

TWENTY KILLED IN WRECK

Wreckage Takes Fire and Some Injured Are Burned.

CAUSE UNDETERMINED

Either a Broken Wheel or Displaced Rail May Have Derailed Train— Was Under High Speed—Four Rear Cars Upturned and Dragged Along Ties.

New York, Feb. 19.—Twenty persons were killed and at least one hundred and fifty injured last Saturday evening when one of the latest installed electric trains of the New York Central was derailed just this side of Williamsbridge, on the Harlem Division.

Two of the cars were overturned and burst into flames, the woodwork catching fire from contact with the third rail.

A most peculiar and unexplainable feature of the accident was that the last car of the train left the rails first. It ran for a short distance over the sleepers and then whipped off the car ahead. When they toppled over the two coaches ahead of them followed. Carried on by the terrific speed of the train, the motor car of which was still on the tracks, their sides were torn into slivers, seats were ripped out, and the passengers were hurled about and crushed.

Three explanations were offered by officials of the road to account for the accident. It was generally credited that the wreck was due to a defective rail, which was later found around about a wheel of a car and with one end protruding completely through the floor of the car.

It was also suggested that a flange of one of the wheels of the motor car had broken.

Spreading rails is also given as a possible reason for the derailing of the rails.

The passengers who escaped all agree that the train was going at high speed—some say from seventy-five to eighty miles an hour, while others think it was going at a speed of one hundred miles.

To add to the horror of the wreck, the rear coach of the train began to burn, and, while possibly a few of the injured were cremated, the firemen arrived promptly and succeeded in extinguishing the flames before the scores of passengers imprisoned in the wreck were burned.

The smoke laden wind added to the horror of the injured who were caught in the wreckage.



Ex-Governor George C. Pardee, California, who has severely scored the State Legislature for its extravagance. He declared that legislators had lost all moral sense.

MINISTERS' TRIAL DIVORCE.

Mr. and Mrs. Puffer Agree to Live Apart for Three Years.

Salem, Mass., Feb. 21.—A unique marital agreement has been perfected by the Rev. Charles E. Puffer, pastor of the Universalist Church of this city, and his wife, who is a lecturer.

While trial marriages are a topic of general discussion, Mr. and Mrs. Puffer have put into operation a compact which may be termed a trial divorce. They will live apart for three years, as though they were divorced, and if they find this mode is satisfactory they may then get a real divorce.

Meanwhile Mrs. Puffer is to receive trial alimony in the form of \$75 a month. At the end of three years, if a divorce is obtained, Mrs. Puffer is to receive \$7,000.

They have a grown son, a graduate of Tufts College, who is now in Arizona.

\$3,958.33 for Boy's Life.

New York, Feb. 21.—By the decision of a jury in Judge Ford's part of the Supreme Court the value of a ten year old boy's life is \$3,958.33.

This verdict was rendered in the case of Mary Netelsky, an administratrix of her ten year old son Harry, who was run over and killed by a two ton coal truck owned by the Hudson Coal Company of New Jersey.

Odessa Jews Attacked Afresh.

Odessa, Feb. 21.—Ninety-five Jews have been removed to hospitals suffering from injuries sustained in an attack made upon them by members of the Union of Russian Men. The racial ill feeling runs high, and the Jews here are in hourly expectation of another series of outrages.

STRUCK A HUGE GAS WELL.

Allowed to Flow Weeks Without Capping Causing Great Loss.

As a commercial product natural gas was twenty-three years behind petroleum. They both originated in Pennsylvania; and Pennsylvania had led all the States in the production of both products ever since, until 1905 when California surpassed her in petroleum.

Petroleum and natural gas are allied products. As Pennsylvania had the first and largest oil field she has also the first and most extensive gas region, says the Pittsburg Despatch.

Like oil, it is controlled by the few, and the enormous accruing profits redound to increase the wealth of the already rich. And it seems impossible now to carry on such extensive industries without great aggregations of money. It would be impossible for individuals of moderate means to pipe oil or natural gas 200 or 300 miles and distribute it in small pipes or wagons to individual consumers in a city.

An instance showing the truth of this statement occurred in reality lately in McKean county, Pennsylvania. Two brothers by the name of Keeler drilled a well 1,886 feet deep and struck the greatest gusher ever known. It threw the two ton string of drilling tools entirely out of the well and its vibrations soon shook the heavy timbers of the derrick to pieces. The escaping gas roared like a heavy freight train dashing along, the sound of which could be heard at a distance of ten miles. It was commonly said that it was producing 100,000,000 cubic feet per day. Such exact measurements as could be made placed the amount at 42,000,000. But whatever the flow of the gas may have been it was by far the largest well ever drilled and the extraordinary production served to attract great crowds of visitors.

