THE SIGNAL

By Vladimir Garching.

SIMON IVANOFF was a gateman. His house was about five miles from the nearest railroad station. A short distance away was a factory chimney pointing towards the sky, like a long dirty index finger, but otherwise no sign of buildings were to be seen with the exception of a few miserable huts.

Simon Ivanoff was weak bodily and mentally. During the war with Turkey he had been the orderly of a captain serving in General Gurko's army, and when the war was over they both returned to Russia without having been wounded. The captain went to St. Petersburg and Simon returned to the village, where and news was awaiting him. His father was dead, his little child dying and his poor wife so exhausted that she could hardly keep on her feet. Simon started to work as hard as he knew how, but everything seems to have conspired against him. His baby died, and it seemed to him that his hut was so terribly empty. The crops were a failure. Hard times knocked at the window, entered the door and sat down next to them on their wooden bench. Then those two poor beings, man and wife, decided to leave their village and try their luck somewhere else.

One day when Ivanoff was sitting in a car he thought that he recognized his old captain standing in the uniform of a station master on the platform outside a small station. He looked at him long and the other man also seemed surprised when his eyes fell upon the poorly dressed working man.

A few minutes later and the two men had recognized each other. Simon started to tell of all his misfortune, and the station master, who was moved almost to tears, asked him what he intended to do.

"I do not know," Simon answered, "I want to work, and I am willing to go anywhere and do anything just to be sure that my poor wife and I must not die from starvation.

The station master looked at him for a moment, and then said:

"Listen, brother, stay here for a while. You say you are married, but where is your wife?"

"She is a servant in the house of a merchant at Kursk."

"Good. Write to your wife to come here. I will give you a pass and in a short time I will have a position for you as a gateman. You will have a little house of your own and money enough to keep you from starving. Don't lost courage, brother, but trust in me."

Ivanoff thanked him with tears in his eyes and stayed with him, waiting for the vacancy.

He did all kinds of jobs in return for his food and lodging. He sawed wood, carried water, swept the platform and sprinkled the garden. When his wife arrived Ivanoff loaded his few belongings on a push cart and went away to his new home. It was a neat little house, quite new and cozy looking with a little garden behind, and about 50 feet of ground on each side. In front of the house was a big tree shading it during the summer. The two people were delighted and began to build their modest castles in the air. Perhaps some time they would be rich enough to buy a horse, maybe even a cow, and then they could sell milk and butter in the town. Surely the good luck they had been waiting for so long had come to them now.

Next day Ivanoff received all the things a gateman needed. There were two little flags, one red and one green, some lanterns, a signal horn, a hammer, a wretch, an iron lever, a large broom, a little book containing the time tables. At first he could hardly sleep, he was so happy. He read the regulations, and every moment he looked at the clock. Two hours before the train was due he ran out of the house examined the track, tried the screws and sat down on his door step listening. But after a while he grew more used to his work, his nerves grew more steady and he knew the book of regulations by heart.

The summer came and he had less to do. There was no longer any snow shoveling to be done, and besides the trains that passed were not very many. A few months later Ivanoff had met a number of his fellow gatemen. One was a silent old man, who was about to be pensioned. Another who lived next to Ivanoff was young, very tall, thin, pale and nervous. The first time Ivanoff met him he politely took off his hat.

"How do you do, neighbor?" he said.

The other looked at him and mumbled. "How do you do." Then he turned his back and went away without saying anything else. When Ivanoff the next day met his neighbor's wife he said in his friendly way:

"Really one can't accuse your husband of being very talkative."

The woman looked at Ivanoff for a moment, then she said rudely:

"What should he talk about? It is much better for everyone to mind his own business. May the Lord bless you, little father!"

After a while Ivanoff succeeded, however, to win the confidence of his comrade, and soon they were very good friends. Often they went out together, to examine the tracks, and when they had finished their trip, they sat down on the grass, and while smoking their pipes, told each other the history of their life.

The name of the other man was Basilius. He talked only very little, but was a good listener. Ivanoff, on the other side, talked about everything that he could think of, about his wife, his little baby he had lost, the village where he was born, and all the troubles he had had.

"Yes, neighbor," he said, "I have suffered a good deal, and passed through a great many hardships ever since I was born. There are people who are always lucky, and who pass through life without sorrows, but I, who have never done any harm to anybody, have always had bad luck."

