Democratic Matchman. Bellefonte, Pa., February 14, 1908.

A Peep Into the Chart Room of a Great Railway.

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WORKING OUT A SCHEDULE.

Threads and Pins That Enable the Officials to So Place Trains as to Avoid the Danger of Collision and All Unnecessary Loss of Time.

Travelers who consult the ever handy time tables to the arrival or departure of the particular train that is to carry them probably never give a thought to the manner in which a modern time table is made up. To the uninitiated it is a Chinese puzzle, and even those well versed in its mysteries often become confused. How are time tables made? What is the procedure in determining the speed of a train and the exact time and place it shall meet another train? The answer to these questions is to be found in the chart room.

The chart room is usually in some quiet corner of the general offices of a railway company and for weeks at a time is locked. But every now and then the word goes forth that the schedule is to be shortened or lengthened, new trains to be put on or some change made that necessitates the revision of the time card. Then from distant points of the system the division superintendents gather for a conference with the heads of the passenger and freight departments in order to learn the most desirable time for trains to arrive and depart from terminals. With this information, they retire to the chartroom, where there is a separate chart for each district.

The charts are white boards about six feet wide and from two to five feet high. The names of the stations, accurately scaled, are printed on the boards at the side, and from the top of the board many colored strings dangle. more suggestive of a parlor game than a tool for laying out the path of traffic and commerce.

The superintendents confer regarding the time at junction points on connecting trains and then work out the schedule on intermediate points on a chart of his division.

Horizontally the chart shows 12 midnight on the left side, and there is a line extending across the chart for each five minutes from that time until the full twenty-four hours have been shown. For convenience each third line, representing a period of fifteen minutes, is in a different color.

Superintendents are supplied with various colored silk thread, pins and a tack hammer. Red is used to designate a passenger train, green for a second class or freight train, and black is for a third class or local freight train. Whenever a train is scheduled out of a terminal at a certain hour a pin is driven at the intersection of the station line and hour line-this being the beginning -and such other times at various stations as may be desired are determined by drawing the thread over the board to meet the intersection of the various stations and hour lines at the proper times. Where necessary tacks are driven to keep the thread on the proper schedule. Westbound trains run down and diagonally to the right. Eastbound trains start at the bottom, run upward and diagonally to the right. Wherever these threads cross, a meeting point is indicated, and if this crossing of the threads is between station lines it is then necessary to adjust the time on each train, so that the meeting point will be at the most convenient station. This is done by holding the lines crossed at station with a pin. Of course on double tracks these meeting points are not necessary. After the chart has been strung a former issue of the time card with pen and ink is brought into use, and the superintendent begins at original terminal, looks at the station line, and whenever any string representing a train crosses this station line he notes the time as shown on the proof of the time card. One train at a time is read from start to finish, and after they have all been checked they are rechecked to see that all meeting points are properly made and noted on proof, after which the time table is ready for the printer. To make a successful time card a superintendent must be perfectly fa-

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miliar with the grade and track conditions and when stringing the thread must allow more time for unfavorable grade, railroad crossing and other un-

usual stops, so that the running time of the train will be uniform. Whenever it is desirable to make a meal stop a pin is put in at the proper station and the string run horizontally to the line until the required number of minute lines have been passed, when it is again taken down the board at the proper degree of speed. By making the string more vertical the speed is increased, as there are fewer minute lines crossed. By swinging thread to the right the speed is decreased. and by the use of pins this can be arranged between each station to suit conditions .- St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Disposing of Her Rivals. "The president of our club is an aw-

fully clever woman." "What did she do?"

"Disposed of her rivals for office by putting them on the nominating committee."-New York Press.

Double Surprise.

The Friend-Your marriage to Sapphead was quite a surprise to me. The Ex-Widow-Well. I guess it was more of a surprise to him.-Boston Herald.

Repartee of the Shop.

"I never was so insulted in my life!" said the girl with the brown eyes indignantly.

"Explain further," was the request. "Why, you know Fido chewed up the muff to that set of gray furs of mine. and so I went into a shop today to see if I could find a muff that would replace it. I told the clerk what I wanted. He couldn't find anything that would suit, so he called another clerk. This one hunted high and low, he dragged out muffs till they heaped the counter. but he couldn't find one that would match. Finally he called the proprietor, a fat, stuffy man, who came waddling down the aisle and said, 'What is the trouble?'

"'I can't make a match,' I said almost tearfully.

"'Why, that's funny,' he said in a hatefully patronizing manner. 'What's the matter with the men?"-New York Press.

Michelangelo.

