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Passing Events in the Field of Electricity

Electric Motors at Railroad Terminals

The New York Central company has substituted electric motors for locomotives on passenger trains in and out of the New York City terminal. The change was inaugurated on December 19 and the result appears to be satisfactory. Though anticipated for some time, the change is hailed as the beginning of the end of locomotive smoke clouds and gases which have been a chronic nuisance to people living near the right-of-way over which enormous traffic passes day and night. The revolution makes for a cleaner city and increased comfort for passengers. It means much more in a general sense. It furnishes an example which other cities will follow. The commissioners of the District of Columbia have notified the railroads interested that steam locomotives must be dispensed with in Washington and will not be allowed to enter the new Union station when ready for business next year. Chicago takes courage from these examples and hopes some day to see its beautiful lake front unsmudged by puffing locomotives.

Plans for a more beautiful Chicago, says the Tribune, "should include provision for the banishment of all steam locomotives from the city limits. The daily list of offenders against the anti-smoke ordinance usually contains the names of several of the railroads. Individual engines being reported by watchful public agents. These occasional citations do not begin to suggest the great nuisance which is maintained by every railroad which enters the city. People whose homes are near the tracks long since gave up the idea of keeping things clean. They have tried to accustom themselves to the noise or have become reconciled to it. Hundreds of commuters every day in the year are forced to endure the smoke and the cinders. Many of the suburban stations are so arranged that a passenger coming up the stairs or going down gets the full benefit of the belongings of the engines. A clean platform is a rarity.

"These conditions have been accepted in the past as necessary. But that day has gone now, for the successful employment of electric motors has pointed a better way. The evidence of the elevated railroads is visible to all. In some cases the third rail has been laid upon the surface, permitting rapid transit without the dust and smoke and noise. The presence of warning signs, 'Danger! Look out for the live third rail!' at crossings or at other places along the line points to an element of new difficulty, but the advantages far outweigh the dangers. The New York Central lines are being electrified for fifty miles or more from the central station, and the patrons are looking forward to an early elimination of the smoke nuisance and a marked reduction in the amount of noise.

What is being done elsewhere ought to be done here in Chicago. If all locomotives were stopped at the city limits and none but electric engines permitted within those bounds the gain would be wonderful. The dangers will be minimized on the elevated tracks and proper precautions on surface lines will lessen the likelihood of accident to the individual who keeps off the tracks where danger signs abound. There would be considerable initial expense of installation, but the beneficial results would be so many as to make the matter of expense entirely secondary.

Sending Photographs by Wire.

Great improvements are said to have been effected by Prof. Korn of the Munich university in his apparatus for transmitting photographs over the telegraph wires. He has succeeded in sending photographs from Munich to Nuremberg, a distance of 109 miles, in from ten to fifteen minutes. Precisely the same results, says Prof. Korn, would be obtained if the photographs were transmitted by a telegraph line of any length. The photograph is placed on a transparent glass cylinder, which revolves slowly and at the same time moves right and left. A ray of light is thrown on the cylinder by means of an electric lamp and lens, and when the ray reaches the interior of the cylinder it is brighter or darker, according to the coloring of that particular part of photograph through which it passes. Inside the cylinder is some selenium, which transmits the electrical current in proportion to the intensity of the light brought to bear on it. The receiving apparatus consists of an electrical Nernst lamp placed inside a glass cylinder covered with sensitized paper, on which is reproduced the photograph in its exact shades, provided that the cylinders at each end of the wire revolve at exactly the same speed. It is hoped to make such improvements in the apparatus as will enable pictures to be photographed in two minutes.

Berlin Telephone Improvements.