Basilius did not answer right away. He knocked the ashes out of his pipe, stood up and said with a sigh:

"It is not luck that is against us, brother, it is man. In this world there are no more ferocious beasts than men. Wolves don't eat each other, but men do. I tell you that if men were not so cruel there would be far more happiness in the world."

Ivanoof looked thoughtful.

"Yes—I don't know—perhaps you are right," he said, "but at any rate if we are unhappy it must be the will of God."

"The will of God!" Basilius cried furiously. "If you really want to blame the good God for everything that man does, that is wicked and mean, and if you will try to oppose it, then you are a coward, and then I shall have nothing more to do with you."

He jumped to his feet and started to walk away. Ivanoff called him back, but he didn't answer, and soon disappeared around a curve. This incident, however, did not break up the friendship of the two men. The next day they met each other on the track, shook each other's hand and started talking about the same subject.

"I tell you brother," Basilius said, "that if men were not so wicked we two would not have to live in our miserable hut."

"But really I think we can't complain," Ivanoff answered.

"You really mean to say that you think we ought to be satisfied? It is very likely that you have seen a good deal more of the world than I have, but you have not understood what you have seen. Haven't you seen how all we poor people are suffering? While we are young they work us to death, and when we have grown old we are fired out, because we are no longer useful. How much do you receive a year in wages?"

"Very little, I must admit. I get only 12 roubles."

"There you are, and I get 13½ roubles. Will you tell me why I should get more than you do? But it isn't only this difference of a couple of roubles. It is another difference. The other day I had to go to the big station and the division superintendent happened to be there. He was wearing a uniform all embroidered with gold. I had the great honor to see his lordship. He was riding in his own private car, and didn't know whether he would design to look at us poor people. Now I am not going to stay here very long. I want to get away, no matter where to."

"HE PICKED UP THE FLAG AND WAVED IT."

"What, do you mean to say you will leave you little house, where you have a thrifty wife, and where you have a little plot of ground that you may work?"

"A plot of ground. A nice plot of ground that is. There isn't a green leaf on it. This spring I had planted some cabbage plants, and one day the inspector comes along. 'What does this mean?' he roared. 'You are planting cabbage without asking my permission. Tear those plants out of the ground immediately, or I will show you something.' He was so drunk that he could hardly stand, and I suppose that was the reason he didn't like my poor cabbage. Then I was fined three roubles." Basilius continued melancholy. "But if he had said another word I am sure I should have killed him."

"Now, then, neighbor, you are really too hotheaded," Ivanoff said.

"No, I am not, but I knew I was right, and if he cares to come to my house once more drunk I shall make a complaint against him."

A short time afterwards Basilius really filed a complaint against the inspector.

One day the division manager came along to inspect the road, as a great many engineers and high officers were expected to arrive from St. Petersburg. A great many repairs were made, and all the telegraph poles were painted. Ivanoff worked all the week to get everything in shape. He patched and brushed his Sunday clothes, and polished his brass badge with his number until it looked like a little sun. Basilius was not lazy, either. At last the eventful day came, and the manager stopped in front of Ivanoff's house. Ivanoff saluted in military manner, and made his report. The manager seemed well satisfied.

"How long have you been here?"

"Since May 2."

"Good. Who is the gateman in house No. 64?"

The inspector, who stood next to the manager, hurried to answer in a voice trembling with indignation: 'It is a fellow named Basilius Spiridoff.'"

They went towards house No. 64 and Ivanoff trembled as he thought of what would happed to his poor neighbor.

A few hours afterwards, when they had all gone, he went towards Basilius' house. When he was some distance away he saw Basilius' tall, lanky figure coming down towards him. He carried a heavy cane and had a bag across his shoulders. His head was bandaged and his face swollen.

"Hello, neighbor," Ivanoff cried. "Where are you going? When he came closer he saw that Basilius was changed, so as to be almost unrecognizable. His face was pale, his hair disheveled and his eyes shot fire.

"I am going to the city, to Moscow, to make a complaint to the director-general," he said in a voice trembling with anger.

"Oh, little brother, what is the use? Give up that foolish idea, stay with us and forget what they have done to you."

"Forget! Never, little brother, it is too late to forget. He hit me in the face with his clenched fist and I shall never forget it as long as I live, but I shall teach him something, you may be sure."

