BAXTER SPRINGS NEWS.

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BAXTER SPRINGS, - - KANSAS

THE LAST INN.

This is the inn where I
Have journeyed all my days;
I enter—close the door—good-bye!
And the world can go its ways.
The soft, cool shadows round me creep;
I lay me down to rest—to sleep.

There is no reckoning here;
Not any noise or strife;
Nor shall one murmur at the fare
When Death is host to Life.
Clean bed and board for ye that come,
But sightless eyes and lips made dumb.

Cold ice at head and feet,
But flowers of colors grand,
To make the air above you sweet
And paint the roof of sand.
What more? And when the keen winds blow,
Sweet dreams in daisies 'neath the snow.

Good night, friends, and farewell!
Our lives must parted be.
Grieve not that I with Death must dwell,
For Death is kind to me.
Tired, I lay me down to rest,
A child lulled on a mother's breast.

—F. L. Stanton, in Atlanta Constitution.

"OLD 68."

A Fireman's Wierd Adventure on a Terrible Night.

I HAVE long since given up trying to understand it, and have put it from my mind as much as possible. There was a time when I thought about it too much, and when it seemed to rest upon my brain like a black, impenetrable cloud, darkening my whole life with its horror and mystery. Sometimes, even now, when I am wakeful at night, that weird picture rises before my eyes, and that wild voice rings in my ears, until my flesh creeps and the cold sweat starts out upon me. Then I see before me again—but I will tell you the story and you shall judge for yourself. They say that learned men and philosophers deny that such things can be. Well, I wish the wisest and most skeptical of them all could have stood in my shoes that night: it would have given him something to think of for a long time, at any rate.

That winter was a bitterly cold one and terribly severe on us railroad men, exposed, as we always are, to the worst of it at all hours of the day and night. Many a good fellow died of colds caught in the merciless storms of that year, or, benumbed and stiffened in the icy winds, missed his grip and rolled under the wheels, and—well, only a trainhand gone! Who takes note of such small matters?

I was firing on the heavy engine, known along the line as "Old 68." She was a tough old bruiser and sometimes obstinate as a mule, so that, fire as you might, you could not keep steam in her boiler nor the hand on the gauge up to the sixty-pound mark. But on the whole she was trustworthy enough as engines go, and once get her in good humor she would pound along at a forty-mile gait as lively as the best of them.

My engineer, Shelly, was one of the smartest and steadiest men on the road—an eye like a hawk's to catch signals, a hand of steel at the valve and bar, cool and steady in danger and fearless of death, as if he would sooner have met it than not—which I often suspected was really the case. He was not one of your rough, swearing, drinking fellows, but, as was plain to see, had known better things than the hard, coarse life of an engineer. He never kept company with the rest of the men, though he was never offensive nor put on lofty airs; but there was a kind of reserve about him which seemed to keep every one at a distance without any effort on his part. He had no enemies and no friends. Those who knew him best knew but little about the man himself and nothing whatever about his past history.

There had been some rumors of a terrible tragedy in his life—the sudden death of his wife, it was said, by violence; but they were very vague. He never referred to them himself, and no one else would have dreamed of questioning him. Even I, who had been firing for him, riding by his side for many months, and for whom I think he felt as much friendship as he could feel for any human being, would have as soon thought of putting my hand in the blower as to have asked him any questions. And even to-day I am really as much in the dark as I was then; for that strange and terrible experience which I am going to relate only deepened the mystery.

The winter of '78 was a hard one, as I have said, and, though early in the season, the night of the 19th of November was one of the bitterest of the year. Cold, gray and quiet; no moon, no stars and no clouds, only a kind of obscurity over every thing, in which objects were partly visible, distorted and changed, so that we had to keep a sharper look-out even than upon a dead-black night.

The run was a long one and we were carrying only two cars, one passenger and one freight, both empty, for we expected to get one load when we met the north bound express at Sharp's junction.