For many years past the working of the Berlin telephones has given rise to much justifiable complaint owing to interruptions in communications, partly mechanical and partly electrical in their nature. The system about to be introduced there entirely avoids the use of handsets for calls and connects and does away with the magnet arrangement. It is devised for calling up the exchange automatically by means of double terminal signals and central battery working. For calling on and off recourse is had to inductant lamps. As soon as the subscriber removes his telephone from the hook a lamp is lighted at the exchange. The operator signifies attention by placing the plug attached to a two-way cord in the jack and asks for the number required; if another exchange is needed she depresses a button which puts her on the call wire. After receiving the junction line number she then places the other plug attached to the cord in the junction jack. This causes the signal lamp of the second exchange to be switched on. Only when the person called is reached—that is to say, when the second subscriber has lifted his microphone from the hook—is the lamp put out. So that as long as it continues to burn it is an indication that through communication has not yet been established. When, at the end of their conversation, the two subscribers hang their microphones on the respective hooks, two small signal lamps are illuminated on the keyboard, termed the end lamps, on which the operator at

Tersely Told Tales Both Grim and Gay

Retort Concoctatory.

His late General Shafter was accustomed to tell of a neat retort made by a volunteer soldier to an officer during the Cuban campaign.

Near Siboney, one night after a march, it chanced a few of the "boys" of a Tennessee company had pitched their tents in close proximity to the tent of an officer of another company. The "boys" were somewhat noisy, as taps had not been sounded.

"Shut up, over there!" shouted the officer, angrily.

"Who are you?" asked one of the "boys."

"I'll soon show you if I come out there," was the response.

The boys, however, continued their racket to such an extent that the irritated officer soon appeared upon the scene and read them a terrible lecture, winding up with the threat to report the men to their colonel. "Don't you men know enough to obey a superior officer?" demanded he, testily.

"Yes, sir," respectfully answered one of the men. "We should have obeyed you at once if you'd had shoulder straps on your voice."—New York Times.

In Self-Defense.

An eminent judge of northern Vermont was fond of telling the following story: At a session of the criminal court, over which he was presiding, a man was being tried for stealing a sheep; he had been discovered taking the dead animal home, and when he was arrested there was evidence that the sheep had already furnished several meals for the family. He was asked if he had anything to say before sentence was passed upon him. "I killed the sheep, your honor, but I did it in self-defense."

"Self-defense?" said the indignant judge. "Killed a sheep in self-defense? What do you mean by such a statement?" To which the man replied: "No damned sheep bites me and lives!"—Harper's Weekly.

Post Earns a Hat.

Barry Hilliard, who forty odd years ago lived in a small town in northern Vermont, was noted for his careless vagabond habits, ready wit and remarkable facility for extemporaneous rhyming. While he was sitting one day in the village store of what is now a part of Montpelier, among a group of idlers, the genial merchant asked him why he wore such a shocking bad hat. Barry replied that he could not afford a better one.

"Come now," said the merchant, "make me a rhyme on a bad hat and I will give you the best I have in my store." Instantly Barry threw the old one on the floor and began:

Here lies my old hat,
And pray what of that?
It's as good as the rest of my raiment!
You'll make me your debtor.
And send me to jail for the payment.
The new hat was voted to be fairly won,
And Barry bore it off in triumph, saying:
'Tis a poor head that can't take care of itself!—Boston Herald.

Keeping Christmas Continuously in the Heart

GRAN'S rassin' match is goin' on in every corner of the civilized globe," says Mr. Dooley in the American Magazine. "An' we're all in a tangle, fightin', quarrelin', robbin', plundrin', or murderin', accordin' to our tastes. It's what Hogan calls the struggle for existence, an' it'll always go on while there's a dollar in the wuruld, a woman, or a ribbon to wear in our coats. But on the three hundred and sixtieth day suddenly we hear a voice: 'Gintlemen, gentlemen, not before th' children!' An' we get up an' brush th' dust off our clothes and shake hands, prettin' in' it was all fun. 'Th' kids have come in.'

Wouldn't things be changed if after the truce observed December 25, 1888, the men and women of the world failed to renew the fighting and the quarrelin'? Wouldn't life be more than worth the living if after keeping Christmas in the form, by filling the children's stockings on Christmas eve and exchanging gifts and salutations with friends on Christmas day, we kept Christmas in the heart for the balance of the year?

