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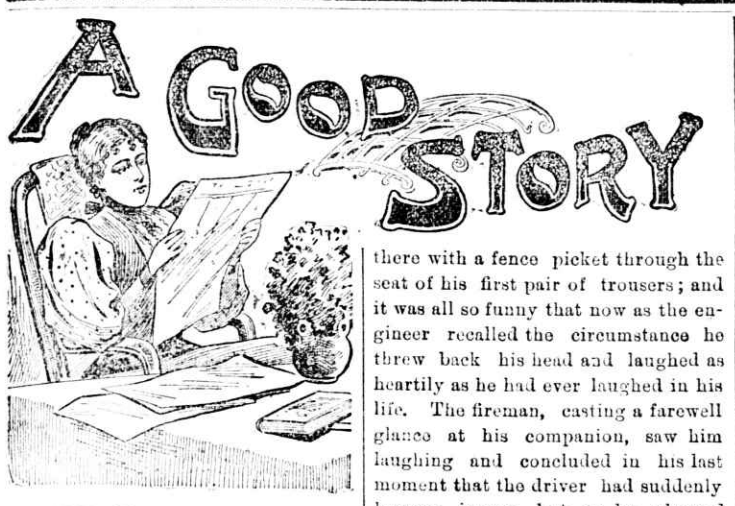


THE GHOST TRAIN.

When the Rio Grande Western was a narrow gauge road it was very crooked. Even in the Utah desert there were many curves among the sand hills that have been piled up during the past few thousand years. A locomotive--one of a type known as "sewing machines," because all their machinery was in sight—was trying to make a spur for the general manager's special, against which she had a time order. The time was growing alarmingly short, and the driver of the light engine knew that the man on the special with the general manager behind him, would be crowding the limit.

To be allowed to "pull" the general manager is an honor earnestly striven for by engineers, and when once obtained it is carefully guarded. It was a clear, dry day in the early autumn, the very best time of the year for a fast run, and "Old Sam" had been gauging his speed for fifty miles back so as to hit Coyote spur on the dot, and break the record for fast running on the Alkali division.

By the rules of the road five minutes were allowed for the variation of watches, but the rule is not always wholly respected, and as the man on the special was known to be a daring driver the sewing machine crew saw they were in a close place long before the smoke of the approaching locomotive was seen. Now they had barely five minutes left and nothing for the variation and the coveted siding four miles away. If the opposing train failed to respect the "five-minute rule" she might at that moment be passing the spur. At last there remained but a single mile, and only a minute to do it in. The throttle was wide open and the little engine was rolling so that the bell rung continually. The fireman had put in his last fire and was now straining his eyes to catch the smoke of the special.

The engineer, with his left hand on the whistle rope, clung to the side of the cab to keep from being thrown out of the right of way.

The wheels under the sewing machine were so small that the best she could do was forty-five miles, and now when she came down to the very last second there was still a quarter of a mile between her and the meeting point, but at that moment the flying wheels of the special engine crashed over the switch and shut her out. The little sewing machine, hid among the sand hills was straining every nerve to reach the passing point at which she was already overdue. The man on the special was just beginning to feel sure of his position when he rounded a curve and saw the light engine emerging from a shadow cut. Of course he shut off and tried to lessen the force of the collision, but to stop was out of the question.

The fireman on the light engine saw the special and warned his companion, for they were curving to the left and the driver could not see, but the four men knew that nothing could prevent a dreadful collision and that in a few seconds' time they would all be piled up in a heap. Both drivers had called to their firemen to jump, and the firemen had turned to their windows. The special engineer was in the act of reversing, that he might take the good opinon of the official with him. The other driver only shoved the throttle in, braced himself and waited for the shock.

The driver of the special engine had a boy, and this boy had climbed up on a picket fence to kiss his father goodbye that morning at their home in Salt Lake, but he slipped, fell and hung there with a fence picket through the seat of his first pair of trousers; and it was all so funny that now as the engineer recalled the circumstance he threw back his head and laughed as heartily as he had ever laughed in his life. The fireman, casting a farewell glance at his companion, saw him laughing and concluded in his last moment that the driver had suddenly become insane, but as he glanced ahead where death was awaiting he was not sure that he was sane himself.

