



NUMBER AND INITIAL.

and fell. Death seemed at this switchman wasn't tick as though he was of the track. There at the end of the car at



OF TRANSCONTINENTAL TRAFFIC.

men, and the axes cleared the engineer had seen before the second truck he would either have raked beam and be dragged and crushed, the engine jerk stopped the switchman then, of his class, took a full and rolled out from unsathed, and went on about nothing had happened the chances the switch-

order of things it is not switchman to go between of uncouple them. One ing illustrations shows a ng to a side ladder while that breaks the coupling e engine. e not kept in touch with the switching engine, or as he men who work love to call the big ma- the cars around, cannot change that has taken opment, even during the first place the switch y a road engine, disabled legated to what was then work. Then came the four-wheeled affair that ed, and slipped and slid But box cars kept getting r, and the pony had to ow to have magnificent

locomotives, as perfect and well equipped as any that run on the road, doing the work about the yards. Once the prejudice of the "road runner" against the yard engine was so great that an old engineer, who had been knocked down and mangled while crossing the tracks, praised God with his dying breath that he had not been killed "by one of those d—d ponies." Yard engines weighing sixty and eighty tons are common nowadays. Their work calls for great strength. Each engine is supposed to be able to start any sort of a string of cars on the level. One of the old-timers tells this story to illustrate the point:

**On Bill Turner.**

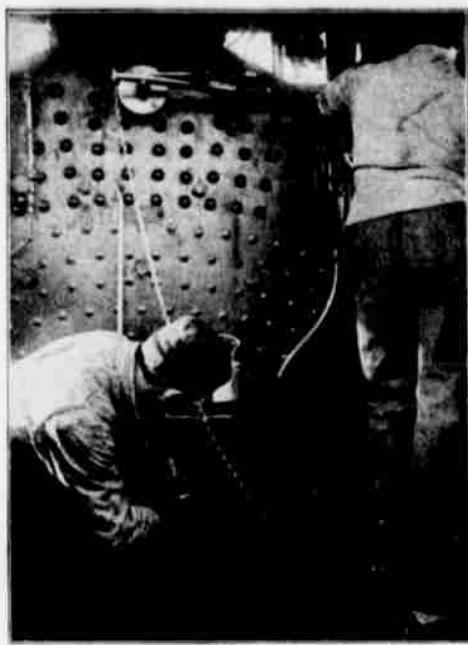
"It was down in the yards at Peoria. Old Bill Turner was yardmaster for the Q and he was a hustler. One day one of them little ponies had coupled into about a mile of boxcars loaded with corn. She couldn't start 'em, but she was slipping and snorting and making a great hullabaloo about it when Old Bill Turner came sailing down the track.

"What in —'s the matter with you?" he shouted at

snorted the engineer, 'she's on her third time 'round.'

"And you'd ought to see Old Bill Turner getting away from that part of the yard."

In those days there was little pleasure



INSIDE THE CAB.

for either engineer or fireman on the pony. It was, and is for that matter, the roughest sort of hard work to ride all day over the frogs, being bumped and jolted by the quick starts and stops, but this is minimized on the modern switch engine. It requires a high grade of skill to successfully run a switch engine. The engineer needs a quick eye and an accurate judgment of speed and distance in order to be able to quickly and carefully handle the cars. He and his fireman are kept busy all day watching for signals and looking after the safety of the men on the ground, besides the ordinary cares that fall to the lot of an engine crew. Eternal vigilance is just as essential in the cab of a switch engine as it is anywhere on earth. These men work ten and eleven hours a day, and while their lives may not be so spectacular as those of the men who pull the limited, if it wasn't for them the limited would never get out of the yards.

**Omaha Yards Are "Good."**

Omaha's several switching yards are busy places, but they bear a good reputation among railroad men. There are degrees in yards as in everything else. For instance, it is the general understanding that if a man can work in the Kansas City yards he can work anywhere.

Not so very many years ago it was the custom down in the Kaw bottoms to bury the unsuccessful aspirants for places on the switching crews. They were usually killed before the yardmaster got a chance to discharge them. It isn't because there is not a great deal of work done daily in the Omaha yards that they have a good name. It is because the tricks are so arranged that the men really have some chance to do their work in comparative safety. In order to give some notion of what is done daily The Bee gathered some figures during the week.

As to the number of cars handled the figures are not exact, owing to the reluctance of the roads to state their business to the public, but they are approximately correct. The other figures are accurate. Glimpses of the yards given in the illustrations on this page will enable the reader to form some idea of the extent of the trackage.

