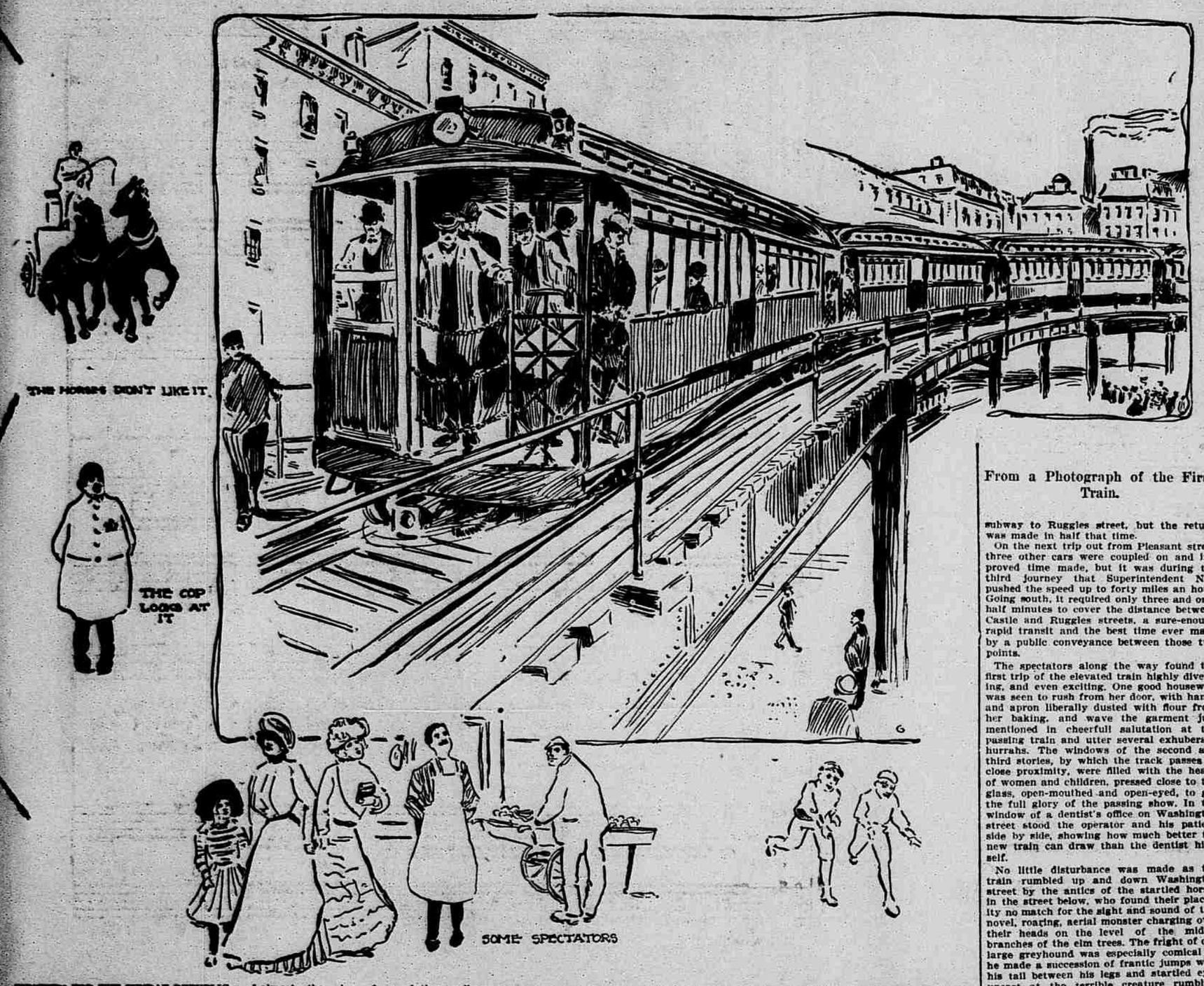
Boston's New Elevated Electric Train Makes Forty Miles an Hour.



