

JUST GIVE IT A THOUGHT.

How little it costs if we give it a thought, To make happy some heart each day!

—New York News.

TROUBLES OF A GREENHORN STATION AGENT.

NO more railroad in mine, said the hungry reporter, as he tilted his chair back and elevated his heels on the desk that the city editor called him when he was there.

The rest of the "late watch" gathered around, with exclamations of amazement and surprise, and he continued: "You see, I once applied to a division superintendent for a job, and was assured my application would be considered."

I wanted to know if I would have time to go and pack my grip, but they seemed to think such a delay would materially prejudice the prospects of the road, so I grabbed the pass and made for the train, which I managed to catch, after a brief but exciting chase.

"This train don't stop at Doneril's, young feller," said the conductor, as he pocketed my pass and proceeded calmly on his rounds.

We were rapidly nearing my destination, and something had to be done, so I informed a brakeman of my predicament, and he very kindly volunteered to ask "Fatty Buff" to slow down a little at Doneril's and let me off.

"I'm sick and tired of this business," he said. "The work's enough to kill a mule, but it's the injustice and lack of appreciation that makes me hot."

"Any track-walker can tell you that an engineer is asleep more than half the time when out on the line, and that the only way to call his attention to a slow flag or a stop signal is to shove a rock through the cab window."

"That's had," he replied. "You bet"

for sit right down and familiarize yourself with them. You'll find 'em all in those files. Besides the tariffs, there's 724 supplements and 1,647 amendments, in addition to 2,286 circulars that you should post up on. Then, there's the special commodity rates, and the modified rulings as applied to the different tariffs and the new rulings—there's 489 of 'em—that have appeared since the last classification was issued.

The conductor walked in and said: "Ask 'im if he's got anything for No. 23."

I closed the key and wandered aimlessly out on the platform, in the vague hope of seeing the agent, or that something might happen. To my surprise, I saw that the freight had stopped at the other end of the yard, about three-quarters of a mile away.

"Tell him to go plumb to B—!" shouted the conductor, and then calmly continued his labor. As there seemed nothing else to be done, I started back to the station to deliver the message, and had gone but a short distance when the engine passed me, backing up to the office. It was going too fast for me to board it, so the conductor and engineer had been waiting ten minutes or more when I eventually reached the station.

"If it's all the same to you, partner," said the conductor, with freezing politeness, "we'd just as soon get out of here before they grow out of our remembrance."

"I walked into the office and told the dispatcher I had stopped the train."

"Why don't you be all day about it?" he answered. "There's nothing for them—it's too late to help 'em any how."

"I was afraid of the conductor when I told him this. His jaw fell, and for fully a minute he gazed at me in round-eyed horror, then rushed from the office and yelled to the engineer: 'Get a move on yourself! Git out of here before he has another fit!'"

car over thirty-six hours, and we're liable to \$500 fine."

The cow was unloaded immediately. When I returned to the office he called my attention to a bill of 98 cents I had collected on a washing machine.

"You corrected that bill before you collected it, I hope?" "Corrected it? No. What's wrong?"

"Oh, a mere trifle; that comes under the Interstate Commerce Law, and by overcharging 13 cents you've laid us liable to a fine of \$5,000, or two years in the penitentiary, or both—that's all. See what circular 2,201 says: 'Agents who violate any of the provisions of the Interstate Commerce Law will themselves be personally liable to the penalties imposed thereby. Ignorance of the law is no excuse for its violation.' That's soothing, ain't it? And here's a case of brandy you've forwarded to Iowa, a prohibition State. That's another overcharge, but, thank God, we can probably escape to the hills before the authorities get on to it."

He sprang from his chair and began pacing the floor, muttering to himself: "Oh, no; there's no heroism required to run a station—no responsibility attached to the position. Fines are laid up for you, jails and penitentiaries yawn for you; but that's nothing—that's merely the every-day routine."

"Those quails," he faltered, looking at me imploringly. "You examined each bird, as the law directs, to see that it had not been captured by a net, pound, weir or trap? You know rule 83 says agents must acquaint themselves with and be governed by the game laws of their State and Territory."

I could not speak, but he read the answer in my downcast face. He extended his hand to me, while a look of sublime exaltation transfigured his homely countenance.

"As the agent," he said, and his voice had the terrible calmness of despair. "I am responsible for your crimes—I am forever undone, but I bear you no malice. It was fate, whatever happens, remember, I forgive you, but," and he jammed his hat down over his ears and his eyes glared wildly, "they will never take me alive."

Then he strode out of the office and disappeared. The sun sank below the western horizon and twilight and mosquitoes invaded the melancholy landscape.

Presently a freight train came along and halted for water. It so happened that an empty box-car stopped right opposite the office, and as I gazed into

the hospitably open door a great home-sickness and a yearning stole over me. For a moment I hesitated, but a scream of mortal anguish reached my ears from the direction of the saloon, and decided me.

Softly closing the office door, I crept into the unattended car, and when the engineer had "taken up the slack" and pulled out of Doneril, my career as an assistant agent was at an end.—The Gateway.

"WESTWARD STAR OF EMPIRE" Marvelous Growth of the Trans-Mississippi Region in Recent Years. Since 1850 the farms which have been opened between the Mississippi and the Pacific are almost equal to the entire land area of the original thirteen States, and these are increasing rapidly.

"I can especially recommend this tailor-made gown for service," said the genial manager of the ready-to-wear department.

"Sir," answered the young lady customer, with a look that was calculated to freeze the mercury in a thermometer. "I'm not going out to service."

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Nonnegotiable. "Dis is a fine paper," said Meandering Mike; "It says dat de difficulty is not so much in perducin' value as in gittin' it to de best market."

