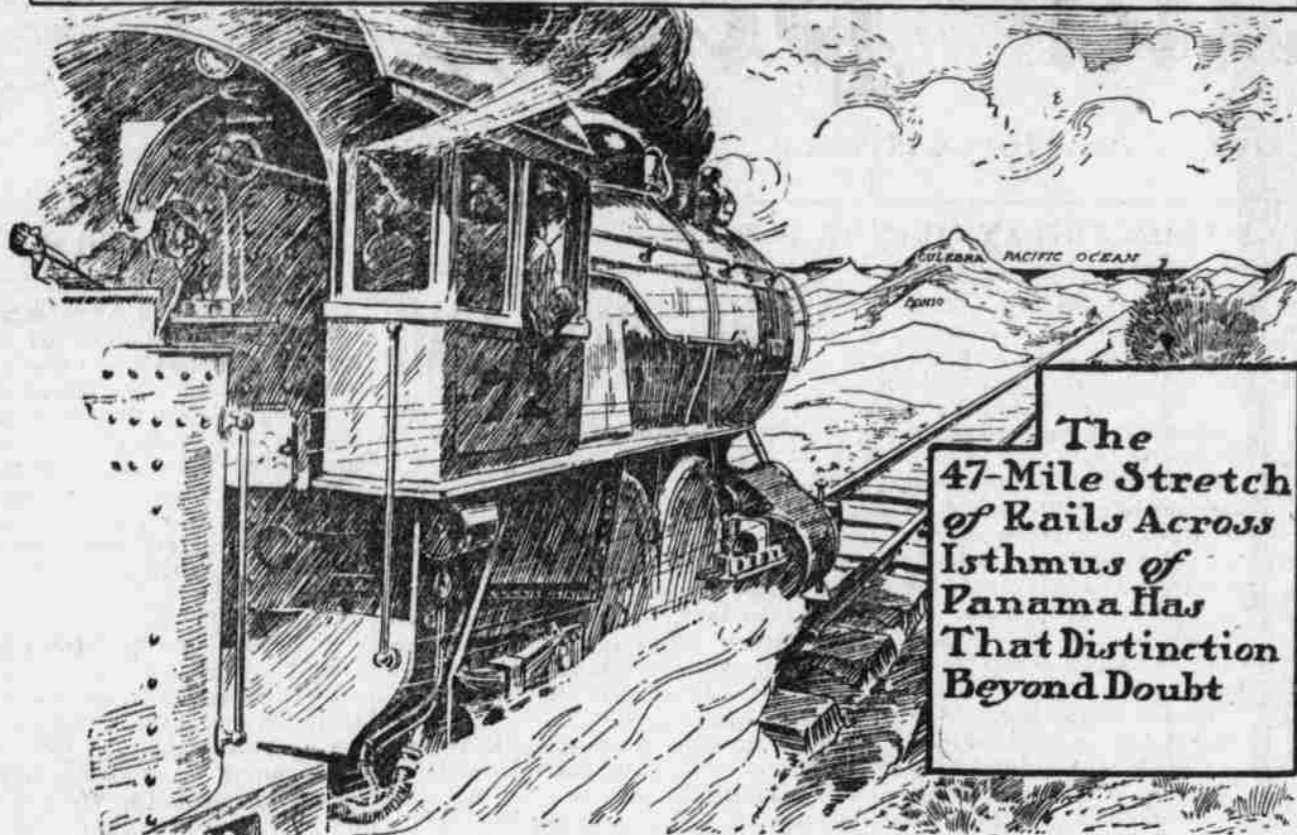


Busiest Little Railroad in the World



The 47-Mile Stretch of Rails Across Isthmus of Panama Has That Distinction Beyond Doubt

The busiest little railroad in the world is the Panama railroad. Having a run of 47 miles—this being the length of the road—it does more business than some roads whose line is ten times the length.

The history of the construction of this road is too well known to bear a repetition. Through almost impenetrable jungle, infested by poisonous reptiles and insects of all sorts, and compelled to inhale a noxious atmosphere produced by swampy conditions, the engineers plodded their way and mapped out the course for the bed of a road which they didn't know was destined to become the busiest little railroad in the world. It is a familiar saying that for every cross tie laid upon the bed of this road a human life was sacrificed.

Now this road is changing its entire route and road bed with the exception of a few miles. This is due to the fact of it being on the wrong side of the canal and would have to cross it many times when water is turned into it were its present route to remain. Then again many bridges would have to be built upon a soil whose solidity is not adapted to bridge building of a substantial nature. Lastly, the present road bed is on land which must be excavated for the canal.