"Ivanoff took his friend's hand, and said: "Basilius, I beseech you to stay here, to do nothing rash. It will not make you happier, but tell me everything that happened."

"What happened! Yes, you know the manager came to my house to inspect everything. I knew he would be severe and I fixed up everything that he wouldn't find the slightest thing to make a complaint about. He was just about to leave when I went over to him and handed him a written complaint. Then he started to roar. 'What do yuo mean, you dog, you swine? Here I am coming on a trip of inspection and then you dare to take up my time with your nonsense about your garden? In front of you are standing some of the highest officials of the empire, and then you dare bother us with your rotten cabbage? But wait, my young friend.'

"Then I could stand it no longer. I replied something which made the manager furious. I felt a burning pain in my face, but I didn't move. It came so entirely unexpected. The others left there a few minutes later. I came to again and began to wash the blood off my nose and mouth and then I left."

"But your house, and your position, and your wife?" Ivanoff asked.

"My wife will stay here. She can look after the position as well as I can. Besides, I don't care. The devil take all of them and their whole railroad. Good-bye, neighbor. I don't know if they will listen to my complaint, but if——" Basilius picked up his bag and started to walk away.

"But comrade, you don't intend to walk all that distance?"

"No, you need not worry. I know the firemen on the freight train, and I am going to help him to do the firing, and thus I shall be at Moscow tomorrow."

The two men bade each other good-bye, Basilius left and nothing more was ever heard of him. His wife stayed in the house and worked night and day. She grew very thin and her face and eyes were always swollen with tears. One day when Ivanoff met her and asked if she had heard any news of her husband, she burst into tears and ran away.

While a boy Simon Ivanoff had learned to make whistles from reeds, and now he spent almost all his spare time making these little toys. When he had made a certain number of them he turned them over to a friend of his who was a railroad conductor and who sold them at Moscow to a dealer in toys, who paid two kopeks a piece for them.

Ivanoff one day left his house. He told his wife to watch the gate when the 6 o'clock train should pass, strapped on his big knife, and went out to cut reeds for his whistles. About 60 yards from the railroad was an immense swamp filled with rushes and reeds. Ivanoff cut off a number of them, tied them together in a bundle, and returned slowly to his house. It was already near sundown, and everything was quiet except for the sound of the wind in the rushes and the noise of the grasshoppers and the wild birds. Ivanoff was approaching the railroad, when suddenly he heard a noise as of iron striking iron. He hurried toward the track thinking: "What in the world can this be?"

He was now standing in a clearing in the woods. In front of him, as far as he could see, ran the track with its glistening rails, and close by he saw a man bending over the rails, and evidently working at something.

Ivanoff approached him cautiously. "I am sure it is one of those fellows who steal bolts," he thought. He went still closer to the man, who did not hear him coming, and now he almost fainted with terror. The man was now standing up straight, holding in his hand a heavy iron lever, which he pushed underneath a rail, which came loose and fell into the middle of the roadbed.

Ivanoff felt the blood rushing to his head. He was so dizzy that he could hardly see, he wanted to cry out, but he could not make a sound, for in the man he had recognized his old comrade Basilius running away as fast as he could, could.

"Basilius! My dear Basilius, my brother, my friend! In the name of heaven come back," Ivanoff cried in despair. "Give me your lever; we still have time to put the rail back in its place. Basilius — nobody will know anything; I swear you I will not tell; Basilius, my brother, come back and do not commit suah a terrible crime."

But Basilius did not come back, he ran into the woods and disappeared. As if struck by lightning Ivanoff stood there looking at the loose rail. His bundle of reeds had fallen to the ground and was lying at his feet. An express train was due in a few minutes and nothing could stop it. He had left his red flag at home, and he had no tools to put the rail back in position. All he could do was to run back to his house to find the tools and he did not think there was time enough. He started to run back faster than he had ever run before, but he was about 500 yards from his house when he heard the whistle on the factory blowing. It was 6 o'clock now and the train would be there in two minutes.

"Oh God! Oh, God Almighty, save these poor people! Oh, the poor passengers! Maybe they have children along, little innocent children. Now they are sitting in the cars, looking through the window at the scenery which seems to rush by—happy to be able to travel. Oh, God, tell me what to do. I cannot reach my house and be back soon enough to prevent a disaster."