Terminal trackage and switching facilities in Omaha are controlled by the Union Pacific, Burlington, Missouri Pacific, Northwestern and Omaha Bridge & Terminal companies. These companies have a total of 230.7 miles of tracks in their yards. Over these is handled the business of the companies owning the yards and in addition that of the Rock Island, Milwaukee, Illinois Central, Elkhorn, Omaha, Sioux City & Pacific and Omaha & St. Louis roads.

**Equipment for a Railroad.**

To handle the business the Union Pacific uses thirty-five engines, the Terminal company three, the Missouri Pacific eight, the

Burlington five and the Northwestern four. In this connection it must be remembered that the Chicago roads do the greater part of their switching on the Iowa side of the river, the Burlington's big yards being at Pacific Junction.

These engines daily handle now, when business is slack, 2,750 freight cars and 516 passenger cars, or a total of 3,266 cars a day. In times when business is good these figures are increased by one-half at least, so that it is not an infrequent occurrence that 5,000 cars are handled in twenty-four hours in the Omaha yards.

It is easy to get some notion of the extent of this business. A railroad 230 miles long, equipped with 516 passenger cars—sleepers, day coaches, baggage, mail and



"OILING ROUND" UNION PACIFIC.

express cars; 2,750 freight cars and forty-five engines, employing 500 men in the operating department, would be looked upon by the stockholders as a pretty good-sized proposition in itself. Many a town of metropolitan pretensions would be boastful if it could demonstrate that in its yards were handled in a month as many cars as are handled in the Omaha yards in a day during the dull season. This list of comparisons may be continued indefinitely. These few will serve to show how extensive the Omaha switch yards really are. And then add to these yards in South Omaha and Council Bluffs, with their great trackage and daily traffic, and you'll have a notion of the immense importance of the switchman to the business world in this vicinity. Multiply him by every railroad center in the United States; by every division station on every trunk line, and you'll get



GOING TO WORK.

an idea of his relation to the business world in general.

He is not a hero. He is merely a man who works.

**Short Stories Well Told**

Senator Lindsay was discussing the Porto Rican cases before the United States supreme court last week when Justice White asked him if he thought that congress had full jurisdiction over the territories. "Oh, yes," said the senator, remembering ex-President Harrison's recent article in a magazine, "it can even make a Presbyterian acknowledge religion."

All the justices laughed—all except Justice Shiras, who, being a Presbyterian, did not think the reference at all humorous.

Three soldiers wearing the blue and yellow of the United States cavalry did a good turn the other day to a thin, shivering "sandwich" man who was standing in front of Trinity church, New York. The soldiers were making a hilarious way to South Ferry. Every block or so they stopped and took observations through a big black bottle. The sandwich man's teeth chattered and he looked at the bottle

greedily. One of the soldiers noticed the mute appeal. "Have a drink, old party?" he said, passing the bottle over. The sandwich man grabbed it in two purple hands and before the cavalryman could stop him



"OILING ROUND" B. & M.

he had drunk at the least half a pint of cheap whisky. Then he wiped his lips on his coat sleeve and returned the bottle. The cavalryman's eyes bulged with wonder. "If I had a thirst like that," he said, "I'd never do another day's work."

At a gathering of prominent men at Chamberlain's in Washington the other night the conversation turned to the ups and downs of politics. In the party were Private John Allen of Mississippi and Senator Shoup of Idaho, both of whom have just concluded unsuccessful senatorial canvasses of their respective states.

"What's the matter down in Mississippi and out in Idaho?" someone asked Representative Allen, "that two such brilliant men as you and Shoup do not seem to be wanted in the senate?"

"Well, now," drawled the Mississippian of famous wit, "Idaho is a long way off, and I can't tell you much about why Shoup got left, but I can tell you about Mississippi; I know all about it." Then, in a confidential whisper and with an air of imparting some startling secret, he added: "Mississippi

who was visiting the school, and she finally inquired: "Can anyone tell me who is the governor of Massachusetts?"

No one could tell, not even little Oliver. The teacher then told every one of the pupils when he got home to ask his father, so as to be ready to tell her the next day. Accordingly, when the class was assembled the following morning, she gave out the question, calling on Oliver to see what he might have to say about it. Oliver answered:

"Pa says he's the governor. But I don't believe it, 'cause he always making fun of ever'thin' so!"

