

**"OLD R. AND R."**

By M. J. PHILLIPS

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The Continental Express company is a great institution. It does business in every state between the seaboard, and its employees, who are messengers on trains, local agents, route agents, office men and drivers, number thousands. The Continental continues to be great and to pay dividends because it takes a particular interest in the goings in and comings out of each of its employees. It demands services of them and loads responsibilities upon them at which bank presidents would shudder. The company's motto, if a thing so thoroughly useless were ever an appendage of an enterprise so utilitarian, would be, "The Continental expects every man to do his duty."

The corporation comes nearer to representing abstract justice than the supreme court. Good men are advanced in precisely the degree they deserve advancement. Bad men are punished.



"THROW DOWN THAT SACK!" HE COMMANDED HOARSELY.

The Continental stands ready to spend \$5,000 in convicting the man who steals a hundred. Employees who have given the best years of their life to its service are pensioned. The only touch of human nature about it is the present of a five dollar bill which, with a formal and frosty little letter, is sent each Christmas to every employee who has worked for the Continental a year or more.

The spirit and essence of the Continental is its book of "Rules and Regulations." The tome is a ponderous mass of bound circulars a foot thick. Every fortnight or so another printed yellow folder is issued, bringing the express world up to date, and this is duly read by agent or messenger and fastened into the covers.

Somewhere in the musty depths of the "Rules and Regulations" are instructions covering every possible contingency, from handling Egyptian mummies to the feeding of live stock in transit. No matter how absurd an employee's procedure in an emergency, when viewed in the light of common sense he has only to quote "Rules and Regulations" correctly. He is sure of forgiveness. And the man who is versed in "Old R. and R.," as the book is called, is held by his colleagues in much the same half envious regard with which ministers look upon a brother who knows his Bible exceedingly well.

Booth, money clerk at Morgantown, had a special name for the canvas covered volume—"The Book of Revelation." The agent, Hornbeck, who had grown gray in the Continental's service, chided him one day for his flippancy.

"I tell you, Bill," he said seriously, "'Old R. and R.' can't take you far astray any turn of the road. You could use it as a guide and be a pretty good Christian. Doesn't it tell you to be strictly honest, to be temperate and keep good hours, to affiliate yourself with some church and attend divine services on Sunday, to dress neatly and as well as your income will permit, to treat everybody with politeness, for we must depend on rich and poor, white and black, for our business?"

"That's true, all right," replied Bill, impressed. "I never looked at it that way before."

"And," chimed in Bobby Taylor, the driver, "'Old R. and R.' makes you insure your life before you can work for the company. That isn't all of it either. Away back in Series D, No. 430, dated June 1, 1893, I found a paragraph advising employees to marry."

"Funny you'd stumble on to that, hey, Bobby?" queried Booth, with a grin and a wink at Hornbeck, whereupon Bobby, blushing like a school-girl, hastened back to his wagon.

Bobby was the best driver the Morgantown office had. He did oceans of work every day, collecting parcels and making deliveries. Besides, there were four round trips between the office and Morgan Junction, a mile away. The

railroads get no nearer town than the Junction. He did all this and hankered for more, anxious for promotion, for promotion meant more money, and more money spelled matrimony. Bobby and Marion Hackett had it all arranged. When his salary touched \$300 a month—a driver gets \$45—or when he had \$500 saved, then they would adventure down life's stream together.

"For, you see, Marion, \$45 a month isn't much, although it would buy coal and something to eat," Bobby would explain. "But, darling, I don't want you regretting having married me right at the start. I'm going to have enough so we'll be comfortable."

And Marion, with fond belief in Bobby's financial acumen, would lay her curly head on his shoulder and agree, satisfied this was right, for hadn't Bobby said so?

Bobby was thinking up ways and means one winter's night as he turned his horse's head homeward with the load of freight from the eastbound train. The first quarter mile of the journey, between solid rows of lumber piles and lighted by a single arc light, was lonesome. Bobby often thought that if a holdup for the valuable money packages he carried were ever attempted it would be on this stretch of narrow, deserted street.

The possibility of such an occurrence was always present. Tonight it became a reality. A man, a dark cloth tied over his face, suddenly sprang out of the shadow and seized plodding old Dick by the bit. Something glittered in the hand which he pointed at Bobby. "Throw down that sack!" he commanded hoarsely. "The red way bill stuff," as the valuable packages are called, was in a sack swung over the driver's shoulder.

Bobby's reply was to reach for the Colt's thirty-eight, which drivers of the Continental carry. The stranger fired, and Bobby felt the crease as of a hot iron right above his right ear. The bullet had barely missed him. The holdup man went down next instead, a bullet from the Colt's in his shoulder. He lay helpless on the soggy snow until the police came and took him away.