While the difficulties in building the new road may not be as great as in the old road construction, yet many

miles of it are being built upon huge piles through the marshy and dense jungle. Some idea of the difficulties encountered on the new route may be drawn from the fact that the largest railroad embankment in the world is on the new route and will have to be crossed by this road. It is near Gatun City and crosses a valley for a distance of more than a mile.

The volume of business on this road taxes its carrying capacity to its fullest extent. Its passenger trains are always crowded and many are the times when there is mere standing room. On the passenger line all second class cars are attached behind while the first class ones are in front near the locomotive. A policeman rides all of these trains because of the composite nationalities of the patrons.

In the freight line there is an immensity of traffic. The right of way by night over the rail is almost entirely given up to this branch of traffic. Ships coming into port on the Pacific side having cargo for the Atlantic leave it at the former port and go on their way. This is then transported by this busy little railroad to the Atlantic side and reloaded into ships that take it to its destination. The same operation takes place on the Atlantic side for the Pacific ports. Thus the necessity may be seen in this feature for a canal.—Williamport (Pa.) Grit.

feared that the shock had been too much for the old man, that it had unhinged him, but when it seemed to him that Zick was acquiring comfort from his monologue, he waited.

At length, when the quietness fell in the little room, and the thud of the engines and all the miscellaneous sounds of the workaday world came in, Mr. Hawthorn began again.

"There are many temptations to a young lad coming fresh into an office such as this."

"There is," acquiesced the same dull voice.

"There are more temptations to clever lads than to the dull ones."

"Maybe," answered Zick.

"Rube is the brightest lad we have ever had."

"Aye," said Zick, with a long sigh. "I said that myself this morning," and the contrast between his exultation at the dinner hour, and his despair before the tea hour came, caught him, and seemed to grip at his heart until he felt suffocated.

The master came round, touched his workman on the shoulder.

"My friend," he said, and the two stood side by side while the master spoke persuasively, "let us say that it was a sudden temptation. Perhaps, since it was the first step aside, it will be the last. I have made up my mind to give Rube another chance. I shall let him stay on. No one knows, so it will be easy for him. I shall have him in here all by myself, and I shall tell him that, as his father can trust him to be honest for the future, I can."

Again there was silence in the plain bare room, with the japanned boxes, instead of pictures, ranged on shelves round the wall, and a great drawing of machinery over the fireplace. The sun suddenly streamed through the dingy window; Zick watched the particles of dust as they danced to and fro, up and down, a slanting wedge of golden brightness.

There was war in the old man's heart. The fiercest, the hottest of all human battles was being waged there. The fight was not only between principle and love, it was between duty and a father's great affection.

Godfrey remembered his empty pocket. He remembered that it was the second occasion on which his 'lowance had been missing; he remembered that Amelia Ann had declared that a penny or two had lately gone three or four times out of the mug where the house-keeping money reposed. Zick had not seen Rube steal from the mug, from his pocket. He could say he had seen nothing. But did he, in his heart of hearts, believe that Rube had taken it—nay, more, in his heart of hearts was he not sure?

Mr. Hawthorn waited, a new surprise, a new perplexity gradually over-spread his face.

"Can you trust Rube?" Mr. Hawthorn asked.

Godfrey flung up his arms.

"Lord help me, I can't!" he cried out. He turned. He put up trembling, shaking hands to the slanting band of sunlight, as though he saw in it an angel's ladder leading from earth to heaven, looked with tear-blinded eyes to where he knew that the wedge of blue still brightened the sky.

"Sallie, lass," he implored, "don't take on. Bide comfortable up there. He is your lad, I know, and you only left him with me for our bit here. But what could I do? I couldn't lie, and I wouldn't say aught but what I have said, and tell the truth."—The Sketch.

The Explosive Force of Water.

Water, looked upon as the tamest of liquids, is as great an explosive as dynamite under certain conditions. In one day water breaks up more earth and rock than all the gunpowder, gun-cotton and dynamite in the world do in a year. These explosives can be controlled by human agency, but water does not hold itself accountable to man. It runs into the ground, freezes, expands and spits the soil into little pieces. Finding a crack in a huge rock, it repeats the same process, forcing it asunder. If frozen in the pores of a tree it often explodes with a report like a gunshot and the force of a dynamite bomb.—Dundee Advertiser.