The driver, having finished his laugh and still feeling no shock, looked ahead. The track was clear! He unlatched the reverse lever and threw the engine in the forward motion and the speed of the train, which had been but a little checked, carried them away down among the sand hills. The driver looked over to the fireman and asked: "Did you see anything?"

"No," said the fireman. "Did you?" And the driver said no, tried his water and opened the throttle and the engine whirled away, while the fireman returned to his place at the furnace door.

The official in the special train felt the resistance of the engine when the engineer shut off and reversed, and the general manager, turning to the superintendent, asked with a show of surprise:

"When did you put in that siding?"

"What, back there? That's Coyote spur, and it has been there for six months," was the reply.

"I know very well," said the manager, "where Coyote spur is, for we waited there fifteen minutes for No. Eight going down the other day, but we just passed a siding on the north."

The superintendent was inclined to be funny, but the colonel, stroking his long, gray whiskers, remarked that he had seen a locomotive standing at the point mentioned, and "as trains are not in the habit of meeting and passing between stations, I take it that there must be a siding there."

There was just a twinkle of mirth in the colonel's eyes, which, despite the finger marks left about them by the touch of time, are still bright with the sparkle of youth, but the superintendent was utterly unable to understand the general manager.

There was silence for a little while, but the general manager was by no means satisfied. He pressed the button and when the porter came in he asked: "Did you see an engine on a siding back aways, George?"

"No, sah, I haven't saw no engine. D'aint no sidin' 'cept Ci-ote spur, an' dat wus clear."

"Send the conductor to me," said the official, and when the conductor came in the manager asked to be allowed to look at the running orders.

"Run a special to Grand Junction, avoiding all regular trains. Extra engine 57 has until 5.55 to make Coyote spur against you."

"What time did you pass the spur?" demanded the colonel.

"Precisely at 5.55," said the conductor, now somewhat alarmed at the manager's air.

"Is there a siding between here and Coyote?" asked the colonel, and the superintendent being at a loss to make out what the manager was driving at, started to leave the car, but his superior officer called him back.

"There is not," was the conductor's reply.

"Perhaps," said the colonel, "there was not when we went down, but there is now, for I saw a locomotive standing there."

The conductor laughed as the superintendent had done, but the colonel offered to risk a dinner that he had seen no "ghost" train, and the superintendent took the bet as the easiest way of settling an argument which was about to become embarrassing.

When the special reached Green river the party went into the eating house, where supper had been ordered, and, as was his habit, the colonel sat at the same table with the train and engine crew.

"What did you shut off for just this side of Coyote spur, Sam?" asked the colonel, looking the engineer in the eye, and instantly the eyes of the whole party were upon the driver's dusky face. The engineer was speechless. Not that the circumstances had escaped his mind, for as a matter of fact he had thought of little else, but he knew not how to answer.

"Did you think that engine was on the main line?" asked the general manager, noticing the embarrassment of the engine crew.

"What engine?" asked the engineer, trying to look and speak naturally.

"There was only one engine there besides your own," was the colonel's response. "Will you be good enough to answer my question?"

"Well," thought the driver, "if I've got 'em the G. M.'s got 'em," and he answered: "I did think she was on the main stem."

"What did you think, Harry?" asked the superintendent of the fireman, who was staring at the engineer. The fireman only closed his eyes and shook his head slowly, as though he considered them all crazy, and his long lashes, dark with coal dust, lay upon his newly washed face like the lashes of a chorus girl.

"Did you see anything on your side?" asked the colonel, who was determined to unlock the lips of the fireman.

"Not a thing," said Harry. "I don't believe in ghosts."

"It will not be necessary for you to take out 63 (an accident report,) but I wish you would tell me what you saw and how it affected you," said the general manager, addressing the engineer.

"May I ask you first if you saw anything, colonel?" said the driver.

"I saw a locomotive standing on a spur or siding just east of Coyote."