A route agent came to Morgantown next morning, talked with Hornbeck and went away. Route agents are a power, and Bobby was impressed and flattered when this particular member of the guild shook hands and jokingly called him "Deadwood Dick."

A week later the sequel of the attempted holdup was written. A red way bill package, containing five \$100 bills, came for Bobby from Continental headquarters. A commendatory letter which accompanied it quoted a certain ancient circular far back in "Old R. and R.," which provides that the Continental employee who captures unharmed the criminal that attempts robbery shall receive \$100; the sum shall be \$200 if the thief is wounded and captured.

Hornbeck says that letter, which Mr. and Mrs. Taylor prize most highly, is the first ever sent out from headquarters, consciously or unconsciously humorous. "Old R. and R." makes no allowance for humor, but the epistle advised Bobby, among other things, to get married. And Bobby was planning the honeymoon while he read it.

**English Towns.**

That there are many instances in England of two or more towns enjoying the same name is a fact that nobody can well help knowing, but probably few people are aware of the very wide extent to which this duplication of names prevails. Newton seems to hold the same rank among places as Smith among individuals, no fewer than seventy-two towns and villages in England alone bearing this name. By including the Newtowns, obviously

the same name with a slight difference in spelling, the total is raised to little short of ninety. As every town must have been a "new town" at some time or other it shows a great lack of inventive genius among our ancestors who had the naming of the towns. There are sixty-eight places named Sutton. Our ancestors seem to have found the four points of the compass of great service in the nomenclature of their towns, for besides the Suttons there are fifty-one Westons, forty-nine Nortons and seventeen Eastons. To these last should be added thirty-eight Astons, another form of the name very common in the west of England.—London Chronicle.

**A Domestic Treasure.**

Sir Squire Bancroft in proposing the health of the bishop of London told a story in his inimitable way. A charming young damsel came to London to visit an aunt, who probably came originally from Scotland, for when the young lady was leaving in a cab for an evening party she said: "Now, mind; don't you pay him more than 1 shilling. It's his legal fare." Arrived at her destination, the young lady sprang out, handed cabbie a shilling and bounded up the steps of the house.

"Ere, I say, miss!" called cabbie. "Kin I ask you a question?"

"Yes, you may."

"Well, are you married?"

"No," she cried, indignant. "I'm not!"

"Well—well, somebody's a-goin' to git a treasure, for I never seen a gal as could make a bob go further or do more 'ard work nor you, miss!"—London Mail.

**The Right Doctor.**

In Haverhill, Mass., according to the Boston Herald, there used to live two doctors of the same surname. Dr. Benjamin E. Sawyer was a physician with a large practice. Dr. Nathan Sawyer was a veterinarian. A man named Jones, after a week or more of limping, was very sick, and his wife, becoming alarmed, sent the hired man for Dr. Sawyer. The hired man brought the wrong Sawyer—the veterinarian. Dr. Nathan explained to the wife that he was skilled only in the diseases of horses, cattle and other animals. "I guess you can prescribe all right in this case," replied Mrs. Jones. "Jones is a jackass."

**Sciatica Cured After Twenty Years of Torture.**

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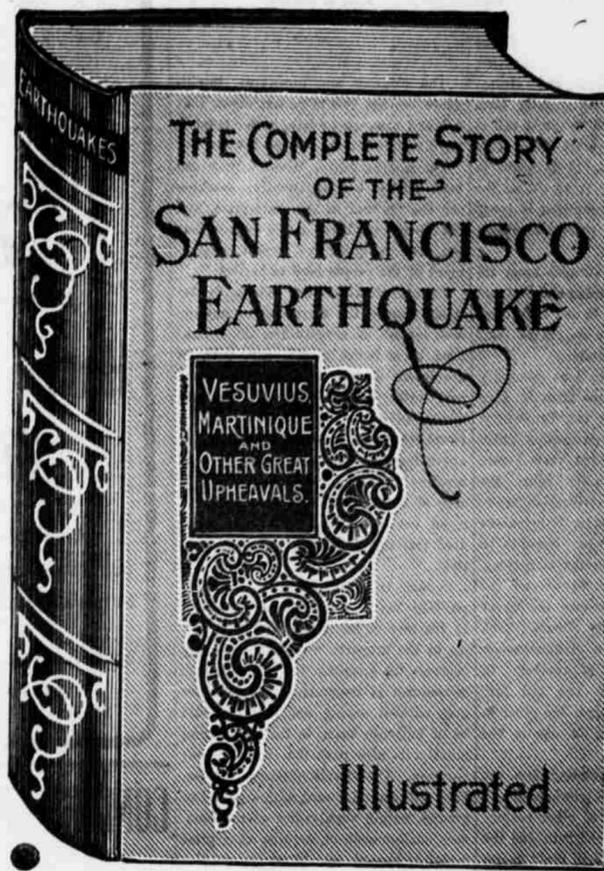
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