Explosive Force of Water.

Water, looked upon as the tamest of liquids, is as great an explosive as dynamite under certain conditions. In one day water breaks up more earth and rock than all the gunpowder, gun-cotton and dynamite in the world do in a year. These explosives can be controlled by human agency, but water does not hold itself accountable to man. It runs into the ground, freezes, expands and spits the soil into little pieces. Finding a crack in a huge rock, it repeats the same process, forcing it asunder. If frozen in the pores of a tree it often explodes with a report like a gunshot and the force of a dynamite bomb.—Popular Mechanics.

Barnum's Ready Retort.

Barnum once appeared at Oxford to lecture on "Humbug." The rowdy students would not give him a hearing. At length, in a momentary lull, he shouted, "Then you don't want to hear anything about humbug?"

"We don't!" was the answer in a roar.

"Well," retorted Barnum, "I've got your money, and there's no humbug about that!"

The disturbance came to a sudden finish, and Barnum proceeded in peace.

Jumping at a Conclusion.

"Jinx wants to know if suicide is a sin?"

"Why, then, did he get married?"—Houston Post.

A TRICK OF MEMORY.

Memory is one of the most useful and least trustworthy of our faculties.

"I mind it weel, but I hae ma doots o' ma mind!" said a canny Scotchman in the witness box. A wholesome charity for the mistakes of others was learned by a certain woman from her own experience. She was about to cross the continent for a three months' visit. On the day of her departure she went to the safety deposit vault where she kept her valuables, and said to the manager that she wanted to take her box, with its contents, to her lawyer's office for an hour. Could he arrange that for her? The manager assented, and wrapped the box in a newspaper, that it might make an inconspicuous bundle.

The day passed and the woman did not return. The next morning, inquiry revealed the fact that she had gone on her journey. The manager was curious enough to ask her lawyer if he knew anything about the box.

"She left here intending to take it directly to you," said the lawyer.

That was enough to justify a telegram, as soon as the woman had reached her destination, six days later. Telegram: "Where did you put your safety deposit box?" Answer: "In the vault where it belonged." Telegram: "It is not there. Return at once."

Another week passed in wretched suspense for everyone concerned. When the woman arrived, she was in a state of nervous rage, and ready to accuse the officials of every crime in the calendar. She declared she had driven straight from her lawyer to the vault. The manager had himself let her in, and talked with her. Her story was complete in all its details. But the

quite correct," she beamed, with definite finality, "and one might just as well be out of the world as out of the style, you know. Of course they're sweet and pretty and fragrant, and all that," she said, giving them a vigorous shake, as though they needed a course in gymnastics. "But who wants anything like that, indeed?"

"Oh, yes, sometimes some men, the old-fashioned kind, that wear silk hats and say 'thank you,' occasionally buy them, and then, too, when a girl is in mourning and can't wear anything else, there is a slight demand, but to send violets to a girl!"—she held up her hands in horror.

"Why, I am sure she'd give them to the cook."

"Well, what do they like?" I asked.

For answer I was treated to a glance that would have been a credit to an emigrant inspector.

"Like?" echoed sharp-eyed Sybil.

"Why, anything that stands out, shows off; lets everybody know that you're wearing them, speaks for themselves; that's what they want."

She swept by a bow of roses, dusky with velvet beauty, and pointed to a great patch of gaudy orchids.

"There! there!" she exclaimed. "That's the kind that makes the hit; just look at them. There won't be one left after the ball to-night. Of course, I'll have to fall back on the roses to help out, but I'll be those bright ones there," she pointed to a crimson blot staining some snow-white hyacinths in the case beyond. "You know," she confided, "I do believe some girls would wear sunflowers if they were only fashionable. Those chrysanthemums and bright flowers do make an awful hit, and as for orchids!"—I followed her forefinger trying to find some mythical meaning other than a loud plea for dollars and cents. "Those, of course,

FRENCH MAKE MONEY REARING ANGORA RABBITS.



COMBING THE HAIR, PICKING IT, AND PACKING FOR MARKET.

Thrifty French men and women make tidy sums of money rearing Angora rabbits, and selling their hair or fleece, which is woven into a superior quality of cloth much like silk, and is worn next the skin by those afflicted with rheumatism, who say they derive beneficial results. The better the animal is nourished and cared for, the longer, finer and thicker is the hair. The rabbits are also consumed for food. It is said that with proper care each rabbit may be made to yield a net profit of three dollars a year, and the occupation is very pleasant.

records of the deposit company did not substantiate it. That cast doubt enough on it so that it seemed worth while to look up the cabman who had driven the woman on that fateful day.

