

# The Special Correspondent

## CHAPTER XXVI.—(Continued.)

I will go back to Popof. Impossible. I seem to be nailed to the floor of the van. My head swims.

It is true we are running toward the abyss? No; I am mad. Faruskiar and his accomplices would be hurled over as well. They would share our fate. They would perish with us.

But there are shouts in front of the train. The screams of people being killed. There is no doubt now. The driver and the stoker are being strangled. I feel the speed of the train begin to slacken.

I understand. One of the ruffians knows how to work the train, and he is slowing it to enable them to jump off and avoid the catastrophe.

I begin to master my terror. Staggering like a drunken man, I crawl to Kinko's case. There, in a few words, I tell him what has passed, and I exclaim: "We are lost!"

"No—perhaps—," he replies.

Before I can move, Kinko is out of his box. He rushes toward the front door; he climbs on the tender.

"Come along! Come along!" he shouts. "I do not know how I have done it, but here I am at his side on the foot plate, my feet in the blood of the driver and stoker, who have been thrown off on to the line."

Faruskiar and his companions are no longer here. But before they went one of them has taken off the brakes, jammed down the regulator to full speed, thrown fresh coals into the fire box, and the train is running with frightful velocity. In a few minutes we shall reach the Ljoni viaduct.

Kinko, energetic and resolute, is as cool as a cucumber. But in vain he tries to move the regulator, to shut off the steam, to put on the brake. These valves and levers, what shall we do with them?

"I must tell Popof!" I shout.

"And what can he do? No, there is only one way."

"And what is that?"

"Rouse up the fire," says Kinko, calmly; "shut down the safety valves, and blow up the engine."

And was that the only way—a desperate way—of stopping the train before it reached the viaduct?

Kinko scattered the coal on to the fire bars. He turned on the greatest possible draught, the air roared across the furnace, the pressure goes up, up, amid the heaving of the motion, the bellowing of the boiler, the beating of the pistons. We are going a hundred kilometers an hour.

"Get back!" shouts Kinko, above the roar. "Get back into the van!"

"And you, Kinko?"

"Get back, I tell you!"

I see him hang on to the valves and put his whole weight on the levers.

"Go!" he shouts.

I am off over the tender. I am through the van. I wake Popof, shouting with all my strength:

"Get back! Get back!"

A few passengers suddenly waking from sleep begin to run from the front car.

Suddenly there is an explosion and a shock. The train at first jumps back. Then it continues to move for about half a kilometer.

It stops.

Popof, the major, Caterna, most of the passengers are out on the line in an instant.

A network of scaffolding appears confusedly in the darkness above the piers which were to carry the viaduct across the Tjoni valley.

Two hundred yards further the train would have been lost in the abyss.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

And I, who wanted "incident," who feared the weariness of a monotonous voyage of six thousand kilometers, in the course of which I should not meet with an impression or emotion worth clothing in type!

I have made another muddle of it, I admit. My lord Faruskiar, of whom I had made a hero—by telegraph—for the readers of the Twentieth Century.

We are, as I have said, two hundred yards from the valley of the Tjoni, so deep and wide as to require a viaduct from three hundred and fifty to four hundred feet long. The floor of the valley is scattered over with rocks and a hundred feet down. If the train had been hurled to the bottom of that chasm not one of us would have escaped alive.

This memorable catastrophe—most interesting from a reporter's point of view—would have claimed a hundred victims. But thanks to the coolness, energy and devotion of the young Roumanian, we have escaped this terrible disaster.

All? No! Kinko has paid with his life for the safety of his fellow passengers.

Amid the confusion my first care was to visit the luggage van, which had remained uninjured. Evidently, if Kinko had survived the explosion, he would have got back into his box and waited till I put myself in communication with him.

Alas! The coffer is empty—empty as that of a company which has suspended payment. Kinko has been the victim of his sacrifice.

And so there has been a hero among our traveling companions, and he was not Faruskiar, this abominable bandit hidden beneath the skin of a manager, whose name I have so stupidly published over the four corners of the globe.

It was this Roumanian, this humble, this little, this poor fellow, whose sweetheart will wait for him in vain, and whom he will never again see. Well, I will do him justice. I will tell what he has done. As to his secret, I shall be sorry if I keep it. If he defrauded the Grand Transasiatic it is thanks to that fraud that a whole train has been saved. We were lost; we should have perished in the most horrible of deaths if Kinko had not been there.