When I swung myself into the cab I was startled by the expression of Shelly's face. It was deadly pale and set. I remember noticing that he had bitten his lower lip and that there was blood upon it.

"Why, Shelly, old man, what has happened?" I exclaimed. "Are you sick?"

He smiled and his features relaxed slowly into their usual sad expression, as he answered:

"No, Tom, nothing has happened, only a headache. Don't mind me."

Just then we received the signal to start and soon left the station behind us in the gloom. I had my hands full keeping a head of steam on for the first few miles, but as I busied myself about the furnace, I could not help glancing at Shelly now and then, as he sat peering out into the dusk before us, with that strange set look upon his face, and thinking: "A heart-ache, poor fellow, instead of a head-ache is what you mean."

There were twenty miles of straight driving before we made the first stop. We had got over about half the distance and I was just settling down to steady work, having my furnaces well loaded and seen that my water gauges were well up, when I was startled by a sharp exclamation from Shelly. Looking up quickly, I was shocked at his appearance. He was leaning forward, gazing out of the cab window, which was open, his eyes starting from his head and his whole air expressive of the most intense terror and expectancy. Above the clanking of the machinery and the whizz of the escaping steam, I could hear his loud, quick breathing.

"Shelly," I cried, "what is it?"

He did not heed me until I had repeated my question in a louder tone.

He put out his hand as if to silence me without turning. "Hush!" he said, in a strange, choked voice; "hush, Tom! *she is there.*"

"She! who?" I asked, in alarm. "There is no one there. You are ill, Shelly."

"No, no," he answered, in the same husky tone. "She is there, I tell you."

"You are mad, Shelly," I cried, nervously, hardly knowing what I was saying. "What woman would be out on such a night as this?"

He slowly turned his face toward me and by the faint light of the gauge lamp I could see how locked and rigid his features were.

"No *living* woman," he said in a slow, penetrating whisper, every syllable of which was audible above the noise of the engine. "A dead woman, Tom."

I am not naturally a nervous man, and at times, at least, in the prime of my youth and strength, I feared neither man nor ghost, but I confess I was thoroughly shaken. There was something so uncanny about the whole thing. The unnatural expression of the man's face, the blood-curdling accents of his voice, his evident belief in his own impressions, all contributed to send an icy chill down my skin and bring the perspiration out upon my forehead.

"Shelly!" I cried, "Shelly, don't look out there. Shut the window and sit down. I'll run her to Sharp's and give you time to get over this."

For reply he beckoned me to his side and against my will I crossed to where he stood.

"Look there!" he muttered in my ear, while his fingers closed upon my arm with a vise-like grip. "There just ahead of the pilot in the glare of the head-light—and tell me what you see."

In the lane of light flung far ahead upon the tracks, making a brilliant wedge in the darkness, the steam,

HE PUT OUT HIS HAND.

driven downward by the icy wind, rolled in dense white volumes, at times shutting off the view as with a thick, waving curtain. And there just beside the engine, not ten feet distant, I saw—what? I rubbed my eyes and stared. I drew back and looked at Shelly's haggard face in bewildered inquiry, too much horrified to speak, rubbed my eyes again and looked. Yes, there it was! Was I mad or dreaming? Could I trust my own senses and was there, almost within reach of my outstretched arm, floating in the air and keeping pace with our swift motion a *woman's form?*

"Shelly," I whispered, breaking the spell of terror which was upon me with an effort. "What does it mean? What is this awful thing?"

"See," he replied in a tone which I hope never again to hear from the lips of mortal man while I live. "She has come to accuse me for the deed I did. She has come to exact retribution from the man who loved her better than his own soul, and yet took her innocent life."

"Shelly, Shelly!" I cried, shaking so violently that I could hardly keep my feet. "What are you saying?"

"Look," he said, pointing with a trembling finger through the open window. "See what is upon her breast! I did that. I, lost wretch that I am, gave her the blow in my mad jealousy that let out her pure young life. And I loved her, oh, Heaven! I loved her."