Lord Kelvin, the eminent English scientist, was a practical man in all things. Nothing annoyed him more during his lectures than inattention on the part of his pupils. He once surprised his class by the quick and amusing manner in which he solved a problem on sound. In the midst of an experiment Lord Kelvin had ceased lecturing and was silently watching, along with most of the students, the progress of an experiment. There was a dead silence, which was suddenly and rudely broken by the sound of a marble, which an inattentive student had purposely dropped and which continued to roll and drop, drop down all the tiers of benches till it reached the ground floor. Meanwhile Lord Kelvin had quickly turned around and observed where the marble emerged onto the floor. He counted back the number of times he had heard it drop and then announced:

"Mr. X— of the seventh tier, you may report to me after the lecture."

The eminent scientist had correctly spotted the culprit.

The other morning a gentleman with white beard, closely cropped, and quite an aldermanic girth, walked down Pennsylvania avenue to the capitol, relates the Washington Post. On the way he stepped into a shop kept by John Denham to make a purchase. The shopkeeper looked at his customer closely.

"Did any one ever tell you," he asked, "that you looked like ex-President Harrison?"

"Yes," was the reply. "I have heard it said very often. Do you think there is a resemblance?"

"I should say so," answered Denham. "I never saw General Harrison, but from his picture I should say you were a dead ringer for him."

The purchaser gave a little chuckle, as if he were intensely pleased, and then went out of the shop, proceeding on his way to the capitol. Denham went to the door and



AN EASY WAY OF COURTING DEATH.

isn't sending its best men to the senate this year."

During the late ex-Governor Wolcott's term of office as governor of Massachusetts his youngest son, Oliver, was in one of the primary classes of a school. The teacher was one day asking questions of her little pupils, to give them a chance to show what they knew about one thing and another for the entertainment of a lady

looked after him. Standing in the doorway was "Al" Reed, the district agent of the Atlantic Coast line. "Al," said Denham, "did you see that man who was in here last now?"

"Yes," said Reed.

"I told him," said Denham, "that he looked just like ex-President Harrison."

"Of course he did!" exclaimed Reed. "That was Harrison himself."

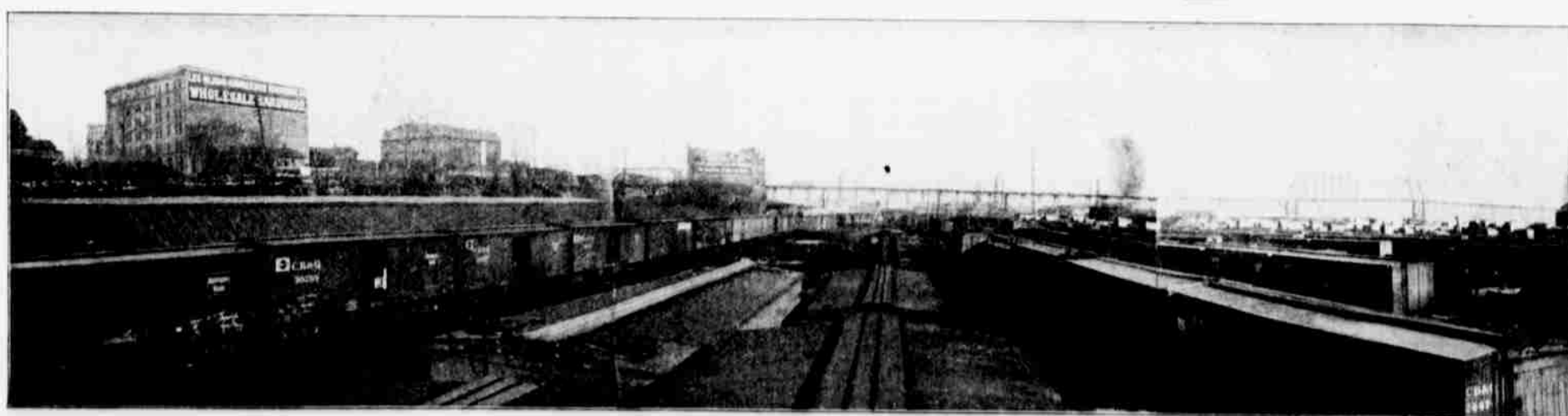
Marjorie had just returned from a visit to the old homestead in Tennessee, where a colored nurse nearly 100 years old was still a treasured inmate. It puzzled her that Chloe should be called "auntie" by her mother and the family, but at last she accepted the fact and did likewise. Her playmates, trooping in to welcome her home, began to enumerate their possessions acquired during her absence.

"I've got a black pony," crowed Charlie exultantly.

"I've got a new baby brother," cried Jessie.

"M'm! That's nothing; I've got two of 'em," retorted Fred.

Marjorie's eyes flash'd. "Oh!" she cried, "I've got a heap more'n that; I've got an auntie as old as Methuselah and black as tar."



IN THE BURLINGTON LOCAL YARDS.