I went back to the line, my heart heavy, my eyes full of tears.

Assuredly Faruskiar's scheme, in the execution of which he had executed his rival, Ki-Tsang, had been cleverly contrived in utilizing this branch line leading to the unfinished viaduct. Nothing was easier than to switch off the train if an

accomplice was at the points. And as soon as the signal was given that we were on the branch all he had to do was to gain the footplate, kill the driver and stoker, slow the train and get off, leaving the steam on full to work up to full speed.

And now there could be no doubt that the scoundrels, worthy the most refined tortures that Chinese practice could devise, were hastening down into the Tjoni valley. There, amid the wreck of the train, they expected to find the fifteen millions of gold and precious stones, and this treasure they could carry off without fear of surprise when the night enabled them to consummate this fearful crime. Well, they have been robbed, these robbers, and I hope they will pay for their crime with their lives, at the least. I alone know what has passed, but I will tell the story, for poor Kinko is no more.

Yes, my mind is made up. I will speak as soon as I have seen Zinca Klork. The poor girl must be told with consideration. The death of her betrothed must not come upon her like a thunderclap. Yes, to-morrow, as soon as we are at Pekin.

After all, if I do not say anything about Kinko, I may at least denounce Faruskiar and Changir and the four Mongols. I can say that I saw them go through the van, that I followed them, that I found they were talking on the gangway, that I heard the screams of the driver and stoker as they were strangled on the footplate, and that I then returned to the cars, shouting, "Back! Back!" or whatever it was.

We are now standing at the head of the train, Major Nolitz, the German baron, Caterna, Ephrinnell, Pan Chao, Popof—about twenty travelers in all. The Chinese guard, faithful to their trust, are still near the treasure, which not one of them has abandoned. The rear guard has brought along the tail lamps, and by their powerful light we can see in what a state the engine is.

If the train, which was then running at an enormous velocity, had not stopped suddenly and thus brought about its destruction it was because the boiler had exploded at the top and on the side. The wheels being undamaged, the engine had run far enough to come gradually to a standstill of itself, and thus the passengers had been saved a violent shock.

Of the boiler and its accessories only a few shapeless fragments remained. The funnel had gone, the dome, the steam chest; nothing but torn plates, broken, twisted tubes, split cylinders, and loose connecting rods—gaping wounds in the corpse of steel.

And not only had the engine been destroyed, but the tender had been rendered useless. Its tank had been cracked and its load of coals scattered over the line. The luggage van, curious to relate, had miraculously escaped without injury.

"It is only too evident," said one of the passengers, "that our driver and stoker have perished in the explosion."

"Poor fellows!" said Popof. "But I wonder how the train could have got on the Nankin branch without being noticed?"

"The night was very dark," said Ephrinnell, "and the driver could not see the points."

"That is the only explanation possible," said Popof, "for he would have tried to stop the train, and, on the contrary, we were traveling at tremendous speed."

"But," said Pan Chao, "how does it happen the Nankin branch was open when the Tjoni viaduct was not finished? Had the switch been interfered with?"

"Undoubtedly," said Popof, "and probably out of carelessness."

Up to now Major Nolitz had taken no part in the discussion. Now he interrupted Popof, and in a voice heard by all, he asked:

"Where is Faruskiar?"

They all looked about and tried to discover what had become of the manager of the Transasiatic.

"And where is his friend Ghangir?" asked the major. There was no reply.

"And where are the four Mongols who were in the rear van?" asked Major Nolitz.

And none of them presented themselves.

"Well, then," said Major Nolitz, "the rascal who sent us on to the Nankin line, who would have hurled us into the Tjoni valley, to walk off with the imperial treasure, is Faruskiar."

"What!" said Popof. "The manager of the company, who so courageously drove off the bandits and killed their chief, Ki-Tsang, with his own hand?"

"Then I entered on the scene."

"The major is not mistaken. It was Faruskiar who laid this trap for us."

I told them what I knew, and what good fortune had enabled me to ascertain. I told them how I had overheard the plan of Faruskiar and his Mongols, when it was too late to stop it, but I was silent regarding the intervention of Kinko. The moment had not come, and I would do him justice in due time.

