1864, and instead of being the stage it was Fletcher's outfit from Sidney, Ia. Eleven were killed and two women carried away by the Indians.

One of them committed suicide the first night. The other was finally rescued through some friendly Indians after having been with the Indians quite a long time and is still alive at some place in northern Iowa. My father and mother were eyewitnesses to the massacre. My father owned the ranch at Plum creek and lived there through all of these stirring times. Yours very respectfully,

GEORGE M. THOMAS.

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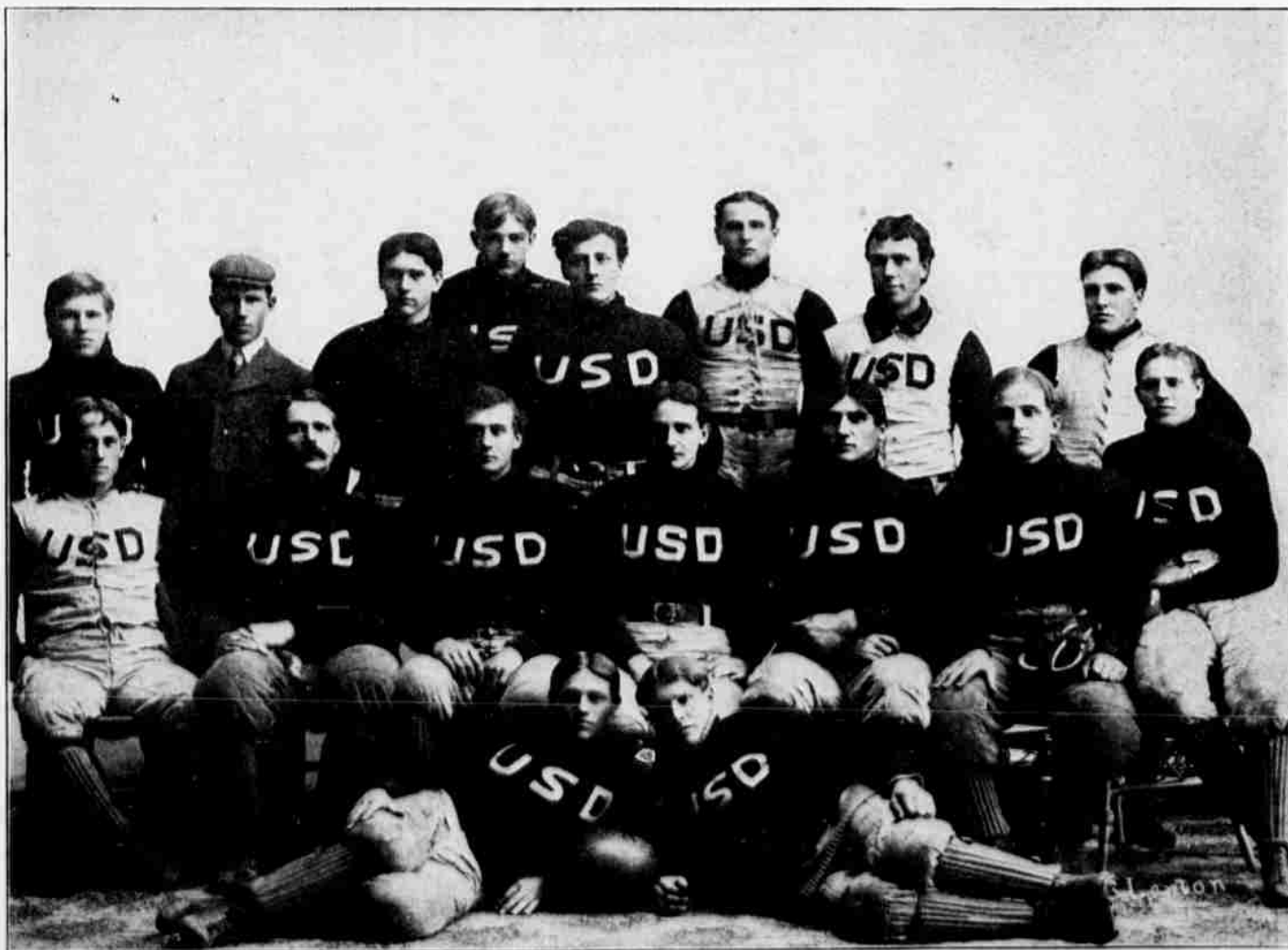
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