From a Photograph of the First Train.

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

It is expected that the new elevated electric road in South Boston will be open to the public in June. Trial trips have already been made and everything has been found highly satisfactory. On the first day of the trials a speed of forty miles an hour was easily attained.

This new "L" road is a novelty. The "third-rail" system is used, and there are, therefore, no overhead trolley wires. The rails are of the heaviest, and the cars are almost the size of regulation railway coaches.

The cars are run in trains of from two to five cars, and it is expected that the best speed of any steam "L" road will be excelled. The method of construction of the elevated tracks is generally similar to that of other "L" roads, the differences not being easily noted by the public.

On the trial trips the road was found to be in perfect working order, the rails smooth and well laid, the "juice" abundant and regular in supply, and the people along the way enthusiastic at seeing the train shooting by their windows.

Superintendent Neff was at the controlling lever on the front of the car. A voltmeter and ampermeter had been adjusted upon a table in the car, and beside them stood Electric Engineer Windsor, observing the variations of the indicator as the speed was increased and decreased. A speed indicator was also provided by running an elastic belt around the axle of the car, connecting it by gearing with a dial face.

Moving slowly, to make sure all was right and tight and solid, keeping a close watch for the elm branches along Washington street, which in one place ticked the windows of the car, and studying the road as an Indian scout is alleged to study the trail of a fleeing foe, Superintendent Neff worked his car along to Ruggles street, which was made the terminus of the trip on account of a failure in the electrical connections between that place and Dudley street. Including several brief stops, it required about half an hour to go from the subway to Ruggles street, but the return was made in half that time.

On the next trip out from Pleasant street three other cars were coupled on and improved time made, but it was during the third journey that Superintendent Neff pushed the speed up to forty miles an hour. Going south, it required only three and one-half minutes to cover the distance between Castle and Ruggles streets, a sure-enough rapid transit and the best time ever made by a public conveyance between those two points.

The spectators along the way found the first trip of the elevated train highly diverting, and even exciting. One good housewife was seen to rush from her door, with hands and apron liberally dusted with flour from her baking, and wave the garment just mentioned in cheerfull salutation at the passing train and utter several exhuberant hurrahs. The windows of the second and third stories, by which the track passes in close proximity, were filled with the heads of women and children, pressed close to the glass, open-mouthed and open-eyed, to get the full glory of the passing show. In the window of a dentist's office on Washington street stood the operator and his patient side by side, showing how much better the new train can draw than the dentist himself.

No little disturbance was made as the train rumbled up and down Washington street by the antics of the startled horses in the street below, who found their placidity no match for the sight and sound of this novel, roaring, aerial monster charging over their heads on the level of the middle branches of the elm trees. The fright of one large greyhound was especially comical as he made a succession of frantic jumps with his tail between his legs and startled eyes upcast at the terrible creature rumbling down upon him from the sky—as it must have seemed to poor Tray.

No special attempt was made to secure a fine showing of speed, as the large number of workmen still found along the tracks made it unsafe to let on the full power of the electric current.

Next day other trials were made, and on one of them the round trip between Pleasant street and Dudley street was made in ten minutes and fifty-eight seconds, including six stops.

PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT IS MISLED BY A RUMOR.

Harvard Has Not Received New Telescope for Arequipa, Nor Will the Peruvian Station Be Abandoned.

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

Extremes are represented in two stories circulated in the United States and England regarding the Harvard Astronomical Observatory at Arequipa, Peru. One story affirmed that the big star camera there was to be improved and enlarged. The other rumor was to the effect that the station was to be discontinued on account of the inaccessibility of Arequipa. By the first of these the Peruvian Government has been led astray, although the mistake has been fortunate rather than otherwise in that it has given an opportunity for showing the friendly relations existing between the Peruvian and American Governments, and the rather unusual desire of a South American Republic to encourage pure science.