Ivanoff turned back and rushed the opposite way, insane almost with despair, and without knowing what to do. Suddenly he remembered that he had a whistle in his pocket; he found it while he was running. Something told him that the train was drawing near, and now he heard far away the whistle of the locomotive and felt that the rails began to shake. He had no strength to run further, and stood there breathless.

The spot where he was standing was about 300 yards from the place where Basilius had broken loose the rail. Suddenly he had an idea. He took off his hat, took his handkerchief out of his pocket, then his knife, and made the sign of the cross.

"May God assist me and have mercy upon me," he whispered. With his knife he cut deep into hs arm just above his elbow, and as the warm, red blood began to gush from the severed veins, he dipped the handkerchief in it, spread it out and tied it to one of his reeds, and now he stood there with his red flag, as it is the duty of a gateman, who wants to warn the engineer of danger.

He is standing there waving his red flag—but the engineer does not seem to see him, and if he does not stop now everything is lost, for it is impossible to stop the train at a shorter distance. He feels that the blood is still gushing from the wound, but he continues running. He is dizzy; everything turns black, there are strange noises in his ears, and he seems to hear a bell ringing. He can no longer see the train; no longer hear the roar of the wheels; but all the time he has only one thought: "I can no longer stand up—I am falling—I am dropping the red flag—merciful God! do not fail me in this hour!"

Ivanoff fell to the ground, and dropped the little flag. Just then another man jumped out from the track. He picked up the flag and waved it as Ivanoff had done, the engineer saw him, and his signal; he put on the brakes and the train stopped with a crash. Dozens of people jumped out of the cars to see what had happened. The passengers stood about in groups, and near the rails was a man in a dead faint, swimming in his blood, and next to him stood another man, very thin and very pale, holding in his hand a reed to which was tied a handkerchief dripping with blood.

Basilius looked at all those who were standing about, then he bowed his head and whispered: "Tie my hands and feet, brothers; it is I who broke loose the rail."

RICH UNCLE FROM AMERICA--A Short Story

Written for The Sunday Journal by George De Maupus

By George De Maupas.

AN old white-haired beggar was asking us in the name of God to give him something. My friend, Joseph Davranche, gave him five francs, and when I was surprised at his generosity, he replied: "The poor fellow reminds me of an incident I shall never forget. I will tell it to you now."

"My family comes from Havre, my parents were poor, although my father was a hard worker. We were three children, two girls and I. My mother often grumbled because of our poverty, and frequently scolded father in a very noisy and unjust manner. On such occasions father bowed his head in silence, and moved his hand across his forehead as if he wanted to wipe away perspiration, which was not there, and I remember how this sight of the sad old man hurt my feelings.

"We were living exceedingly economically, hardly ever associating with other people. My sisters made their own dresses and I remember how they would try for hours to squeeze down the price of trimmings which cost three cents a ward. Our usual fare was thin soup and boiled beef, cooked in every possible and impossible way. It is very likely that boiled beef is wholesome, and nourishing, but I was sick and tired of this monotonous way of living.

"It was poverty all the time, and my mother made a terrible row every time I had lost a button or torn my pants.

"The only ray of light in this darkness was our Sunday walk when we were all dressed in our best clothes. Father in black Prince Albert, silk hat, and gloves, walking ahead with mother who was dressed up in all kinds of colors which made her look like a ship on a national holiday. Every Sunday when we walked along the harbor, and saw the big vessels returning from far away, father used to say softly: "If only Julius would come, what a surprise that would be.

"My Uncle Julius was now the only hope of the family, while he had formerly been its terror. From the days of my early childhood I had heard so much about him, that I felt sure that I should recognize him as soon as I laid my eyes on him.

"I knew all the details of his life until the day he left for America. Because he had behaved in such a manner that he could not longer stay at home, that is to say that he had spent too much money, an act which is considered the greatest of crimes in poor families. When a young fellow of well to do people throws away money, people smile and say that he is sowing his wild oats, but if a poor young man makes his father pay bills, he is immediately considered a loafer, a scoundrel, and almost a criminal.

"After Uncle Julius had used up all the money he could ever hope to inherit himself, he began to spend some of the money my father ought to have had, and he was then sent to America.

"On the other side of the ocean things went well with him. He made money as a merchant and soon wrote home that he hoped the time would come when he could make up for the losses he had cost my father. I remember what a commotion this letter caused in the family. Uncle Julius, this good-for-nothing fellow, who had formerly been called all kinds of names was suddenly changed into a man of honor, with the heart in the right spot, a genuine Davranche.