Now that all danger had disappeared, we must take immediate measures for running back the cars on to the Pekin line.

"The best thing to do is to go to the nearest station, that of Fuen-Choo, and telegraph to Tai-Yuan for them to send on a relief engine," I suggested.

Twelve of us, including Pan Chao, Caterna and myself, volunteered to accompany Major Nolitz. But by common accord we advised Popof not to abandon the train, assuring him that we would do all that was necessary at Fuen-Choo.

Then, armed with daggers and revolvers—it was one o'clock in the morning—we went along the line to the junction, walking as fast as the very dark night permitted.

In less than two hours we arrived at Fuen-Choo station without adventure. Evidently Faruskiar had cleared off. The Chinese police would have to deal with the bandit and his accomplices. Would they catch him? I hoped so, but I doubted it.

At the station Pan Chao explained

matters to the station master, who telegraphed for an engine to be sent from Tai-Yuan to the Nankin line.

At three o'clock, just at daybreak, we returned to wait for the engine at the junction. Three-quarters of an hour afterward its whistle announced its approach and it stopped at the bifurcation of the lines. We climbed up on to the tender, and half an hour later had rejoined the train.

The dawn had come on sufficiently for us to be able to see over a considerable distance. Without saying anything to anybody, I went in search of the body of my poor Kinko. And I could not find it among the wreck.

As the engine could not reach the front of the train, owing to there being only a single line, and no turning back, it was decided to couple it on in the rear and run backward to the junction.

In this way the box, alas! without the Roumanian in it, was in the last carriage. We started, and in half an hour we were on the main line again.

Everything ends in this world below, even a voyage of six thousand kilometers on the Grand Transasiatic; and after a run of thirteen days, hour after hour, our train stopped at the gates of the capital of the Celestial Empire.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Pekin!" shouted Popof. "All change here."

It was four o'clock in the afternoon. For people fatigued with three hundred and twelve hours of traveling, it was no time for running about the town—what I say?—the four towns, enclosed one within the other. Besides I had plenty of time. I was going to stop some weeks in this capital.

The important thing was to find a hotel in which one could live passably.

From information received I was led to believe that the Hotel of Ten Thousand Dreams, near the railway station, might be sufficiently in accord with western notions.

As to Mademoiselle Klork, I will postpone my visit till to-morrow. I will call on her before the box arrives, and even then I shall be too soon, for I shall take her the news of Kinko's death.

Half an hour afterward we are installed at the Hotel of Ten Thousand Dreams. There we are served with a dinner in Chinese style. The repeat being over—toward the second watch—we lay ourselves on beds that are too narrow, in rooms with little comfort, and sleep not the sleep of the just, but the sleep of the exhausted—and that is just as good.

I did not wake before ten o'clock, and I might have slept all the morning if the thought had not occurred to me that I had a duty to fulfill. And what a duty. To call in the Avenue Cha-Coua before the delivery of the unhappy case to Mademoiselle Zinca Klork.

Ah! if Kinko had not succumbed, I should have returned to the railway station—I should have assisted in the unloading of the precious package. I would have watched it on the cart, and I would have accompanied it to the Avenue Cha-Coua; I would even have helped in carrying him up to Mademoiselle Zinca Klork. And what a double explosion of joy there would have been, when Kinko jumped through the panel to fall into the arms of the fair Roumanian! But no! When the box arrives it will be empty—empty as a heart from which all the blood has escaped.

(To be continued.)

## "FIRING" LISKUM.

Liskum was the "butt" of the "local" room of the daily on which he worked, says the Brooklyn Eagle. He was a dried-up, wrinkled little chap, who might have been either 20 or 60 years of age. Whatever went wrong about the office was laid to Liskum, and whatever was attributed to him he accepted without a murmur, only smiling a crinkly little smile that won the hearts of the whole staff. For, joke him as they might, every reporter on the paper had a tender spot for Liskum.

One day Tompkins, the "star" reporter, came in to find the group about the big stove in the local room indignantly discussing something.

"Liskum had been fired," some one told him. "There was a great fuss about the third ward story in this morning's paper."