"When I saw her first," said Sam, taking courage from the colonel's confession, "she was bang in front of us coming out of a cut like a ball out of a cannon. I saw it was all up with us, but I naturally shut off—mechanically, so to speak. I think I hooked her over, but I didn't whistle, open the sand valve nor set the air—they wan't no use—no time—but just then I thought of little Sammie as I saw him last, hangin' on the fence by the seat uv his pants, an' it seemed to me that I never see anything so funny, and I laughed that hard that the tears came in my eyes and blinded me. Then the thought came to me that we were a long time coming together, so I looks ahead an' there wan't a thing in sight. I asked Harry if he see anything an' he lied an' asked me if I see anything an' I hed too, an' opened up the throttle again. That's all I know about it."

Now the agent came in with a number of messages for the superintendent, and as the official began reading the first of the lot he began to smile.

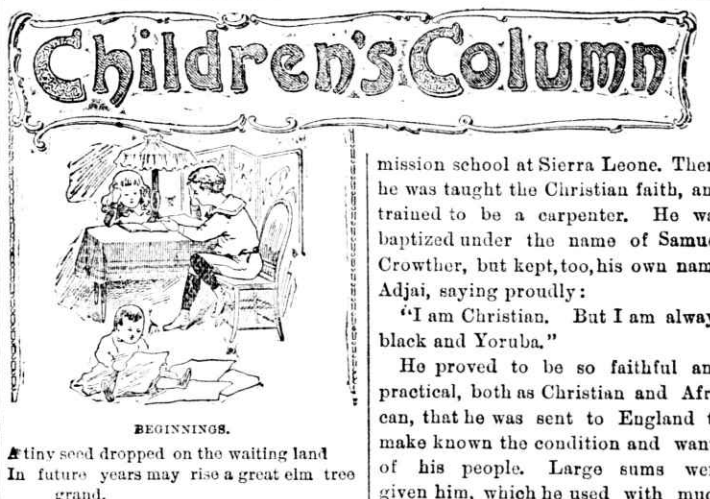
"Read it out," said the colonel, "Perhaps it will tell us something about the 'ghost.'" The superintendent read:

"Engine 57 is off the track and nearly off the right of way, 1,000 yards east of Coyote spur, but still on her feet."

That explained the ghost engine. At the instant when the engineer shut off, "the sewing machine," just then rounding a sharp curve, jumped the track, lit square on her wheels and went ploughing out over the hard adobe of the desert. She rolled and rocked for a few seconds and then came to a stop with the engine men still standing in the cab. The engine had been working hard and if the throttle had remained open she might have made the curve all right, but the sudden relaxation of all her tension caused a jar that threw her off her feet, but it was a lucky jar for the crew.

Since that time, however, old Sam has been in hard luck. He has already lost three legs. The last one being caught under an engine, was chopped off by the conductor with an ordinary ax to prevent the engineer being roasted alive. Those who witnessed the operation say that Sam rested on one elbow and smoked a cigar while the conductor hacked away at his ankle. It was a wooden leg.—Atlanta Constitution.

Seventeen thousand British patents for the manufacture of ink have been taken out.



BEGINNINGS.

A tiny seed dropped on the waiting land
In future years may rise a great elm tree grand.

A noble thought uttered with careless art
May kindle deeds that thrill a nation's heart.

Naught is too small in God's eternal plan
To make or mar the excellence of man.

And who to ranks of honor would belong
Must [illegible] beginnings of the right and

—Anna M. Pratt in Sunbeams.

THE BEAVER'S TRAITS.

The beaver is found in the northern part of Europe and Asia, but more of them are found now in the northern part of North America. It has two layers of fur. The under hair is gray and very short, the outer hair is chestnut in color and is long and thick. Jackets and cloaks are made of it because of its warmth.

The hind feet of the beaver are webbed. Its tail is like the rudder of a boat. It does not have fur on it, but is covered with scales. The beaver is a gnawing animal. Its food is the bark of trees. It is two feet from the nose to the root of the tail. The tail is over one foot in length.

When they build a dam they find a suitable spot where there are trees on the side of the stream so that they can gnaw them. The beaver gnaws a tree so that it will fall across the stream. If it is not large enough they will gnaw another one. This is the foundation for the dam. They gnaw more trees so that they can float them down the stream. When they reach the other trees they are caught among the branches and packed with mud and stones. It goes on this way until it is high enough. They do this because in very cold countries the shallow streams freeze to the ground and in the short hot summers they dry up.