He covered his face with his hands and I heard him sobbing aloud, as with clang of wheels and rush of steam we swept onward. Meanwhile with eyes starting from their sockets I continued to gaze at the nameless thing before me.

Unnerved and distracted though I was, there could be no mistake in what I saw. In the midst of the rolling clouds of steam, seeming to be formed out of it and at times to melt with it again, the tall, slender form, clad in a long floating robe of white, was as plainly visible as the dark bulk of the engine beside which it floated. It was, as I have said, the figure of a woman; young, in the very flower of her early prime, and beautiful beyond any thing I had ever imagined. Her long, pale brown hair unloosed from its fastening, fell over her shoulders. When the steam

FLOATING ON THE AIR WAS A WOMAN'S FORM.

rolled away from before her face, I could see that the eyes were fixed upon the cowering man beside me with an expression of ineffable love and sadness.

And what was that upon the side of her white robe, under the left breast, that dark spot, which as the light from the head-lamp fell upon her spectral figure turned a deep, terrible crimson? In my horror and confusion I had some vague idea of its significance.

"Shelly, Shelly, for God's sake tell me who is that woman?" I said, in a husky whisper.

He raised his head, and gazing out of the window at the weird shape, muttered, in the same awe-struck voice, apparently oblivious of my presence:

"My wife, my beautiful wife, whom I adored and whom I falsely accused of sin, and in my madness destroyed! Forgive me! I have suffered, ever since that awful night I have lived in torment, living an hourly death. Have I not expiated my crime? Have mercy! Have mercy!"

Was it the fancy of my excited brain, or did she extend her hands towards him with a gesture of infinite tenderness? Shelly turned towards me and in a voice whose calmness startled me continued:

"Dear friend, my time has come. I must die. She has told me. See, she beckons for me. I am content, I have been very unhappy and now I shall be at peace. See, she forgives me; she knows I loved her. Do my memory justice, old friend, and run 'Old 68' to the station—"

Even while he was speaking there was a fearful shock! The engine seemed to leap bodily in the air, then turn over and over in an awful plunge downward. In the instant that I hung clutching the rail of the cab during our mad somersault I saw, or thought I saw, that weird white form bending over the form of Shelly fallen inert upon the floor, then came a sound like the rending of the sky, and all was darkness.

When I came to myself I was in bed, weak, crushed and at the very verge of death. In the weeks of slow recovery that followed I learned that we had been wrecked upon a misplaced switch, and in the complete wreck that followed but one life had been sacrificed, as I expected—Shelly's. He had been found in the cab of the ruined engine with the spring of the throttle-valve thrust through his left breast like a knife. He had only too surely predicted his own strange death. But the wound in his breast, the counterpart of that phantom shape—how explain it? And how explain what I saw and what he said before he died? Do the dead come back and exact retribution from us for our crimes against them? Did I indeed see the ghost of Shelly's wife slain by his jealous hand, or was it merely the wild imagery of delirium of the long fever which followed my injury? Who shall say? Who indeed shall answer any one of the questions which make up the mystery we call life?—M. C. Hammond, in Drake's Magazine.

—Female Reporter—"I seem to use twice as many pencils as you." Male Reporter—"Well, you must remember I don't underscore every second word."—N. Y. Epoch.

FOOLED THE MAGICIAN.

A Foxy Amateur Gets the Best of Herrmann in a Private Performance.

It is related of Herrmann, the magician, who is fond of playing his tricks off the stage, to amuse his friends, that he was accosted one evening in an uptown cafe by a conceited-looking man who had been watching the prestidigitateur do some clever sleight-of-hand work, and finally broke in with:

"You're a pretty clever man, Mr. Herrmann, but I can do a trick as good as any of yours. I can change a five-cent-piece that you may hold in your clenched fist into a one-dollar gold coin."

"Why, my dear fellow," laughed the magician, "that's one of the simplest tricks in my profession, one that an adept would think it beneath him to perform. He might amuse a child with it, perhaps, but so could a mere beginner."