The gas had been sold in advance before the well was completed to the Pennsylvania Gas Company (which is understood to be the Standard Oil Company). There had been no pipe line laid in advance to take care of the gas. Of course it was unknown whether there would be any gas. Every well is a mystery until the driller strikes the sand. But when the sand was struck and the immense quantity of gas rushed out there was no immediate attempt to "shut it in." Day after day it wasted from 42,000,000 to 100,000,000 cubic feet, sufficient to supply the domestic uses of a city of 50,000 inhabitants. The gas was struck on the 22d of September, 1906. No attempt was made to control it until the 10th of November, just fifty days, when the first effort to shut it in was successful. Why an earlier attempt on the part of a great company to save the gas for two poor men was not made is not entirely explained.

Perhaps they knew for a certainty that it could not be done. They might not have been able to have secured the tubing any earlier. The one thing which they did, however, was to lay an eight-inch pipe and carry the gas 200 feet away from the well and let it escape there. They could not turn it into a gas main for the reason that they had laid no main in that interval of fifty days. It is said they could not get the pipe. They laid that eight-inch pipe off to the south.

There was a good reason for laying it that direction. The Pennsylvania Company owned adjoining leases. They owned one across the road to the north. And as they wanted to drill there, there might be some danger from the gas of the Keeler well. The Keeler well is 300 feet south of the road at the point of the Pennsylvania Gas Company's new well. And the gas from the Keeler well was carried 200 feet south from the well. Of course, as the gas from the Keeler well belonged to the Pennsylvania Gas Company they had a right to pipe it where they pleased. But they were not paying for it while it wasted.

The Pennsylvania Gas Company drilled a well as near to the Keeler line on the north as possible. All gas and oil men know that gas and oil is in veins or seams or belts of sandstone, sometimes in pools. It is practically guesswork to strike these veins. No man owns the seams of oil or gas, except what he can strike in the wells from his own lease. Anyone, of course, who owns an adjoining lease can drill as close to the line as possible in the attempt to strike his neighbor's successful pool. That is part of the game. It is competition in the great industry. The Pennsylvania Gas Company successfully capped the Keeler well in their first attempt, which was a few days before they struck the sand in their own new well, but they did not turn the gas into their pipe and begin to use it. The gas is safely shut into the well waiting the laying of the main. In the meantime gas in the new well was struck. It is a fine well, producing about 10,000,000 cubic feet per day. Evidently it did not strike the veins of the Keeler well and is not drawing the gas from them.

Thomas Edison's Pastime.

Those who chance to pass the dwelling of Thomas A. Edison, the electrician, at an early hour in the morning are somewhat astonished to hear an organ being played and wonder who is thus amusing himself at a time when others are fast asleep. It is Edison himself, who, after a long period of work in the laboratory, will refresh himself mentally by a couple of tunes on his favorite instrument, thus preparing for recuperative slumber.

LUCK IN CATCHING CROOKS

Moving Picture Led to a Hold-up Man's Arrest.

PENALTY OF VANITY.

One Loomed Up on the Screen at a Show and a Detective Found Him With That Clue—Chance Glimpse of a Photograph Led Finally to One Woman's Capture.

"The high notch criminals, the fellows who pull off big jobs and have to make big jumps, are complaining more and more of how small the world is growing," he said. "Yet there are still plenty of hiding places. The element of chance constantly figures in the apprehension of wanted men. Only a couple of weeks ago a badly wanted Chicago stickup man was snaged at Pasadena, Cal., through some moving pictures, says an old detective in the New York Sun.

"The stickup man put a ball in the shoulder of a Chicago merchant who refused to be frisked with his eyes wide open. This happened last winter. The whole country was circulated and the Chicago flies had been doing the dragnet thing to pick up the stickup man's trail for nearly a year.

"Some time ago the moving pictures of the Jack O'Brien-Tommy Burns fight, which took place at Los Angeles, reached Chicago. A party of the Chicago flies went to the place where they were shown to have a look. Before the pictures showing the fight were thrown on the screen there were a lot of the moving films showing scenes in the training camp of the two scrappers.

"In the forefront of one of the films stood the stickup man, perfectly unmistakable. The natural vanity of all humans causes them to face moving picture machines when the pictures are being taken, and the stickup man away in front, and magnified two or three times in size, was grinning straight at the detectives. When the exhibition was over the detectives had a look at the film on which the stickup man appeared, and found that they were dead right. One of them immediately hopped out to Los Angeles. The stickup man had seen the fight picture himself, and he figured that there might be something doing when the Chicago detectives had their peek at them. So he quit playing the Los Angeles races and laid low in Pasadena, where he lived, for a while. But the Chicago detective got on his trail in Los Angeles, and nailed his man at Pasadena.