Their houses, which are near the dams, are made of branches of trees, moss and mud. Two or three beavers can live in one of these houses. They dig deep ditches so that they can go into the stream without going over the land. Beavers cut a number of small logs and fasten them near their houses so that when they are hungry, they dive for one of these logs and strip off a piece of the bark and eat it.—Trenton, N. J. American.

A SLAVE MADE A BISHOP.

American travelers in England, as a rule, make a pilgrimage to the ancient cathedral of Canterbury, which is filled with associations of moment to the historian and the Christian. Here the Crusaders kept vigil before departing to the Holy Land. Here Becket was murdered. The stone steps are still here, worn in deep hollows by the knees of countless pilgrims in past centuries. Every stately pillar and carved stone has its record of dim, far-off days in English history.

One scene, however, which has been witnessed in this great minster, is more significant to Americans, vexed as they are with their race problems, than any murder or coronation.

Here before the high altar, with all the solemn splendor of the ceremonial of the English church, a poor freed slave, with a skin as black as coal, was consecrated the first bishop of the Niger

Adjai, a Yoruba boy of twelve, was taken prisoner with his mother by the Foulah tribe and sold to Portugese slave-traders. His mother was left in Africa. An English man-of-war ran down the slave-ship, and brought out from the hold the wretched prisoners frantic with terror at the white skins and blue eyes of their rescuers. They mistook the cannon-balls on deck for skulls, and the carcass of a hog in the cook's cabin for a human body, and tried to escape from the supposed cannibals by jumping into the sea.

The boy, Adjai, was sent to the mission school at Sierra Leone. There he was taught the Christian faith, and trained to be a carpenter. He was baptized under the name of Samuel Crowther, but kept, too, his own name Adjai, saying proudly:

"I am Christian. But I am always black and Yoruba."

He proved to be so faithful and practical, both as Christian and African, that he was sent to England to make known the condition and wants of his people. Large sums were given him, which he used with much sagacity for his race. The queen sent Bibles, Prince Albert a steel corn-mill and other farming implements, which Adjai taught his people how to use.

On his second visit he was made bishop. He returned to his own tribe, and after a long search found his mother. He took her to his home and she became a devout servant of Christ, and lived to a great age. But she persisted in wearing always the Yoruba costume, and in speaking that language, answering all arguments by saying:

"I am an African. Jesus will know me in my own skin and in my blanket."

No man in Africa served the Master more faithfully than Bishop Adjai Crowther. The thoughtful reader in the story of his life can find a meaning which rightly used, will uplift his own.—Youth's Companion.

TRICKS PLAYED BY PLANTS.

Dr. Lundstrom has recently described some cases of alleged plant mimicry. The cultivated plant known as calendula may, in different conditions, produce at least three different kinds of fruit. Some have sails and are suited for transportation by the wind, while others have hooks and catch hold of passing animals, but the third kind exhibits a more desperate dodge, for it becomes like a caterpillar. Not that the fruit knows anything about it, but if it be sufficiently like a caterpillar, a bird may eat it by mistake, the indigestible seeds will be subsequently dropped, and so the trick succeeds.

The next case is more marvellous. There is a very graceful wild plant with beautiful delicate flowers, known to man as the cow wheat. Ants are fond of visiting the cow wheat to feast on a sweet banquet spread out upon the leaves. Dr. Lundstrom has observed one of these ants, and was surprised to see it making off with one of the seeds from an open fruit. The ant took the seed home with it. On exploring some ant nests, the explorer soon saw that this was not the first cow wheat seed which had been similarly treated.

Many seeds were found in the ant nurseries. The ants did not eat them or destroy them; in fact, when the nest was disturbed the ants saved the seeds along with their brood, for in size, form, color and weight, even in minute particulars, the seeds in question resemble ant cocoons. Once placed among the cocoons, it requires a better than an ant to distinguish the tares from the wheat. In the excitement of flitting, when the nest is disturbed, the mistake is repeated, and the seeds are also saved. The trick is found out some day; for the seeds like the cocoons, awake out of sleep. The awakening displays the fraud. The seeds are thus supposed to be scattered; they germinate and seem to thrive in the ant nests.