"Later we heard from the captain of the steamer that he had a very large business. Two years later another letter came from him:

"'Dear Philip:'

"'Business is fine and growing all the time. Tomorrow I am starting on a long trip to South America. It may be years before I write you again, but you must not worry for I will return to Havre as soon as I have made a big fortune, which will not take me very long, and then we will all spend our days happy together.'

"This letter grew to be a gospel in the family. It was read aloud at all occasions, and both to friends and acquaintances.

"Time passed however and for 10 long years we heard nothing from Uncle Julius, but father's hope grew stronger, as the years went by, and mother often said: 'When the good Julius comes everything will be changed, for he is a man who knows how to get along in the world.'

"Every Sunday when we saw the big black steamers appear in the horizon, father repeated his eternal: 'What a surprise if Julius were coming.' And we children almost thought we could see him waving his handkerchief, and crying: 'Hello Philip.'

"We builded a thousand castles in the air founded on his homecoming. Then everything was to be happiness and pleasure. And I am almost sure that my father had a quiet option on an estate in the country near Ingouville.

"We were not only hard up for money, but also the young men with serious intentions, and my oldest sister was now 28 and the youngest 26. At last a poor but honest man, who occupied a small position under the government, proposed to the younger one, and it was surely the reading of the letter from Uncle Julius which made him pop the question. It is not necessary to say that she did not give him time to change his mind, but accepted him immediately. It was a general holiday in the family. After the wedding it was decided that we should all go on a little trip to Jersey, the island which is the goal of all poor people, who cannot afford to go very far, and still are ambitious to go abroad. It is not very far away; you go on board a steamer and when you land you are abroad on English soil, where a Frenchman, after a sea voyage of two hours, may enjoy the sight of a neighboring nation in its own home.

"This trip was all that we could think of for weeks ahead. It was the happy dream of the whole family. At last we started. I plainly see the whole scenery today, as if it were only yesterday. I see the steamer crossing the channel slowly, my father consciously watching our three trunks, mother arm in arm with my unmarried sister, who after the wedding certainly looked like a chicken overcome with cold, and last of all the newly married couple, which I must look at all the time.

"It was beautiful weather and the sea was perfectly calm. We saw the coast disappear, and we were all happy and proud as only people who travel very little can be. Father looked very gentlemanly-like in his black frock which in the morning had been cleaned carefully with benzine, and the result was that he also this day was surrounded with the familiar odor of the cleansing fluid which we knew so well from our Sunday clothes.

"Suddenly father saw two gentlemen treating two ladies to oysters, which an old sailor dressed in rags was opening with a knife. The ladies were eating, holding the shells with their clean handkerchiefs, and pointing their lips pushing them out as far as possible, that no juice should fall on their dresses, and each time after they had eaten the oyster they emptied the fluid that was left in the shells, drinking out of them as if they were cups, and throwing them far into the sea.

"I am quite sure that father was very much impressed with this elegant way of eating oysters on board a steamer running at full speed. At all events he immediately went over and asked mother and my sister if they didn't feel like having some oysters. Mother, however, refused, afraid of the extra expense, but my two sisters immediately replied that they would be delighted to have some.

"'I am afraid they will give me a stomach ache,' my mother said, looking very sad. 'Give the girls a couple after, but don't give them too many or they might get sick. Joseph doesn't need any, one should not spoil children.'

"I therefore stayed with mother, but I remember that I thought her very unjust, and felt very angry at her. While I followed with my eyes, father who, as proud as a turkey gobbler, conducted his two daughters and his son-in-law to the old ragged sailor.

"Suddenly he grew very uneasy, stopped, turned pale and stared wildly about him.

"'How strange, but there is a very strong resemblance between that old sailor and Julius,' he whispered to mother.

"'What, Julius?' mother exclaimed.

"'My brother, of course. If I did not know him to be a rich man in America I would really believe it was he.'

"'You are crazy, when you know it is not he, why must you come to me and talk that nonsense,' mother stammered, quite pale.

"'Look at him Clarisse, look at him yourself.'

"She stood up and went over to the daughter to look very closely at the sailor, a poor, dirty, wrinkled man who had eyes for nothing but his work. Immediately afterward mother came back trembling all over.

"'I am almost sure it is he,' she groaned.

"'Ask the captain, but be very careful; suppose the old scoundrel should find us out.'