"You may laugh at it," persisted the man; "but I'll bet you can't do it."

"Nonsense," said Herrmann, "I wouldn't—"

"You're stuck, old man," sneered the conceited one; "I'll bet I could play it on you and you can't play it on me, and I ain't in the 'perfesh' either."

"Do it for him, Herrmann, if just to shut him up, and get rid of him," said one of the bystanders.

"Well, where's your five-cent piece?" said the magician, rather wearily.

"There it is," replied the rival wonder-worker; "now change it to a one-dollar gold coin if you can."

"Now I'll show you," said Herrmann, "how an amateur magician or a tyro in the profession would proceed to perform this idiotic little trick before a drawing-room full of children or a gaping crowd of country bumpkins at a country fair."

"Extend your arm," he commanded with a wave of his hand, assuming a mock-heroic attitude.

The man shoved out his hand, in the palm of which lay a five-cent piece.

"This is your own coin, my friend?"

"Yes."

"You're sure of that?"

"Yes."

"Tell the audience whether there is any collusion between us to deceive them in any way."

"There ain't any."

"All is fair and above board, gentlemen and ladies. No fraud, collusion, or any thing of that kind whatsoever. Shut your hands tight, my friend. Now take care not to let your coin slip. Clench it. Presto——!" and Herrmann made several theatrical waves and passes with his arms.

"Now open your hand."

The man did so, and there lay a bright, new one-dollar gold piece.

"Well, you did it after all," said the conceited one cunningly, a little crestfallen, "and as slick as I could have done it myself," and he turned to go away.

"Good-bye," said Herrmann, "you may leave me my gold dollar, though, before you go."

"What do you mean?" said the man, with a twinkle in his eye.

"Why, the gold dollar I palmed off on you. Here's your five-cent piece."

"Nonsense," said the man; "you changed my five-cent piece into a gold coin without its leaving my hand. I'll leave it to the crowd if you didn't."

The crowd promptly burst into a roar, declaring that the laugh was fairly on Herrmann, and a compromise was effected by which the apparently conceited stranger passed the gold coin over the bar and all drank to the clever magician, the amateur remarking with a grin: "Here's luck to you, old man, till you're tired of it."—Chicago Journal.

Loss of Voice in Canaries.

The following treatment has completely restored a fine singer for me which I quite despaired about, as he had been sick and silent for months: Leave off seeds entirely. Make a paste of sweet milk and bread crumbs, throwing the crumbs into the milk while boiling, and stir until quite smooth; add a pinch of cayenne pepper, varied occasionally by some finely mingled clove of garlic; dissolve in the drinking water a little black currant jelly, or a bit of fig or half a potash lozenge. I used all of these and my bird is well. So to which the preference should be given I do not know, though I incline to the jelly. It may take a long time to cure the bird, and if the trouble rises from hardness of the tongue it must be painted daily with strong borax water. If he sneezes, a little olive oil must be put gently up his nostrils. He should have plenty of tepid water to bathe in; also give him celery, sweet apple or lettuce, but by no means hang him close to the window. The cold is too severe, even in a moderately warm room, for a bird in delicate health. Paste must be fresh daily.—Fancier's Journal.

Helping Him Out.

The Young Man (argumentatively)—But, don't you see, Miss Bessie, that when you reason in that way you are only begging the question?

The Young Woman (blushing beautifully)—I am sure, Mr. Penducle, I—I didn't intend to—to beg you to—to ask me any question!

[Sudden mustering up of courage on the part of the bashful Mr. Peduncle and agitated propounding of question Miss Bessie had been waiting to hear.]—Chicago Tribune.

—Philadelphia has the largest number of Sunday-school attendants of any city in the United States, 193,802. New York ranks next with 187,000. Brooklyn next with 107,233.

SCHOOL AND CHURCH.

—The laws of Wyoming require equal pay for equal work to men and women as school teachers.