"Why, I wrote that myself," said Tompkins. "Liskum had nothing to do with it." And with that he started for the managing editor's room.

Mr. Rockman sat by his flat-topped desk; Liskum stood opposite him. Tompkins slowed down in an apologetic way, for he remembered that he had violated precedent by entering the editor's room without knocking.

"Come in, Tompkins," said Mr. Rockman. "You are just the man I want to see."

Liskum turned his crinkly smile on Tompkins but spoke not a word.

"I have just dismissed Mr. Liskum for that third ward story," said the editor.

"I heard so," replied Tompkins, "but I wrote that story myself. He had nothing to do with it."

"I know that," said the editor. "That is why I dismissed him. A formidable delegation of third-ward people came here this morning, and made it very plain to me that something must be done to soothe them. I knew you were such a fussy chap it would never do to let you face them, so I brought Liskum in and indignantly dismissed him from the reporter's staff. I am just now engaging him as assistant city editor."

Liskum turned another crinkly smile on Tompkins, and the star reporter went back to the big stove in the city room.

"Boys," he said, "the old man is all right."

Up in the Air.

"Why don't you turn your pen to higher themes?" asked the well-meaning friend.

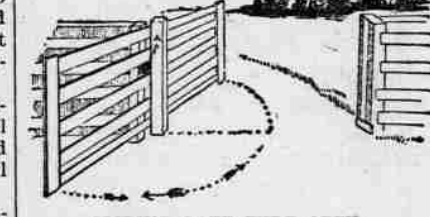
"I'd like to," replied the funny man, "but there doesn't seem to be any demand for skyscraper jokes at present."



## Simple Farm Gate.

The gate shown in the accompanying illustration is recommended by a correspondent of the Montreal Family Herald. The gate is intended for inside locations, upon a farm instead of bars or swinging gates which are troublesome and apt to get out of order. The correspondent has six of these gates on his ranch, and expects soon to put in as many more. It will be noticed that the gate is not hung on hinges. It consists simply of a hurdle which stands between two strong posts set so that the gate easily passes back between them. The second bar of the gate rests on a cleat A, shown in the illustration. This cleat consists of inch lumber, four inches wide and 12 or 14 inches long. The gate will slide easily if the top of the cleat is greased. As the gate is closed it slips between the two posts, which prevent it from being pushed either way.

Points in favor of this gate over



SLIDING GATE WIDE OPEN.

those in ordinary use are as follows: It is cheaply and easily made; it is not liable to get out of order; quickly and easily operated; requires only ordinary fence posts, no hinges, or latch, and it locks automatically.

## This Year's Wheat Crop.

Another bumper wheat crop is in prospect. Estimates by the Department of Agriculture on grain in the field indicate a total yield of winter wheat of over 411,000,000 bushels against 401,685,887 in 1903 and 325,374,503 in 1904; a gain of 10,314,113 bushels over 1903 and 85,225,497 bushels over 1904. The estimate on spring wheat is 348,000,000 bushels, but there are good reasons for believing that the yield will be from 10,000,000 to 15,000,000 bushels greater than the present estimate. However, the comparison, accepting the estimate as correct, is interesting, showing an excess for 1905 over the yield of 1904 and less than 1903, as follows: Estimate of yield of spring wheat, 1905, 348,000,000 bushels, against 355,183,656 in 1903 and 279,696,656 bushels in 1904, about 7,000,000 bushels less than the yield of 1903 and 68,303,344 more than last year. According to the official estimate, the total wheat crop of the United States this year will be 670,000,000 bushels. Unless serious damage comes to spring wheat during its ripening, the total wheat yield of the United States will be about 118,000,000 greater than in 1904 and 33,000,000 in excess of 1903.—Epitomist.

## Cost of Making Beef.

It has been accepted as proved that the younger an animal the lower is the cost of putting on flesh and fat. Some experiments have been made to prove this, but the data are too meager to permit of the building of very strong arguments on them. Professor Mumford of the Illinois station has taken up the question and is making an experiment that will at least add to the volume of the data if it does not settle the question, which it probably will not. Herds of various ages are being fed at the station, and these will be marketed as fast as ready and careful reports compiled of the cost of gain made on each lot. There is a point beyond which it does not pay a farmer to keep an animal, even though that animal is all the time gaining in weight. The station is trying to find the point at which steer feeding must stop, if a profit is to be made. Every day after that point the farmer is losing money and losing the time he is putting on the care of the animal.