An Awful Fate. "Alas! the mystery of poor mamma's disappearance is now explained."

Very Appropriate. Some kind friends were going to erect a column of marble over the deceased jokemith.

One Man's Wisdom. Smith—Gotox was worth over a million when he died, but he didn't leave a will. Jones—I wonder why? Smith—Oh, I guess he wanted his heirs to get the benefit of his wealth instead of the lawyers.



Widow Ketchum—My husband left me quite a good deal when he died. Mr. Oldblack—Well, you ought to be used to that; you know he did the same thing when he was living.

Hard to Please. "They're accusing you now," said the friend of the political boss, "of putting money into politics."

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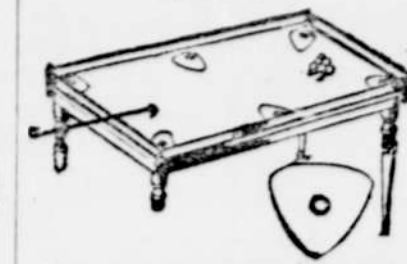
Strange Fancy. Patient—After taking that medicine I had some very mysterious dreams. Doctor—Well, I told you it would cause you to dream of the impossible.

Another War Rumor. Priestella—Lieutenant Higgins seems to be rather attentive to Miss Elderleigh of late. Melicent—Yes; and she is evidently skirmishing around trying to precipitate an engagement.

Guess Work. "Who can tell what a meter is?" asked the teacher of the juvenile class. "I can," promptly replied the urchin at the pedal extremity. "It's a thing what you chop meat with."

Another Boarder Perhaps. "So," said the guest at the wedding of Richman's daughter, "your house loses a daughter to-day."

NEW GAME APPARATUS.



In the winter season, when outdoor sports must be abandoned, aside from skating, tobogganing and kindred amusements, the search for new games to occupy the long evenings begins.

The Old, Old Story. "Have you ever sent any of your poems to the magazines?" asked the sentimental maid.

Ravages of Time. "Remember, my boy," said the good old deacon, "that even the hairs of our heads are numbered."

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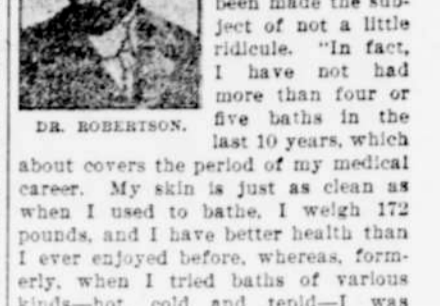
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secret passages. Some run the gauntlet through the assaulting ranks. All who can carry a part of the family treasures—eggs, larvae and pupae. Like their brooding-nest brothers of the human race, when disaster befalls, their first care is for their offspring.

"Meanwhile the invaders issue from the gates, bearing in their jaws the Fuscon young and occasionally an adult. They take the home trail, but not in ordered ranks. It is go-as-you-please now. They are welcomed back by their black confederates, who receive the captives and take them—their very own sisters perhaps—into the domestic quarters. The soldiers hurry back to the scene of action, for their work is not yet finished."—Harper's Magazine.

Dr. Robertson, Who Says Body-Washing Is Not Healthful. "Don't!" says Dr. John Dill Robertson, of Chicago, when you speak of bathing. "It may kill you."



"I have not had a bath in two years," said he in confirmation of the theory advanced by him at a recent meeting of a Chicago society and which has been made the subject of not a little ridicule.

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The Washington Elm at Cambridge is now old and feeble. A plain tablet near the trunk bears the following inscription by Longfellow: "Under this tree Washington first took command of the American army, July 3, 1775."

Mr. Trespoff, a Russian naval surgeon attached to the Baltic Sea fleet, has been experimenting with an apparatus for taking photographs of the sea floor at any depth and, it is reported, with such success that reliable records of submarine life may now be reckoned among our available sources of biological knowledge.

South American cities have many equestrian statues, but the most notable is that of Bolivar, the Venezuelan liberator, which has a prominent place in one of the parks of Caracas. It is estimated that there are almost four hundred equestrian statues in the world.

A most interesting memorial of the Roman occupation of England has just been sold under the auctioneer's hammer. This is the Roman station of Amboglanna, the largest on the famous wall which marked the limit of the Roman province. After an existence of 1,800 years the walls of the station, five feet thick, are in a wonderful state of preservation.

Never Touched Him. "Hello, old chap!" said the chronic borrower as he met an acquaintance, "you're looking well."

QUEER STORIES.

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ONE OF DOWIE'S STORIES.

John Alexander Dowie is opposed to the bankruptcy laws, which he regards as dishonest. Mr. Dowie holds that if a man owes a debt he owes it till it is paid, and no law on earth can absolve him from it.

"In Scotland, where I come from," he said, "there used to live an old man named Fergus MacGregor. Fergus carried the bankruptcy law to its logical conclusion, and proved, unconsciously, its fallacy."

"The old man was a chandler. He got into difficulties, failed, went through the bankruptcy court, and was left off at the rate of 5 shillings to the pound. Permission was given him, that is to say, to liquidate each just debt of 11 by the payment of only 5 shillings."

"Well, Fergus was a happy man when the order of the court was announced to him. He paid all he owed at once. He said he saw his way clear to growing rich. And next morning he started out to do a little shopping for his wife."

"He went to the grocer's and bought potatoes, tea, oatmeal, sugar, eggs, and so forth, to the extent of £2. At the end, taking up his parcels, he laid down 10 shillings in payment."

"Fergus, man, this is not right," said the grocer. "Your bill is £2, not 10 shillings."