He was found. He remembered the circumstance well.

Had he any recollection of stopping anywhere else? Scratching his grizzled head, he slowly retraced the course, and then said, "Why, yes! We stopped at the bakeshop on the corner of 3d street, and you went in!"

Here was the clew. A hasty visit to the bakery revealed the newspaper bundle tucked away on a high shelf, with its precious contents undisturbed. There it had stood for a fortnight, while a woman and a half-dozen men were staying awake by night and fretting by day, accusing each other of lying and stealing, all because one woman's intention got ahead of her performance and imprinted a lie on the tablets of her memory.—Youth's Companion.

NO LONGER LOVED.

Violets Purchased Only by Old-Fashioned Men Who Say "Thank You."

If a straw may show which way the wind blows, says a well-known newspaper writer, then a violet may also serve as a vane to indicate the passing sephyr of society.

In the present vanishing of the violet, there is no better indicator of this radical change between the woman our fathers used to call "mother" as she stitched and sewed and sniled upon her little brood, supremely happy with the bouquet of violets that sometimes graced her gown, and the smart, up-to-date Mrs. B.

Formerly when flowers were distinctly emblematic, deep with esoteric meaning, there was no greater compliment than to be presented with a bunch of violets. Poets the world over, since Adam dined and Eve went violeting, have rhaped over the womanly significance of its quiet fragrance. From first reader ditties about the "mossy dell where the humble violets grew," to Napoleon's eloquent tribute as he plucked it as the springtime emblem of his return from Elba, and also of Josephine's devotion, everywhere from garret to throne, it has nodded its lowly head, with a success undreamed of by haughty garden beauties. Modesty, sweetness, innate gentility—these glowed in the deep blue of each fragrant messenger. But, gracious alive, who wants to be that nowadays?

"Violets? Dear me! Don't get those," said the florist with a prescient glance like an up-to-date Sybil with a fat bank account. "They're way out of style. No one ever buys violets any more! They're too little, too modest," she pointed to a few meager bouquets that looked very modest indeed, drooping on their wilted stems.

"They're not half showy enough, not

account of ill health. While he was ill he did various things to while away the time. One day he started to build a toy cathedral patterned after a picture he saw in a magazine. His building materials were matches and glue, his tools a pocket knife and a glue brush. The plan was laid out for a building 14 feet high, 14 feet long and 7 feet wide. He worked with remarkable patience, oftentimes putting in all his waking hours at his task. After two years of almost continuous application the job was finished.

The walls of the cathedral, the towers and turrets, the galleries and steeples, the ornaments—all are of matches. It took more than 2,000,000 matches to build the church and more than 100 pounds of glue used in fastening the 2,000,000 matches securely.—New York Press.

After an affecting scene at a play the men all blow their noses vigorously, and the women pat their eyes. A man's way of crying is to blow his nose.

If there is one thing a garrulous man detests more than another it is a talkative woman.

MORNING.

Awake, awake, from dell and brake,
The mist is thinly rising,
Be thou wise and open thy eyes
To see the sun uprising;
The morning sun with slanting beam
Shines o'er the hillside and the stream.

The lark upsprings, with dew on wings,
And warbles out his lay;
From tiny throat his thrilling note
Welcomes the coming day.
O man, arise to higher things!
List to the song all nature sings!

Awake, awake, the day will break,
Though on thy bed reclining;
It will not stay, though lie thou may,
Grumbling or repining.
Come, lift thy heart to God above,
And bless and thank Him for His love.
—Baltimore Sun.

Sallie's Little Lad

"No," decided old Zick Godfrey, thrusting his powerful fingers through his grizzled locks and addressing anyone in the group, enjoying a cheerful midday meal by the warmth of the engine house fire of the Hawthorn mills, who might have leisure from his own bread and cheese to listen, "I do not hold with new-fangled notions and new-fangled ways. Not me! Why, raising his large head, with the white locks still curling about the open, honest brow, "I am always hearing tell of folks running about from this place to that. A change here, another to-morrow. It has always been good enough for me to work for one master. I came to Hawthorn's mills as a boy, and I have been here ever since. And Rube," with a smile that softened the rugged features until they were as tender as a woman's, "will do the same, I'll be bound." He had felt a measure of proprietorship in the office and its concerns for the last month—that is, ever since Rube, his only child, the Benjamin of his old age, had been installed there as office boy.