Detectives find out among other things that the great majority of crooks are very vain people and in spite of their rogues' gallery experience they are forever having their pictures taken.

"It may be that it's because of their rogues' gallery experiences that they do this. Few of them look pretty in their police mugged pictures and their vanity incites them to have photographs taken that look like them when they're in the untagged state. These pictures are often innocently put on view by photographers and many a crook is picked up in this way. I got a noted woman gem lifter that way twelve years ago. She'd turned two big Maiden Lane tricks and the Jewellers' Protective Association wanted her a whole lot.

"A job that was a good deal like her work was pulled off in a Denver gem house three or four months after her getaway from New York and I was sent out there to prowlsome. It looked poor to me after I'd been on the job in Denver for a week. I knew a number of stool pointers out there, but they couldn't give me anything about her. The Denver flies weren't hep to anybody that looked at all like her.

"I was just about to flag the job and crawl in with the poor mouth and the tale of six six, when one afternoon I stopped at a Denver photographer's show case to rubber at the pictures, a new display which had only been tacked up a couple of days or so. The middle picture resting against the black velvet was a big, boudoir size thing, and it was my woman, in a fine clean lace dress, full figure, with a fan in her hand and looking like a somebody hostess receiving her guests for a pink tea.

"I made the photographer's upstairs plant in three jumps and I had a right to ask him where the woman of the boudoir size picture was. The photograph had only been taken a month or so before, and he had only to turn over a few pages of his book to find the name and address of the sitter. The name was phony, of course, but the address was all right. She was living at Manitou Springs. I went there and found her in her flat, pretty snug, with coin to toss at the brier birds. She clawed me up quite a few with her nails when I told her she was the one, but I brought her back all right.

A Writer's Plaything.

When Mr. Rider Haggard was a child a very old doll of battered wood, hideously ugly, was one of his favorite playthings, and also of the other children in the family. An old nurse used to call this doll "She," and in after years the novelist borrowed the name for the heroine of his most famous book.

Miranda Wood's Romance

By Ethel Bret Harte.

III

The hot summer sun, which had been scorching and lashing into white heat the little New England village of Northfield all day, was now settling red behind a cluster of firs upon the far off flanks of the Berkshire hills, sinking slowly, drowsily to rest in vivid haze, as though worn out with its own fierce intensity.

One cottage, standing apart from this cluster of dwellings, alone seemed desolate, this sense of loneliness being to-night intensified by the almost tragically forlorn figure of a tall, gaunt woman sitting rigidly upon the doorstep, her thin hands clasped tightly about her knees.

But to-night, musing on her doorstep, Miranda felt strangely troubled and perplexed in mind, for a conversation she had overheard on her return from work that evening kept repeating itself to her brain with startling frequency and distinctness.

It had so happened that while passing along the village street she had encountered Deacon Scoville, who, in shirt sleeves and carpet slippers, a corneob pipe contentedly tucked away in the corner of his mouth, was chatting lazily over his garden gate with Pete Farman, this latter gentleman being entirely absorbed in the engrossing though somewhat strenuous occupation of cleaning his nails with a large jack-knife.

As Miranda approached the Deacon had hailed her with a cheery "Good evening, Miranda. Powerful hot, ain't it?" while Pete, looking up grudgingly from his rugged toilet, had remarked with quiet insolence, "Most hot enough to roast taters on your tin roof, ain't it, eh?"

The Deacon's remarks Miranda had acknowledged with a sharp bow of assent, while her eyes had swept scornfully the impudent, grinning face of Pete Farman. The next instant she had turned the corner of the wood sharply and was lost to view behind the tall lilac hedge which formed an almost impenetrable wall at the side of the Deacon's garden.

Here she stopped, ostensibly to settle her bonnet with an angry jerk, but in reality to recover her breath and composure, which seemed to be slipping from her in gusts of fury. As she was about to start on again, the wind, swaying the lilac tops hither and thither, brought the voices of the two men she had just quitted clearly and distinctly to her ears, holding her as though spellbound in curious though horrified fascination.

"Hurrah!" laughed Pete Farman; "there goes the gal what's never been kissed; don't wonder, it 'ed take a powerful nerve. Gul, what a face! Looks like she'd been reared on persimmons. Euf!"