—The Methodists have bought a site near Washington City, where they purpose establishing a university which, while representing the denomination, shall also include whatever is best in the line of facilities for advanced education.

—There were 22,760 white and 13,064 colored children enrolled in the public schools in the city of Washington for the year 1889. There were 235 colored and 458 white teachers, and the total cost of instruction was $487,455.52.

—Newnham College has formed the nucleus of a portrait gallery of its founders and benefactors by Richmond's portraits of Miss Clough and Miss Helen Gladstone, and Shannon's portrait of Mrs. Sedgwick. Each portrait will bear a Latin inscription, and beneath it the name and date.

—The Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada reported for its eleven conferences, for 1889, a membership of 228,959, and 217,737 Sunday-school scholars. It raised for missions $215,755, and has 489 missionaries, 596 paid agents, with returns from its missions of 46,944 members. It has Indian, French and domestic missions, a Chinese work in British Columbia, and a foreign mission in Japan.

—The various schools under the patronage of the American Baptist Home Mission Society are generally in a healthy and promising condition. Dr. Morehouse gives very interesting details in the Home Mission Monthly, from his recent visit South, concerning Shaw University, Benedict Institute, the Atlanta Seminary, Leland University, Bishop College and other institutions.

—There is in London a school of medicine for women which seems to be in a very satisfactory and flourishing condition. At a recent examination of the University of London one of the fair medical students passed in all her subjects in the first division. The societies for the discussion of topics relating to the professions of medicine and surgery which are usually found in medical schools are not absent from the School of Medicine for Women, nor do they show any lack of thoughtful research or able understanding of the ubjects discussed.

THE IRISH BANSHEE.

A Superstition Which Prevails in All Parts of the Emerald Isle.

A generation or more ago a certain doctor, who practiced in County Mayo, had been sitting up one night with a gentleman who was dangerously ill. After some hours the crisis seemed over; the patient fell into a quiet sleep, and the doctor retired into another room to get a little rest.

He had not been there long when a servant rushed into the room, crying and wringing her hands, and exclaiming:

"Och, the poor masther—the poor masther!"

"Hold your tongue," said the doctor; "the master's better, and will be doing well enough if you don't wake him with your keening."

"Och, doctor dear, don't ye hear the Banshee?" said the girl, who was evidently half scared out of her wits.

"Banshee, indeed!" replied the doctor; "it's your own fancy and nothing else."

But the girl would not be satisfied until the doctor accompanied her back into the room where the master lay, and there, sure enough, he heard a faint, mournful sound borne upon the wind.

He went to the window and looked out. Before the house, and stretching for a considerable distance, was a great lawn, bright with the moonlight, and with not a tree or shrub to afford shelter to any living thing; and from out of the midst of the moonlight could be heard a wild, plaintive note, rising and sinking, and rising again.

Startled out of his skepticism, the doctor rushed to his patient's bedside and found him at his last gasp.

Unlike most most sprites and phantoms, the Banshee is attached, not to places, but to persons, and will follow a member of the family to which she belongs across the sea to warn him of the approaching doom of himself or of his kinsfolk. No family save those descended from the ancient Irish chiefs can boast of a Banshee. A certain amount of ignorance seems to prevail upon this head; there are many families of Norman or Saxon descent in Ireland, as in most countries, who, being possessed of some death-boding apparition—no doubt a highly respectable phantom in its way—dignify it with the name of Banshee, a title to which, as we have seen, it has no valid claim.—National Review.

Courtship in the Ukraine.

When a spinster among Ukraine Cossacks feels a fancy for a certain youth in the tribe, she is encouraged by tribal custom to declare her passion. If her love is reciprocated, all right; if it is not, the maiden sits down in the youth's cabin and proclaims an intention of remaining until he realises the error of his ways. The young man is in bad straits, as the damsel's family would resent any incivility on his part. His only recourse is to take up his blanket and his whisky and find a new abiding place. The spinster may then know that he really does not care to wed.—N. Y. Ledger.