The story was to the effect that $250,000 had been given Harvard for a great telescope for Arequipa—the need of which, as was known in Peru, has long been felt. President Romanya of Peru, hearing of the report, at once communicated with the observatory authorities in Cambridge through Minister Calderon at Washington, offering on the part of his Government to give them a site and to permit the importation of the instrument and all its apparatus duty free—which would have been equivalent to a contribution of a good many thousand dollars.

At the same time with the circulation of this story clippings were being received from many different papers in this country and in Europe stating that the Peruvian station has proven a failure and would be abandoned. This story was quite untrue, but it had a rather natural misunderstanding for its basis. The Harvard Observatory has for over ten years maintained meteorological stations between the coast of Peru and the Amazon Valley, in connection with the astronomical work proper, as maintained at the city of Arequipa. These were as follows: Mollendo, 100 above the sea level; La Joya, 4,150; Arequipa, 8,030; El Misti Summit, the highest meteorological station ever established; Mount Blanc, El Misti (so named as being almost exactly the height of the Swiss Mountain), 15,600; Alto de los Huesos, 13,300; Vinocaya, 14,600; Puno, 12,500; Cuzco, 11,300, and Santa Ana, 3,000.

The climate of this portion of Peru is stable and does not vary essentially from year to year, however, and since a general and fairly complete and accurate record of the meteorological conditions covering a period of ten years, a period long enough to determine the main facts and characteristics of the Peruvian climate, had been secured, it was decided that it would be a waste of energy to continue the obstrvations further, and this phase of the work at Arequipa was accordingly ordered discontinued.

The abandonment of the meteorological work of the outlying stations gave rise to the story that the whole of the work at Arequipa would be abandoned. This, of course, is not the fact. The astronomical work and the meteorological observations at Arequipa will be permanently continued. It is recognized generally that Arequipa is one of the most important observatories—as indeed it must be from the circumstances of its location, if for no other reason—in the world. With the great Bruce 24-inch doublet photographic telescope and the other instruments which have been erected in connection with it, it is assured that the station will continue to do work of great astronomical value.

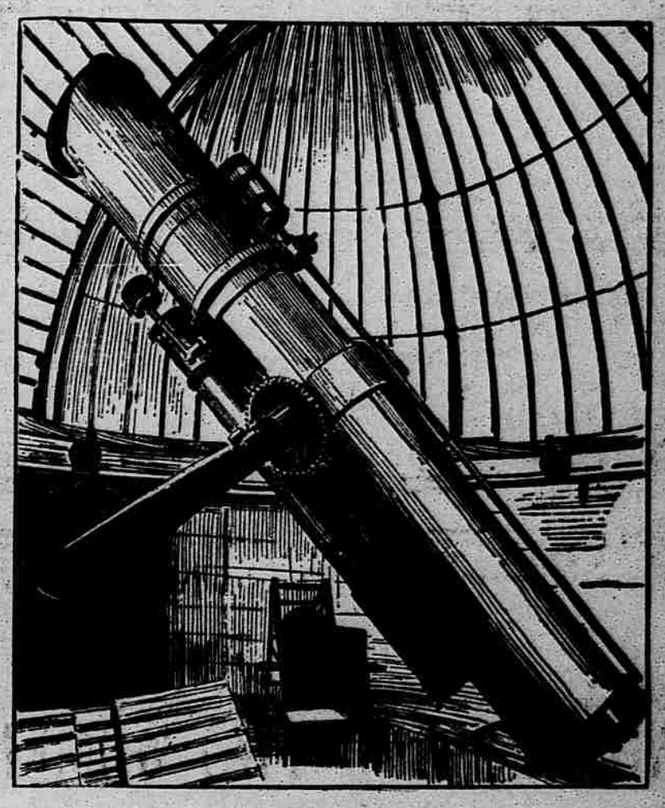
The Arequipa station is indebted to the trustees of the late Uriah A. Boyden for its establishment, and to Miss C. W. Bruce of New York for its chief instrument, procured by means of her gift of $50,000 in 1892. Mr. Boyden left a fund to establish an observing station at an altitude where the conditions would be favorable for astronomical work, and the trustees transferred the fund to the Harvard Observatory on condition that it undertake to carry out the wishes of the testator. After an extensive scientific investigation, Arequipa was selected as probably the best location under all the circumstances, first, because of its situation in the Southern Hemisphere, where there was a pressing need of astronomical observations, the Southern heavens being relatively unexplored in comparison with what had been done on the stars north of the equator; and, secondly, because of the climatic conditions of the Arequipa district, which are admirable from an astronomical point of view.