Michelangelo stood in the front rank both as painter and sculptor. In both arts he was worthy of the highest praise. The fresco of the "Last Judgment" in the Sistine chapel is considered the most wonderful picture in the world, showing the omnipotence of artistic science and the fiery daring of conception that but few other paintings can even approximate. In sculpture the "Moses" and the "Slaves." not to mention other pieces, rang among the finest creations of the art and proclaim Michelangelo to have been as masterful with his chisel as he was with his brush.-New York American.

THE WATERMELON.

Africa Is the Original Home of This Luscious Fruit.

The humorists always associate the African with the watermelon, assuming that the taste of the colored man for his favorite dainty arises from his life in the southern states, where the melon vine grows like a weed.

As a fact, however, the African taste for the watermelon is hereditary. The vine is a native of Africa, where it is found wild in the great central plains of the continent, and has also been cultivated for many ages.

In Egypt the meions grown along the Nile rival those of southeastern Missouri.

The melons mentioned by the Israelites as being among the good things they had in Egypt were undoubtedly watermelons, for in the wall paintings about the time of the exodus the melon vine is represented, and in one case a long procession of slaves is depicted, each bearing on his shoulder a huge dark green watermelon.

Botanists say that varieties of the melon are found in southern Asia, and some even claim that the plant grows wild in central and South Africa, but Africa is no doubt the original home of the melon, and in his preference over every other kind of vegetable or fruit the African merely displays a taste that has become fixed in his race by thousands of years of indulgence. for in central Africa ripe watermelons are to be had every month in the year. -Detroit News-Tribune.

HORNET SENTINELS.

It Would Seem That These Insects Keep Guard Over the Nests.

Is a hornets' nest guarded by sentinels, after the manner of ant bills? It is not so easy to decide, for their private habits do not invite familiar approach. But some experiments seemed to point that way. No noises, however near or strident, had the least effect upon the workers. Blow on divers instruments as loudly and shrilly as I would, they poured in and out of the gate or labored on the walls, intent wholly upon their own affairs. But at the slightest jar upon the window or shutter, out flew a bevy of irate insects and flung themselves against the wire window screen with an angry "bump" that showed how good was their intention at least to defend their home. It was always so. A squad of workers, free and ready for aggressive duty, seemed to be lurking near the gate, prompt to sally forth upon alarm. Even at night a few kept near by, and, although their port had lost its vicious swing and they moved about with sluggish pace, like sleepy watchmen, as doubtless they were, they left upon the observer the impression that they were on sentinel service. in which the community was never lacking .- Dr. H. C. McCook in Harper's Magazine.

An Ode to His Washerwoman Even in the face of financia, embarrassment the Yale student refuses to be downcast, for when the florist threatens suit if his bill is not paid or when in walking through the city streets the student sees his newest shirt adorning the grinning face of his washerwoman's young unhopeful it is not his nature to spill a bottle of ink on a dissertation on the subconscious relationship of poverty to vice. More likely he will go whistling back to the campus and put to the tune some such verses as appeared in the Yale Record of years ago under the title "Owed to My Washerwoman:" I promise thee that some day I will come In answer to thy oft repeated dun. And in thy eager hands I then will lay The dollars ten I've owed for many a day. I will not censure thee for rips and tears, For e'en the socks that now thy husband

wears. Yes. some day in the dim futurity I'll pay it all, I promise thee.

And so he will set the whole campus laughing, if not to paying their bills,-E. R. Embree in Bohemian.

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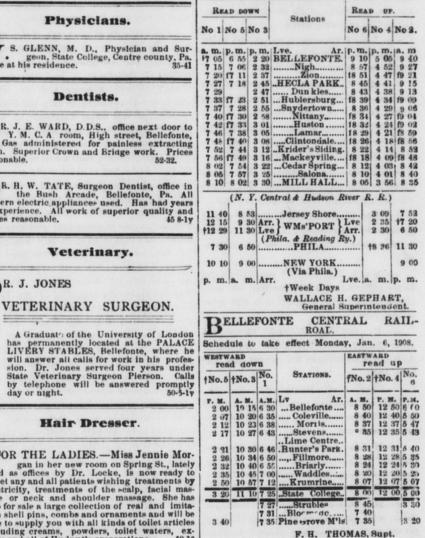
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Teacher-Freddy Fangle, you may

give the German name of the river Danube.

Freddy-Dunno. Teacher-Donau! That is right. 1 am glad you have studied your lesson so well Freddy is surprised, but keeps still. -Exchange.

Jolting the Grandad. A fond grandfather and father were admiring the new baby. Fond Grandfather-I declare! That youngster is a great deal more intelligent than you were at his age. Insulted Father-Naturally: he has a great deal brighter. father!-Life.

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