## A Kicking Cow.

There are many recommended methods of dealing with kicking cows. One, which is by some found to be very effective, is to rope or strap the hind legs together just above the hock. The rope or strap should be put on in the form of a figure eight, having it cross between the legs. Some milkers apply the rope close down to the feet and fasten it to a ring in the floor. Rather than fasten the rope securely, it is better at the first trial to have an attendant to hold the rope, so that he can loosen it in case the cow throws herself in her effort to kick. A plan that does no good and generally much harm is to beat the animal. This only increases the retaliation in the form of kicking. A kicking cow is an angry cow, and after one has exhausted his efforts in attempting to soothe her by means of patting, currying, giving massages, etc., without success, the only thing to do is to secure her in a manner that she can neither kick nor injure herself.—American Cultivator.

## The Oat Crop.

The oat crop is one that requires a great deal of moisture throughout the season, and the best crop is assured by preparing the soil so it will conserve moisture. The reason the old

plan of seeding oats in corn stubble fails so frequently is because the ground is stirred shallow and wet early in spring time and when a few weeks of dry weather come it bakes as hard as the road and remains in this condition until harvest. It is not a good plan to be in too big a hurry about sowing oats. When the ground has dried out so it is in good condition to break then start the plow.—Ohio Farmer.

## The Shortage of Sheep.

"Michigan sheep and lamb feeders find themselves up against a peculiar situation, and many of them are at a loss how to proceed," says a writer in the Detroit Tribune. "There are many feeders who were of opinion that receipts of Western sheep at Chicago would be larger late in the season and have waited in the belief that they would be able to get their orders filled at lower prices. Present indications look as if there would be few of the bargains that have been offered in other years."

"Never before in the history of the Chicago yards has there been such a pressing demand for feeding sheep and lambs. Every day now the sheep pens are full of strangers who are looking for bargains, and every desirable bunch is caught up at high prices compared with other years. The outlook for wool and mutton was never brighter than at present, and the general belief is that sheep and lamb feeders will make plenty of money this year, no matter what they pay for feeding stock."

## The Auto Nuisance.

During an English farmers' meeting, the chairman had suggested that he should instruct his teamsters to hold their wagons across the road when autos were approaching at a furious rate. He received the following amusing communication: "As I doubt the power of the average farm laborer to distinguish between the innocent and the guilty, I offer my services. I hold a discharge as a sergeant from the army, and am a trained shot. At least fifty autos pass my house every day. With an ordinary magazine rifle I could get about thirty daily, and I offer my trained services to the chamber at a charge of six pence per head. I should like to know to whom to forward the heads. I could use explosive or poisoned bullets if so desired."

## How Sunday Affects the Cows.

The manager of the Wisconsin experimental farm once said that he could tell the Sundays in the calendar by looking at his milk record, which showed the daily yield, because the quantity obtained was invariably smaller than on a week day. "Our men milk a little later on Sunday morning, and a little earlier at night, probably hurrying the operation, and the cows resent the treatment by giving a somewhat smaller yield of milk." It was observed, also, apropos of the necessity for kind and gentle treatment of dairy cattle, that a new hand obtained as milk from a cow than she would yield to a milker, not necessarily more expert, to whom she was accustomed.

## For Sharpening Posts.

To save lots of work in sharpening posts, fix up the rig illustrated, advises Charles Hecht. The forked pole



RIG FOR SHARPENING POSTS.

is 12 feet long, the brace of 1x4 being about 5 feet high. A stump makes the best block upon which to sharpen post.

## Sod Houses and Telephones.

Sod houses and telephones are the strange combination now offered by the prairies of the Middle West. Yet the combination is less strange than appears, for the present sod houses are by no means to be despised, particularly in cold weather. They are built with considerable attention to comfort, and, with an interior lining of Portland cement, offer almost the advantages of a stone building, and at the slightest cost, while the network of telephones overcomes the isolation of earlier days.

## Poultry Pickings.

Save the cabbage for the hens. Leaves make good scratching material.

Cracked corn will put fat on a fowl about the quickest of any feed.