The distance of Arequipa from Cambridge and its inaccessibility, due to the limitations of the transportation service from Panama, are disadvantages; but that they have not been insurmountable the results attained have clearly shown. Moreover, it is as much under the control and supervision of the director of the Harvard Observatory at Cambridge, Professor E. C. Pickering, as if it were a department on Observatory Hill. Professor Pickering is kept in touch with what is going on by means of frequent photographs of any construction work.

Besides Arequipa there are only two astronomical observation stations of great importance in the Southern Hemisphere—the Royal Observatory at the Cape of Good Hope, famous for the celebrated astronomers who have been stationed there; and Cordova, in Argentina, where the American astronomers Gould and Thome have been directors and have each done important work, principally in the determination, by the meridian circle, of the exact position of the stars throughout the Southern heavens.

At Arequipa, much photometric work has been accomplished, and the entire Southern sky is photographed several times each year with the eight-inch Bache doublet, just as the Northern sky is similarly recorded at Cambridge by the Draper eight-inch, each instrument having a record of over 27,000 plates. These plates, from either station, are stored in Cambridge in a fireproof brick building. The records, which they preserve are permanent and are made accessible by a careful index. When an astronomer in any part of the world, as happened last February in the case of Dodter Anderson of Edinburgh, discovers a new star, it is possible to turn at once to the photographs of either hemisphere and work out a more complete record than is possible by means of the most careful observations of the eye alone. For, whether noted or not, the photographic plate has carried the nightly evidence of the new appearance from the earliest moment that it was visible.

While the Peruvian Government made a mistake as to what had happened, it was not mistaken as to what the whole astronomical staff of Harvard—and astronomers all over the world, it may probably be added—hope may some day prove an accomplished fact.



LARGEST STAR CAMERA.

The twenty-four-inch Bruce doublet telescope at Arequipa, Peru.

THE OLD TOUT'S STORY OF A TRICK THAT FAILED.

How the Track Electrician Did Not Put Over a Good Thing, After He Had Taken Particular Pains to Perfect His Arrangements.

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

The negro stable boy who had attended a vaudeville performance the previous evening was prancing about before an appreciative audience of his own race, brandishing a long wooden stick, which evidently represented a lance. The old tout, seated at his ease on the shady side of the stables, regarded him with disapproval mingled with curiosity, and finally removed his pipe from his mouth long enough to ask:

"What you think you're doin', boy?"

"I'm givin' er insertashun er Shakespeare," responded the boy, with a grin, then joining in the boisterous laugh of his companions.

The old tout treated their mirth with silent disdain and watched critically the action of a yearling which was being cantered about the track. Seeing out of the corner of his eye, however, that the boys were within earshot, he remarked to his surroundings in general:

"And to think that Shakespeare should be made fun of by a no-account stable boy!"

"Who dis yere Shakespeare, anyway?" asked a small black boy, coming up to the tout curiously.

"Shakespeare," responded the tout with dignity, "was the wisest guy that ever booked at a race track. And when I thinks of the things he done and said, it makes me sick to hear a yellow nigger that can't even warm up a horse yet make fun of him."

"What 'd he do an' say?" asked another stable boy.

The old tout knocked the ashes out of his pipe carefully, and refilled it before he answered.

"This here Shakespeare lived a good while back. I think he was a leadin' bookmaker in Washington's time, and I know for certain that he was considerable of a writer besides. He turned out some of the best burlesques that ever happened, and in one of them—I think it was in the opry called 'Rigby' or the 'Rivals' or something of the sort—he gave the best piece of advice that has ever been written. It was, 'Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.'