"Then father and I went over to the captain, whom he asked if he knew anything about the old oyster-opener, whose face he thought exceedingly interesting.

"'Oh, he is a nobody, an old French tramp whom I picked up at New Orleans last year. He says that he has some relatives at Havre, but he does not want to visit them, because he owes them money. His name is Darmanche or Davranche, or something like that. He says himself that at one time he was quite well off while in America, but now he has nothing at all.'

"Father was almost ready to faint, his heart stopped beating and his eyes rolled in his head, as if he had suddenly gone insane.

"'Sit down or they will find out there is something the matter with you,' mother whispered, while the captain shook his head and left us.

"Father let himself fall down on a bench.

"'It is he! it is he!' he groaned; 'what shall we do?'

"'Get the children away from here, and first of all take care that our son-in-law does not find it out.'

"'What a calamity,' father mumbled, still looking like a fit inmate for an insane asylum.

"Mother on the other side was furious and sizzled between her teeth: 'Didn't I think so. That thief would never amount to anything, I know it, but what can one expect of a Davranche?'

"As usual father listened to her ravings in silence, and drew his hand across his forehead, as I had seen him do so often.

"'Give Joseph money to pay for the oysters; I don't know what we should do if that bundle of rags should recognize us; it would be a fine kettle of fish. Let us get to the other end of the boat, and look out that the dirty loafer does not get near us.'

"Father gave we five franks, to pay the man and told my sister that mother had suddenly become seasick.

"'How much do we owe you, sir,' I asked the old fellow.

"'Two franks, 50 centimen,' he replied.

"I handed him the five frank piece, and he gave me back the change. I looked at his hands, poor, dirty, boney, sailor's hands, and then at his face which looked so sad and unhappy.

"'He is my uncle, the brother of my father,' a voice said within me, and I gave him 10 sous as a tip.

"'God bless you young man,' he said, his voice quivering with emotion. 'I am sure that he has been begging in America.

"My sisters were surprised at my squandering of money. When I handed father the two franks mother said: 'It couldn't be possible that those oysters should really have cost three franks.'

"In a voice which I made as firm and loud as I could without actually shouting, I replied: 'I gave the man 10 sous, because I thought he should have a tip.'

"'Are you crazy to give half a frank to a good-for-nothing beggar like he ——.' She stopped when my father's uneasy winking showed her he was afraid the son-in-law might hear something.

Ahead of us in the horizon the island of Jersey was appearing. When we came near the pier, I felt a strong desire to see Uncle Julius once more, and say a few friendly words to him, but he had disappeared probably into his humble cabin.

"We returned home with another steamer, not to meet him and I have never again seen my father's brother.

"That is the reason why I sometimes give a beggar five franks.'"

JOSS STICKS.

Mystery Surrounds Manufacture of Scented Candles.

From the New York Evening World.

In all countries where Buddhist worship is celebrated there is a great consumption of "joss sticks." These ceremonial candles are lighted on occasions of festivity or mourning, prayer or thanksgiving to divinities, and the like. Joss sticks are at once candles and incense, since, like the latter they burn without apparent flame. Their preparation is shrouded in some mystery and the process is still practically unknown, those who carry it on being chosen from a special class and kept in rigorous seclusion. A squared strip of bamboo, of varying length and thickness, according to the size of the joss stick that is to be made, is skillfully rolled on an inclined surface, in a mixture of odoriferous powders agglutinated by resin, made viscous by slight elevation of temperature. One of the ends is left as it is, to serve as a handle. In some cases the bamboo is replaced with a flexible rod which enables the joss stick to be rolled in spiral form. The composition of the odoriferous powders varies with the country. Those used in Indo-China come generally from the province of Canton and include 14 different drugs, among which may be named camphor, sandalwood, aconite and clove. Aconite plays the part of a preservative and protects the joss sticks well against the attacks of rats and mice.

Eggsactly.

From the Boston Herald.

Over in Chelsea a school teacher was engaged in her task of teaching a class of foreign children the English language. She was trying to make her pupils understand the meaning of the word fright, and asked if any one in the class could givce a sentence containing the word.

Quick and confident was the reply of one little girl: "I have a sentence, teacher. We had fright eggs for breakfast this morning.

RAISING A PYRAMID EVERY FIFTY DAYS--

Continued From the First Page of This Section

loading six cubic yards in the 8-hour working day, to perform the feat.