One writer gave us a hint when he said that the kindness and good cheer generally prevalent during Christmas season represents the normal condition of society when it shall reach that perfection possible among human beings. And there are those who believe that in spite of wars and rumors of wars between nations, in the face of oppression and greed among individuals we are moving to that very condition where-keeping Christmas in the heart—men and women will obtain during all the year the inspiration and exaltation they derive during the few hours of the designated season when they keep Christmas in the form. And those who indulge in this bit of optimism tell us that love is leading the way.

Well, Love knows the way; and the men and women who follow her call will find it.

And how are we to put in the entire year

keeping Christmas in the heart? Certainly not by hanging up the stockings every evening of the year; nor by continual exchange of gifts; nor by making perpetual the strain and labors of the Christmas season as we now observe it. But rather by toning down some of the madnes—or, if you prefer to call it, the enthusiasm—of that season, so that our efforts to make a showing for ourselves and immediate friends we put no undue strain upon the pocketbook of our bread-winner, and impose no undue burden upon the poorly-paid shop girl. But—though we sometimes forget it—is the child of some other parents who are just as anxious that their child be comfortable and free from vexatious burdens as we are that our child be surfeited with Christmas gifts.

It is by the use of a little heaven that leaveth out of the great pile of friendly solicitude, of generosity, of good cheer and of kindly disposition that now characterizes the Christmas season; so that without detracting from the joy of that period we contribute to the continuing happiness of men and to the permanent well-being of the world. "But only Love may lead love in to Arcady, to Arcady."

One would be thought single indeed were he to ask in this day: "What is love?" There are, ready at hand, so many answers to the question and most of them are plainly illustrated in every day life.

The mother bending over her first born tells us that is love—and the love light that lies within that mother's eyes tell us that at least is truth.

The father, ready to sacrifice his all for the future of his boy, tells us that is love; and we know that he speaks as one who feels, and feeling, knows.

The maiden knows that love is described in that picture where

A warrior so bold, and a virgin so bright
Conversed as they sat on the green.
They gazed on each other with tenderest delight,

pastime it will not be necessary "when the children come in" for us to "brush th' dust off our clothes an' shake hands prettin' in' it was all fun." Then "the children's season" will last the year round; then the air will be full of music; the world will be full of flowers; life will be full of hope—because the hearts of men are full of love.

The world is not growing worse as some of the disconsolate would have us believe. It is growing better and there flows, at this moment, from the hearts of men more of the milk of human kindness than at any other time in the history of the world. What if meanness and oppression are revealed? The very revelation shows the power of public opinion; and shows, also, that the trend of men's thought is upward.

What if doctrinaires complain that men are becoming indifferent to the details of creeds? That is because they are more determined than ever in their efforts to get closer to God.

Dr. P. L. Hall, one of the best known of Nebraska bankers, responding to the question: "Is the world getting worse?" replied: "No," and added: "There never was a generation in this country in which the moral hazard as a basis for credit entered so largely as in this."

Practical men are turning to the better things of life. They know that love and the things it stands for are alone worth cultivating; they know that to cherish malice, to lay traps for one's neighbor, to encourage vanity and indulge in bombast is a veritable waste of time. They feel with the poet of old who wrote:

"The warrior for the True, the Right,
Fights in Love's name;
The love that turns the world from that light
Loves this to shame."

"That love which lifts the heart, yet leaves
The spirit free—
That love, or none, is fit for one
Man-shaped like I!"

"Keeping Christmas in the heart" will yet become the habit of men; and he who adopts that habit will find

My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to Thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite."

In art and literature the little child is made the representative of innocence for obvious reasons. The Danish queen who, "Oh! keep me innocent, make others great," voiced what is today a wish of many thoughtful parents with respect to the future of their children, as it well might be the wish of thoughtful men with respect to the future of their race. Men of the past who were controlled by vanity where they were not moved by greed, struggled under the embarrassments and handicaps of those who would be "great," let the men of the future be touched with the satisfying qualities of innocence and find that contentment awaiting those who are willing to seek it along the simple lines where love will lead the way.