"Now, it took a bookmaker to write a thing like that, and shows what a wise guy he was. There's no better rule on the track for a man to follow. How do all these schemes that start ringers at the different tracks fall down? They tells too many people. How does most of the trouble come for a wise people when there's something fixed in a race? They tell somebody about it and it gets to the judges. Why do so many good 3-year-olds start with good odds against them for the first time? The owner can't keep his mouth shut. And nearly every piece of trouble on a race track comes from talkin' too much; from lettin' your left hand know what your right hand is doin'.

"Now, I'm goin' to tell you boys a story about this to you. It was on one of those light tracks the thing happened, a year after the Turf Congress had put those tracks outlawed. There was some funny doin's goin' on at this place, you all know the one I mean [illegible] which one it is.

"There was a track owned by a [illegible] and one man, the [illegible] that attended to the lights, [illegible] good man. A gray half-breed horse [illegible] run a half in 50 [illegible] for a three-furlong race [illegible]

"Shakespeare," responded the tout, with dignity, "was the wisest guy that ever booked at a race track."

And at five furlongs there wasn't any use enterin' her at all. Her owner made a pretty good thing by startin' her in half-mile dashes, until finally the weight began to pile up on her. And as she couldn't win with over 120 on her, he began to look around for a way to make a little coin.

"One night he was down by the lower turn watchin' a race, when all of a sudden there was some hitch in the electric current and the lights went out. The field was just comin' around the turn, and when all the incandescents went out every jockey in the race, except one little sister, sighted back on the long stretch and had to send [illegible] home a winner. A gray half-breed [illegible] run a half in 50 [illegible] for a three-furlong race [illegible] five horses about a hundred yards apart, and came under the wire first."

"And was all bets off?" asked a little stable boy.

"Not on your life," responded the tout, "there wasn't a bet on the winner, so the race was allowed to stand. The crowd didn't like it, but it didn't do any good to kick at that track. And there was more rumor's off than enough. Pretty near every [illegible] in the place [illegible] would take it kind of him. But the little coon was ridin' his first race and happened to be sailin' around on the outside of the bunch, not bein' able to keep his mount close to the turns.

"This little darky never stopped, but let his horse go right ahead and trusted to luck. The lights went up in about four seconds, before the other horses had done more than break their strides, but that was enough for the little coon. He came niggaggin' down the stretch, and rode a whippin' finish, although he was about half a furlong ahead of the bunch when he reached the wire."

"Well, the little coon's horse didn't happen to be backed heavy, so after the judges had [illegible] stand. Bets were paid off and the little coon had ridden his first win.

"Now, the electrician got to thinkin' about the race, and figured that there might be somethin' in this thing of havin' the lights go out. So he works out a scheme which he thinks is about the slickest ever.

"His scheme was to enter the mare in a five-furlong race where the odds against her would be big. She would then be backed at the poolrooms downtown. The start in the five furlongs was on the backstretch opposite the grand stand, and just after the flag dropped he intended to step into the switchroom and turn off the lights.

"Now, the judges had let one race of the sort stand, and he figured out that they would do it again. The jocks would figure the same way, and would keep on ridin' in spite of the lights bein' out. As soon as they went out, though, his jock was to pull up the mare and wait until the field got nearly around to him again, stayin' just far enough down the track to keep the starter from noticin' him. When the field got near to him he was to turn the mare loose, and about that time the electrician figured on turnin' on the lights again. The mare would have a big lead, and he knew that the other jocks would be too busy watchin' their own mounts in the dark to notice whether the mare had gone around with the bunch or not. Accordin', the mare ought to gallop in easy.

"Now, it don't look as if a thing of the sort could be pulled off, but he was a pretty smooth sort of chap, this electrician was, and attended to lots of little details to make sure. He chose a race, for instance, where a couple of other gray horses were entered, so the absence of his mare wouldn't likely be noticed as the bunch passed the grand stand in the dark. He knew that there might be a bad accident at the turns, but he figured that the jocks had ridden often enough to know the track with their eyes shut, and that the only reason they pulled up in the first case was because the suddenness of the thing startled them.