Then the Deacon's voice drawled softly:—"I don't believe that yarn 'bout her never havin' been kissed. Miranda's most powerful homely, but she's got a good heart all the same, and that's bound to have fetched some feller, leastwise long enough to give her a kiss."

So now Miranda was turning the details of this conversation over in her mind with Puritanlike precision and candor. She had never had any sympathy or even patience with love and regarded all those suffering from this strange malady as but creatures of unsound mind, to be treated accordingly with contempt scorn.

It had also been Miranda's habit to catechise herself, to turn her emotions to the pitiless light of her almost morbid conscience, and she now insisted emphatically, albeit a trifle mournfully:—"No; I ain't never been kissed."

But already the feeling of anger and resentment which had at first been paramount was giving place to one of singular softness as she thought again of the Deacon's words. So "she had a good heart;" she had almost forgotten she had one, and placed her hand hurriedly to her left side to make sure that it was really there.

To-night some stronger will than hers seemed swaying the current of her thoughts; some power at once alluring and suggestive with which Reason battled fruitlessly; some wine which seemed to lull her senses into blissful confusion and to which she finally gave herself up with childlike abandon.

"I wonder what it's like," she murmured, while again that vague softness enveloped her as in a cloak. "I wonder," she repeated—but here the trees began to dance in lazy rhythm before her eyes as, lulled by the drone of insects in the grass, she fell asleep.

II

"Hide me quick, for God's sake!" cried a hoarse voice in Miranda's ear, while a rough hand upon her shoulder shook her violently from her slumbers. Still stupefied with sleep she gazed confusedly into the strange bearded face thrust close to hers.

thing that sounded strangely like an oath, as he dragged her unresistingly on her feet.

"Come quickly now! They're after me and they'll kill me if they get me—don't you understand?"

Miranda, however, now fully awake, tore her hands from his grasp, and drawing herself up to her full height, stood a stiff and forbidding sentinel in her doorway.

"This, then, was a man, and evidently a bad one.

"Get out of my house, murderer," she cried, in a sharp voice. Then, waving his impatient denial aside with a warning hand, she continued:—"If they're after yer to kill yer, yer done somethin' yer hadn't oughter, and I for one won't stand in the way of secin' justice done."

Then, seizing a broom which lay against the door, and using it rather as a weapon of extermination than of defence, she lunged heavily toward him.

Dexterously dodging this furious onslaught of bristles, the desperate man fell on his knees before her, and raising his eyes, which Miranda noticed for the first time were soft and brown beneath their fringe of black lashes, to her face, whispered between hope and fear:—"Sarely there is at least one spark of womanly pity in your heart."

Miranda started, clutching blindly, wildly at the door for support, as the Deacon's words flashed like lightning through her brain:—"She's got a good heart, and that's bound to fetch some man." The hot blood mounted to her face, and she clapped her hands over her ears to keep out the voice, fearing lest the man at her feet should hear it also.

The almost breathless silence which had followed his eloquent pleading was now broken by the sound of voices along the road, and one could discern dimly in the direction of the village a small black stream of figures running in ragged form, now stopping apparently to peer into ditches, and then hurrying on with renewed vigor. Each moment they became more distinct, and Miranda fancied she could distinguish the voices of the Deacon and Pete Farman among the rest.

Swift as a hare she flew to the door, beckoning the man to follow her, then throwing wide the cupboard said, in a voice scarcely less tense than his had been, "Git in there, quick."

The man sprang forward like some liberated animal—and the next moment the door closed upon him.

But none too soon, for already a party of excited men, headed by Pete Farman, had turned in at her garden gate.

"Yer ain't seen nothing of a man running for his life, have ye?" gasped Pete, his gooseberry eyes nearly bulging from their sockets—"A likely young feller with long black whiskers."

"Someone's broke in up to Farmer Cuddyback's and stole all Mary and Hank's wedding silver," panted the Deacon.

"Serves them right for having been such gul darned fools as to git married," was Miranda's cool and tart reply.

But she was feeling very nervous despite this bravado, and when Pete Farman advanced dangerously near the fateful cupboard she cried in a somewhat choked voice:—"Take your muddly boots off my clean paint; this ain't no cow shed."

Pete, momentarily awed, withdrew to the door, but from this safe retreat, his courage returning, he growled suspiciously:—"Oh, that's all very fine talk, but I seed him turn in here, and it is my painful dooty, Miss Miranda Wood, to search this 'ere house."

"Search, then, till you're blue in the face, for all I care," replied Miranda, in a voice she fondly believed to be indifferent, but which, though bravely commenced, wavered perceptibly toward the close of the sentence.