For the handling of the scant 2,000,000 cubic yards that went out of the canal prism and the accessory works during November, an army of more than 12,300 men would have been required, had the work been done by the ancient Egyptians, for all the lashes of their taskmasters, whose cruelty remains a byword down even to this more merciful day.

In the dim dawn of mechanics, when the pyramids were constructed, the crowbar, the hauling rope and the human beast of burden represented the means of displacement of stone in masses and the high achievement in transportation. A man can handle a rock weighing from 150 to 200 pounds, but a steam shovel deals airily with masses up to 21,000 pounds.

In breaking up the material in sizes feasible for hand labor, the drilling necessary would amount to twice or thrice that required to meet the capacious maw of the mighty steam shovel. And the pick and the other antiquated tools of the past were largely permitted to rest in Mr. Cleveland's famous desuetude.

Alfred Nobel, the Swede who made it the labor of his life to convert the profits of destruction into the riches of peace and plenty, ended all that with his dynamite.

With explosives, as elsewhere in the work, the benignity of the steam shovel persists in its economies. One third of a pound of explosive will reduce a cubic yard of material to the size suited to the shovel; but a pound would be needed to split it down to sizes fitted for men's hands.

So the loading, instead of requiring 1,000 men, would have called for 2,000; and the explosives, instead of amounting to 250,000 pounds for a month, would have risen to 750,000 pounds.

The 37 steam shovels that were at work in October assuredly paid for themselves, especially when one is reminded, as the president reminded congress recently, that they scooped out their 1,800,000 cubic yards of rock and earth while the torrential rains of Panama were deluging the scene of operations with 17.1 inches of rainfall. In point of fact, the record excavations were made while the rainy season was at its worst.

But the material excavated is far from done with when it is digged and shoveled. It must be disposed of—on selected dumping grounds, to which it is hauled by rail. The railroad track itself, laid for the burdened train, must be constantly shifted to the edge of the dump.

They use a track throwing machine down at Panama, handled by three mechanics and half a dozen laborers, who throw a mile of it a distance of nine feet in eight hours.

The same daily job, done by hand, would demand the strength and skill of 600 men.

Material must then be unloaded. They use a special machine for that onerous detail; it has a record at Culebra of chucking out 5,000 cubic yards from 16 trains within eight hours. The slender force of three-score white men and 100 laborers, working by machine, suffices where 225 foremen and 6,000 laborers would have been needed.

They spread the material after the dumping, employing mechanical spreaders, that distribute it from nine to 13 feet from the track. Three dozen white men and threescore negro laborers accomplish what it would demand an army of 7,000 men to do.

How true were the words of the unfortunate De Lesseps, when he declared that mechanics in the future would bring success where the science of his day spelled failure, is impressively apparent from a comparison of the work in the Culebra cut alone during last November!

The standard engine used by the French—we have rebuilt a number of them—is equal to the hauling of 12 4-yard dump cars; it pulls a train transporting 48 cubic yards. The American engines are up to 20 western dump cars, having each 12 yards' capacity—240 cubic yards hauled by a single train.

Better than that the engines can handle 17 flat cars, each with a capacity of 18 yards, or the 306 cubic yards to the train.

To haul November's daily output from the Culebra cut—32,827 cubic yards—684 French trains would have been required, as against 126 trains of western dumps, or 147 trains of our flat cars.

The French, when their operation was at its height, had 282,528 cubic yards as their best showing for excavation from the Culebra cut, performed by laborers numbering from 16,000 to 18,000, with the horde of superintendents, foremen and other employes omitted.

At Culebra in November the daily average of laborers was 6,943, and their amount of excavated material—71 per cent rock, 29 per cent earth—was 788,-022 cubic yards.

That looks like 16 cubic yards per man for the best month under the French, and 118 cubic yards per man in November for the Americans.

So it was. And yet, while the figures do not lie, they need explanation. The French working force, when it worked, digged double that average per man—32 cubic yards to every pair of hands per month. But, instead of 18,000 pair of hands being at work, half of them lay yellowing in the hospitals or clenching in the last agonies of the death that ended their usefulness.

The whole American force, with not a trace of yellow fever's crippling blight, was able to put its shoulders to the wheel, its brain and muscle to the wonder-working machines.