"He calculated that the judges would let the race stand when they found that the track bookmakers hadn't lost anything. The goin' out of the lights could be put down to a failure in the current. And he thought that his mare bein' gray wouldn't be noticed against the whitewashed fence behind her when she pulled up.

"He made one great mistake, though. He let his left hand know what his right hand was doin'. That is, he talked too much about the scheme. Of course he had to let his pals know about it, and had to send [illegible] people quiet than to keep a gag on everybody you know. He told a lot of his friends in confidence, and they told their friends, and finally the thing got to the bookmakers. And finally the other owners got hold of it. But nobody knew just how much other people knew about the scheme, too.

"Well, a lot of owners in the same race figured out that they could sort of work the same kind of a game. And as they had some sense about the matter, they worked separately and planned a little surprise for the electrician. They never knew that the bookies were onto the game, too. As for the bookies, they schemed to have a little surprise party of their own for the electrician, though they didn't imagine that so many owners were on to what was goin' to happen.

"Now, four or five of the owners, each keepin' his mouth shut, figured out that by havin' his own jock pull up his horse, a little ahead of the gray mare, and by holdin' him there till the bunch could be heard a-comin' 'round, that they would have a sure thing on the race. His own horse would have a lead when the lights were turned up, and they calculated that the electrician would be afraid to say anything, although he would see through the game.

"The bookies also got up their scheme. They intended to take all the money they could get on the gray mare. But instead of waitin' for the electrician to turn on the lights, they decided to send two of the track police to the switchroom, where they were to wait until the lights had been turned out a few seconds—just long enough to let the gray mare drop well behind—and then they were to run in and turn them on again. They had special instructions to hammer the stuffin' out of the electrician at the same time. The bookies figured that then they would just keep all the money played on the gray mare, and would make a good thing out of it themselves.

"Well, the night came around for the attempt. The electrician was pretty nervous when the bettin' opened, as was nearly everybody else who was in one of the schemes floatin' around. As soon as the electrician saw that his mare had opened at 10 to 1 he strayed over the paddock to give his jock last instructions. But he didn't notice that some of his friends were playin' hundreds on her in the local books. The friends of the other owners who had schemes of their own played their horses to a standstill, and there never was such bettin' on a race as there was that night.

"The bookies saw that there was somethin' doin' that they couldn't understand, but they took all the money that came to them, knowin' that whatever happened they could have bets declared off if they stood to lose too heavy.

"Well, when the horses went to the post they were watched. Everybody kept an eye on 'em, and his best eye, too. The electrician strayed up to the switchroom, and the two police followed him, chucklin' to think what they were goin' to do to him. After a delay of about five seconds, each jock bein' willin' to accept any old kind of a start, the field started down the back stretch, and a few seconds later the lights went out.

"Now, every jock that had been fixed followed instructions, and when the two coppers ran into the switchroom and after handin' the electrician a couple of cracks turned on the lights—why, you never saw such a sight. At every sixteenth pole a horse was pulled up, waitin' for the bunch to come round again. The gray mare was way round on the back stretch. The only horse movin' was an old skate ridden by the same little coon that had won the other race. No one had thought of fixin' him, he was on such a broken down old cripple, and there he was pluggin' around the track by himself.

"When the lights went up the jocks saw that somethin' was wrong, and some started up again and some didn't. The jock on the gray was so scared that he just jumped onto the high board fence behind him and got over, without waitin' to see what the judges were going to do. But the same [illegible] fully and with conviction—"the whole fiasco came from the electrician talkin' too much. If he had kept his mouth shut he could have carried the thing through, likely, and even if bets had been [illegible] off wouldn't have been out of pocket. If you can see what a wise guy [illegible] wise when he said: 'Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.'"

NONSENSE RHYMES---No. 17.

There was a supreme named Anna
Went upstairs in a curious manner,
When her singing professor
From below did address her,
"I have heard, now I see, your Nose-Annal"