"Well, then, we may as well begin here," said the relentless Pete, walking toward the cupboard as he spoke. Like a flash Miranda was before him. Throwing herself defiantly against the door, she cried in a voice terrible to hear:—"I'm blest if you do! There's all my winter preserves in thar, and I'm not going to let any darned man set his foot in there till they've jellied."

Miranda was plain at all times, but now her face distorted with rage, was fearful to behold, and the men fell back a pace. For one moment she stood like a tigress at bay; the next, recognizing her half won battle, she assumed her old, dry manner, and, pointing with a long, bony finger down the road, said, sarcastically:—"And, now, when you gentlemen have done insulting a poor, helpless woman in her own house, perhaps you might see if you could ketch that man what's runnin' close to the stone wall yonder."

whom she had told the first lie in her spotless life.

What a change had come over that face! All the terror had gone from those luminous eyes, and in its stead was a soft tenderness.

"God bless you for what you have done to-night!" he murmured in a deep, rich voice, "God bless you!"

Then for one blissful moment Miranda felt his arms about her shoulders, as, bending his head to hers, he kissed her.

III

The sun was high in the heavens and the fire quite cold on the hearth when Miranda finally stirred in her chair.

What had come over her? Had she dreamed it all? No, she had not slept; she had been conscious of every tick of the great clock above the mantel, and, besides, there was the cupboard gaping wide, displaying neat rows of jam pots upon its shelves. No, she had not dreamed; she had simply lived, and, it seemed to her, for the first time in her life. A man had kissed her and asked God to bless her, and she had saved his life. Ah, it was all such a beautiful romance Miranda laughed happily as she pictured herself as heroine.

Singing, she went about her work, absently preparing her meager breakfast, which she scarcely touched. After giving a few almost coquetish touches to her toilet she looked lingeringly about the room in loving remembrance ere she turned the key in the door and went out.

The village street was almost deserted, Miranda noticed gratefully, for though she longed to hear the result of last night's robbery she yet feared to do so, and by the time she had reached the substantial Giles abode her heart was beating high to suffocation, and her hands trembled so she could scarcely lift the latch of the garden gate.

Had he really managed to escape or was he now languishing in some dreary prison? Her heart sickened at the thought.

At the door she was met by Mary Giles, who, eager to tell the news, did not notice Miranda's flushed face and trembling hands.

Here she learned that the "ruf-fan" (Miranda's hero) had got "clean away," and, with this blissful intelligence the happy, albeit guilty, Miranda set to work with a light heart. She listened to their story of the robbery with that superior judgment of one who knows, feeling herself a clever actress indeed.

She hummed to herself as she worked, slashing rather recklessly into the material Mary Giles had given her for the new bodice. This unwanted brightness puzzled the good people for whom she worked not a little, but when she actually cut two sleeves for one arm their wonder turned to alarm.

"Lands sake, Miranda Wood!" cried Mary Giles despairingly, as she gazed at her ruined bodice, "he you clean crazy? Lord, one'd think you was in love!"

Miranda started guiltily, cutting a horrid gash in the fated bodice as she did so. In tragic silence the two women looked down at the wreck before them; then Miranda said in hard, wooden tones:—"How much did it cost?"

"It cost me seventy-five cents at Martin's sale, and you couldn't git it less than a dollar 'oother times," replied the now almost hysterical Mary Giles in bitter reproach.

Slowly drawing her purse from her pocket, Miranda counted out four twenty-five cent pieces and laid them in a neat pile upon the table. Then before the astonished Mary Giles could recover her breath she had fed.

She hurried along the road her head bent guiltily, scarcely heeding where she was going until, coming in contact with some huge bulk which seemed to her confused senses like a great feather bed, she looked up to find herself face to face with Mrs. Scoville, who, fat and excited, was fanning herself wildly with a newspaper at Miranda's own gate.

"Land's sakes, M's Scoville!" she cried in alarm, "whatever is the matter of yer? Looks like yer was woun' to have a stroke!"

"I've had one eready," exclaimed the Deacon's wife theatrically. "A most shocking thing I call it—most indecent. Here," she added, thrusting the newspaper under Miranda's nose as she followed her, panting, into the kitchen, "read that for yourself."

As Miranda read a faint, sick dizziness crept over her, the ground seemed to sway neath her feet, and, sinking into a chair, she muttered forlornly to herself, "So it was all a lie after all. It was a traitor's kiss."

A Clever Criminal Caught at Last.

"A paltry robbery of wedding silver at the house of a farmer named Cuddyback, residing in the village known as Scoville's Glen, was the means of running to earth one of the greatest and at the same time cleverest criminals of modern times.