After a Bargain.

"A dollar," she exclaimed when the clerk had told her the price. "Why, that's exorbitant."

"We can't afford to sell it for any less," replied the clerk.

"Well, I know where I can get it for less," she returned, "and I am too good a business woman to pay more than a thing is worth."

And then she marched out of the store and paid 10 cents for car fare to go to a place where she could get the same thing for 99 cents.—Chicago Post.

Daniel F. Tieman, the oldest ex-mayor of New York, who held that office in 1857-'60, celebrated his ninety-first birthday a few days since.

You Will Forget.

You will forget—a few short hours,
Fortune and fame and all to woo,
And ere the bloom forsakes the flowers
The lips you kiss have kissed for you,
And ere the morrow's sun is set,
You will forget.

You will forget—a mile or so,
And out of sight is out of mind;
The easy tears soon cease to flow
When life's before and love behind;
Aye, love, while still your eyes are wet
You will forget.

You will forget—in other years
When you behold that white star shine
We see so dimly through the tears;
When you shall pass these doors of mine,
Or that dear spot where first we met,
You will forget.

You will forget—let me love on,
You have been all in all to me;
So when the past is dead and gone,
Like some fine golden phantasy,
Let me love on, to pay my debt—
You will forget.

—Pall Mall Gazette.

HUMOROUS.

Untold wealth is a thing well known to the tax assessor.

Trees are like lovers: when the time comes for them to leave they stay right in the same spot.

Mr. Fosdick (to his wife)—"Do you call your new hat stylish?" Mrs. Fosdick—"Certainly I do and so will you when you get the bill. The price was $40."

"It is sad," said one girl, "that so many men now-a-days have a great deal more money than brains." "Yes," sighed another; "and so little money at that."

"My good fellow," said the dude to the hatter, "how's trade?" "There's really nothing in hats now-a-days," replied the hatter, trying one on the head of the dude.

"Kitty, why has our French Revolution club called an extra meeting?" "Oh, Nan, we are so bothered; we can't find out whether we've read two volumes or three."

Belle—"You know Jack Giddiboy of course; don't you think he is just out of sight?" Sadie—"Indeed he is! a very personification of the old saying: 'out of sight out of mind.'"

He can't pay his board, for his star of success
Beneath the horizon has sunk;
He's an elephant now on his landlady's hands
And that's why she's holding his trunk.

Parson Bloomfield—"I'm afraid, my friend, your heart isn't right." Dying Sinner—"Well, parson, you'll have to settle that with the doctor. He says it's my liver."

Mr. Specilate—"Awfully dull in the wheat-pit today. Buyers and sellers didn't get together at all." Mrs. Specilate—"Why don't they mark it down and have a bargain sale?"

Mamma—"What do you mean by taking that piece of cake? When you asked for it didn't I say no?" Tommy—"You did; but last night I heard papa say that when a woman says no she always means yes."

"I understand your daughter has given up bicycle riding." "Yes, she sold her wheel as soon as she found out she couldn't wear high-heeled shoes on it with any degree of success."

Maud—"I hear that proposing parties are all the style this winter. The girls do the proposing and the one who proposes the best gets the prize. Have you been to any?" Ethel—"No; but I had a proposing party come to me the other evening. How do you like my ring?"

"Willie," said the boarding house mistress to her son, "I was ashamed of you at dinner. You kept your arms on the table during the entire meal." "Yes, mamma," was the hopeful's reply, "I didn't want to give the boarders a chance to say there was nothin' on the table."

Biggest Pine Tree in Wisconsin Falls.

What was believed to be the largest pine tree in Wisconsin was cut down a few days ago at Antigo. It was well-known as a landmark. Several years ago, the top was blown off, leaving the trunk standing. This trunk measured twenty-two feet in circumference and proved to be 150 feet in length. It was two feet in diameter at the top. The full length of the tree was 260 feet. It required five grown persons to reach around it with extended arms.—Milwaukee Wisconsin.