For my own children I breathe this Christmas prayer:

Give them knowledge; but hold them true,
Ripen their intellect; but keep their hearts young.
Lead them to the heights where by learning much from their teachers men may give much to their fellows; but let them retain to the end a practical trust in the tenderness of men and a simple faith in the goodness and the almsness of God.
Let them be kind to every creature—to every man grown weary, to every woman grown faint, to every child made homeless, to every bird in the air and to every beast in the field—finding in all things something to command their concern, and in all things something to stir their affections.

Keep Christmas within their hearts, work day and play day alike, making each one feel, during all the journey through life, that:

Whatever mine ears can hear,
Whichever mine eyes can see,
In nature so bright with beauty and light,
Has a message of love for me.

RICHARD L. METCALFE.

Proclaims His Good Luck

One afternoon, some years ago, the late Governor Russell, out from Cedar Grove lodge to enjoy a few hours' fishing on Ponkapog pond. Down at the other end of the pond was a boat containing Willard G. Brown of Randolph and a party of fishermen's presence.

Brown's party having been out all day without getting a bite, someone suggested a little game of "seven up." So they seated themselves in the bottom of their boat, which was a typical Ponkapog craft, built on the mud sock pattern, and the game was on.

After playing for some time they noticed a strange boat approaching, and one of its occupants, who was leveling a field glass at them, was heard to exclaim: "Those fellows must have struck a school. They've been cleaning fish ever since we came out."

As soon as the boats were within halting distance Governor Russell inquired, "What luck?" to which Brown replied: "I just bagged on the sea and fishes of trumps and made high, low, jack, gift, game, and all the trimmings!"—Boston Herald.

Diis in Discharge of Duty.

Champ Clark relates the experience of a western politician who was making a house-to-house canvass some years ago.

This politician had come to a prosperous looking farm house at a cross road, when he observed a comely young woman standing at the gate. Pulling up his horse the candidate for the people's favor gracefully lifted his hat in salute of the young woman, and politely asked:

"No doubt, madam, your estimable husband is at home?"

"Yes," responded the woman.

"Might I have the pleasure of seeing him?" suavely inquired the politician.

"He's down in the pasture a-buryn' the dog," came from the individual at the gate.

"I am very sorry, indeed, to learn of the death of your dog," came in sympathetic tone from the candidate. "What killed it?"

"It wore itself out a-barkin' at candidates," said the woman.—Rochester Liard.

Alonzo the Brave was the name of the knight—
The Maiden's Fair Imogene.
The manly lad with the first touch of down on his lip knows what love is when, turning to the sweetheart of his youth, he says:

If you become a nun, dear,
The bishop Love will be;
The cupid every one dear,
I'll chase him from your side."

One poet tells us "love is madness, love is sadness; another that it is "the sweetest joy, the wildest woe." One grown crusty in bachelorhood calls it "a delusion and a snare" and a hopeless one declares "love is the tyrant of the heart; it darkens reason, confounds discretion; deaf to counsel, it runs a headlong course to desperate madness."

But the blitheness of the poets and the cynicism of the despairing cannot affect the views of the man who has walked by love's side; walked by love's side when he gathered the myrtle with Mary; walked by love's side when he led to the altar the girl of his choice; walked by love's side at the cradle of the first born to that holy union; walked by love's side—and held within his own trembling grasp love's firm hand—by the little grave in which was centered that common interest which binds two hearts closer than any marriage vow yet spoken by a priest.

We know that when the maid and the lad, the mother and the father, and the friend have spoken they have told us of love—and that that is love, indeed! But all these are but representatives of the real thing—the out-cropping in particular individuals of that which was to affect all individuals; the triumph in particular quarters of that which was to dominate in all quarters; the hint—strong and beautiful, but a mere hint nevertheless—of that great "truth of truths" which Disraeli described as "The principle of existence and its only end."

Keeping Christmas in the heart as a rule of life rather than as a mere holiday