Gorgas! Yes, Gorgas, who drove the mosquito out of the canal zone; but, also, Ross, who helped him, and Reed, who proved the mosquito theory; and—let them not be forgotten when the statues rise in honor of the martyrs who have made our earth workable and livable—Dr. Lazear and Nurse Mans, and those other incarnations of loftiest heroism, who gave their lives for humanity's victory over its dreaded scourge, yellow fever.

Only 1,156,726 cubic yards were taken out of the whole canal territory during the years 1904 and 1905. But among that million of cubic yards there was about one cubic yard of foulness, representing the mortality among the fever-bearing mosquitos of the zone, which cost more in lives and money than our now care-free, calmly indifferent imagination can conceive.

The real work of excavating began only with the year 1906. In the two years that have gone by since then, 31,-600,565 cubic yards have already been removed. During the whole 10 years the French were at work, they were able to excavate only 81,548,000 cubic yards. Last year the record went upward in bounds, from the totals of 815,270 in March and of 879,527 in April, to the 1,868,729 cubic yards of October and the 1,838,486 cubic yards of November.

And besides, fully 80 per cent of the entire plant needed for construction has been purchased or contracted for; machine shops have been erected for making all needed repairs to the plant; an effective organization has been perfected; a recruiting system is in operation that is capable of furnishing more labor than is required to earn the $60,-000,000 awaiting American skilled labor, and the untold millions more that must go to the unskilled; and scarcely anybody is sick, or is thinking of getting sick.

When the second king of the fourth Egyptian dynasty built his great pyramid, to hold his little body after the life should have gone out of it—that one which awed Hannibal and Anthony and Napoleon with its name of the Great Pyramid of Cheops and its imposing height of 482 feet—he used up 100,000 men for 10 years, merely for the making of the road that led from his stone quarries to the pyramid's site.

And he used 100,000 men every day for 20 years afterward, before his everlasting monument was completed.

Colonel Goethals and his canal force now, would undertake to split up the Great Pyramid of Cheops into material for their steam shovels, cart it away on their American flat cars, with their American locomotives, and dump it into the Nile with their latest American dumpers, within the neat space of 50 days, working no more than eight hours a day, as is proper for a nation that has awakened to the rights of labor, inalienable now, some centuries after the Pharaohs overworked the Jews.

It took De Lesseps 10 years to build the Suez canal and make the reputation he lost at Panama; the present isthmian canal force could have waltzed through that job in three years and 10 months, and had a week or so to loaf around in, swapping home stories and arguing the tariff.

They would have had ships passing through the famous Manchester canal within about two years from the time their steam shovels scooped up the first mouthful. The magnificent Kiel canal of which Emperor Wilhelm is almost as proud of as he is of his naval uniform or his latest poem, would have been put through in jig time—say, five years.

Every day during last December they excavated from the canal material enough to build cubes, not skimpy pyramids, of their own, measuring 125 feet long, wide and high.

During 1907 they took out the material required to put over that section of Manhattan bounded by the North and the East rivers and Fifty-ninth street and the Battery a blanket of rock and earth one foot thick—and there would be enough left over to bury all Central park more than five feet deep.

They are completing the inspection of the lock foundations of the canal; and on the three locks contemplated—Gatun, Pedro Miguel and La Boca—they are planning to use some reenforced concrete. They will use enough of it to build a continuous street of houses from New York to Philadelphia, with houses left over to make a row on one side of the street from Philadelphia to Washington; or a street with houses on one side from St. Louis to Chicago; St. Louis nearly to Cincinnati, or St. Louis to Kansas City. There would be suburban homes for 120,000 people; but, if you crowded them as they do in cities, all Minneapolis could live there.

If every house were 20 by 30 feet, having eight rooms each, two stories and a basement, with concrete floors and a concrete roof, there would be 22,842 of them. Set every one down in its own 75-foot lot, and they would make three streets, with houses on each side, reaching from Panama to Colon—and then, there would be a side street extending from Panama to Gorgona.

The Pharaohs? They are entirely outclassed!

Disputed the Proposition.

From the Chicago Tribune.

"All that you are, my friend," said the lecturer, singling out an elderly man sitting in a front seat, who appeared to be deeply interested, "all that you are, I repeat, you owe to heredity and environment."

"Gosh!" exclaimed the elderly man, turning red with indignation, "I never had no dealin's with that firm in my life, and I don't owe them nor nobody else a blamed cent!"