"Fine lad," continued the old man, speaking aloud to himself, as he walked along toward his job, "sharp as they make 'em, and that good at books and figures."

Zick thrust his hands into his pockets, impelled by a wave of usefulness, of exaltation. They sank down into emptiness; the old man pulled them out as though they had been bitten. In one moment all the joy, the confidence, left his face. It was overcast, troubled. On Saturday night he had placed what he called his 'lowance money for the coming week in his pocket—and it was not there now.

He turned out the pocket. There was no hole in the lining. He had put the money into his left-hand pocket. He remembered particularly, because once before, about five weeks ago, it had been missing, and he had not been able to recollect (that time) the actual fact of his placing it there.

The old man's eyes grew dim. He, who was as punctual as the clock, forgot the hour, the place awaiting him. He was visited by a terrible suspicion, which, though he would have given all

he possessed to dismiss it as absurd, as impossible, would stay with him, would clamor to be taken into account.

Standing there in the middle of the mill yard, with the roar of the machinery about him, with the great chimney belching out clouds of smoke, with the sharp cry of the foremen's voices as they issued orders, and the clanging of the gate bell that heralded a team or a wagon demanding admittance, Zick carefully went over each minute of the last twenty-four hours. On Saturday no one but he and Rube had been in the little house in the long row of mill cottages, for Amelia Ann, his wife's cousin, who "did" for him ever since he was a widower, had taken a night out to see "East Lynne" at the Theater Royal. On Sunday, to be sure, he had gone to church in the morning, but the same lady had been in possession of the kitchen, cooking the Sunday dinner, and if she had meant to rob him, she would have started long ago. All the rest of the day he, Zick, had been at home. Rube had been the only other person in the house. Rube—

His thoughts went back to his wife. Sallie had not been exactly young when he married her, but she had for him a sweeter face than any other woman. He remembered her feebleness, which had only just permitted her to pull

the exertions of his body standing out in beads about his brow. "I have done my best; and if you are up there with the angels you must know more. You will know what I can't understand—you will know where the money has gone; you will know—though I can't see who else could have taken it—that Rube had naught to do with it, or you would never bide comfortable among that music and them crowns."

The idea comforted Zick, quieted him. There was, there must be, some solution entirely exonerating Rube that his poor brain could not grasp.

He moved aside a step or two, to where he could catch glimpses of the sky through the dust-covered window. Before him was a little wedge of blue. He looked up as often as he dared. He saw the colored patch growing larger and larger, the gray disappearing. It seemed to him that that was how Sallie was speaking to him, was reassuring him.

It was hardly an hour later that one of the clerks came to him, and bidding him let the underman take command of the machine, told him that the master wished to speak to him in his private room.

Stamps, it appeared, small postal orders, had been missing from the office for the last month, and an investigation had established beyond a shadow of a doubt that Rube was the thief.

As Zick listened the perspiration began by standing on his forehead; when Mr. Hawthorn ceased it was pouring down his face.

"No," he cried out, as he heard the first words. "My little lad, Sallie's son, rob his master! Not he!"

But before the story was ended he was reduced to silence. When the last word was said, Godfrey looked at his master, his eyes imploring, his lips trembling.

"You'll none have the law again him!" he supplicated.

"Zick!" cried out Mr. Hawthorn. "You and I have been together all these years, and you ask me that?"

But the old man was beyond listening to a reproach or a justification. "Sallie's little lad," he muttered. He put up his arm before his eyes; a hard sob broke from him. He had forgotten his master, the office. The case lay not between Rube and Mr. Hawthorn, but between Zick and his Sallie.

"Lass," he pleaded aloud, and he turned for a moment and raised his eyes to the blue wedge of sky showing through the office window, as if Sallie were just behind it. "I did me best, lass; don't grieve, don't take on; just think I was an old fool, and not good enough for the job you left me. It is me who is to blame. Me! Not him, your little lad, that I saw you sewing 'em bits of things for the last time you and me sat side by side before the fire. Think, lass, as how my fingers was all thumbs with Rube's little clothes when he was too small to do for himself! It has been the same with learning him proper. It has been me that had nothing but thumbs at learning him proper. It wasn't your little lad that you died for at all; it was nobbut me!"

Mr. Hawthorn waited. He caught a word here and there of the low, whispering voice. He could hear that Zick was accusing himself. At first he



"YOU'LL NONE HAVE THE LAW AGAIN HIM!"