A lot of extra cockerels are a nuisance. Kill them off if you want eggs.

Green cut bone or good beef scraps will force the pullets to early maturity.

Dampness is one of the worst troubles of poultry keepers. Sunshine is sure cure.

Lime water is a corrective of fowl diseases and is also a good remedy for soft shelled eggs.

If eggs were sold by weight the talk about big eggs would give place to that of more of 'em.

A duck grows faster than a chicken, sells for more in market, costs no more to feed and needs but little care.

To obtain the best results from hens keep them in flocks of from thirty to forty with one or two males. Crowding never pays any breeder.

As a rule hens fall off in egg production after they are three or four years old, and it is only in exceptional cases that it is advisable to keep them.



John C. Driscoll, who has been the central figure in the Chicago labor graft rumors, has been conspicuous for years in labor affairs. When the Associated Teaming Interests was organized in 1902 he was elected secretary and held the position until April, this year. Mr. Driscoll was born in Oswego, N. Y., May 29, 1859, and was brought by his parents to Chicago when but nine months old. He was educated in St. Ignace College, where he took a classical course and was graduated with the degree of A. B. When Mr. Driscoll severed his connection with the Associated Teaming Interests he declared that during his term as secretary no team owner had lost a dollar through labor troubles.

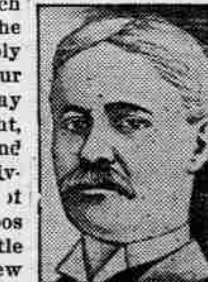


In William E. Cramer, publisher of the Milwaukee Evening Wisconsin, another hero of the profession has passed away. Though for many years blind and all but totally deaf, he managed to keep in touch with events and to direct the policy of his splendid journal even to the last, and few of its issues ever went to print without some article of his own contribution. Throughout his 65 years as an editor he never departed from the high ideals with which he began his newspaper career. His opinions, and they were strong and influential, were always confined to the editorial page. His news columns were sacred to the news, containing fair, impartial stories which were never distorted or confused for bribe, favor or personal interest.



W. E. CRAMER.

Lorin C. Collins, who has been appointed associate justice of the Supreme Court of the Panama Canal zone, is noted as a jurist and lawmaker. For six years he was on the Chicago circuit bench, and he also has served three terms in the Illinois legislature, having been at one session (1883) speaker of the House. Judge Collins was born at Wapping, Conn., in 1848, but was taken to St. Paul in his childhood. In 1872 he was graduated from Northwestern University, and two years later he began the practice of law in Chicago. His home is in Wheaton, Ill.

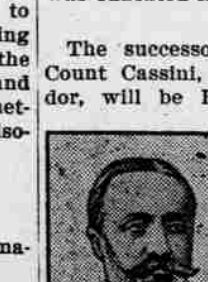


Francis Hendricks, who has reported the results of his long investigation of the Equitable Life Assurance Society's affairs, has been superintendent of insurance of New York State since 1900, when he succeeded Louis F. Payn. His home is in Syracuse, of which city he has been Mayor and where he has established an extensive photographic supply house. Mr. Hendricks has served in both branches of the Legislature, having been Senator three successive terms. He was collector of the port of New York from 1891 to 1893. He was born in 1834 and was educated in Albany.



F. HENDRICKS.

The successor at Washington of Count Cassini, the Russian ambassador, will be Baron Rosen, formerly minister to Tokio. While at the Japanese capital Baron Rosen was one of the strongest advocates of peace, vigorously opposing Admiral Alexieff's warlike preparations in Manchuria. He has the respect, even admiration, of the Japanese, and it is fortunate that he is to be in Washington, where peace negotiations are to be conducted. Baron Rosen's acquaintance with this country and the American people extends over a period of some thirty years. He has been consul general at New York, and was charge d'affaires at Washington during Mr. Cleveland's first administration.



"Swiftwater Bill" Gates, who made a fortune in the Klondike and threw it to the winds, has made another strike, this time in the Tanana district in Washington.

Rider Haggard, the English novelist, traveled about 7,000 miles in his tour of this country, trying to find a location for colonies for his countrymen.

Josef Hofmann, the great pianist, is a clever electrician and devotes nearly all his spare time to the science.