AT THE FORKS O' THE ROAD.

Dar's ol' Trouble at de forks er de road—
Dunno which road ter take;
Don't you he'p 'em fer ter tote his load—
Trouble is all he make!

Don't you min' w'en he whistle a song—
Dat w'en he whettin' his knife!
Show 'im de road—but show 'im wrong,
An' run fer yo' life—yo' life!

—Atlanta Constitution.

WITH A LOAD ...OF... SPRING LAMBS.

By C. A. Stephens.

One of my youthful neighbors, Charles Coburn by name, who migrated from Maine to California a few years ago, writes me most interesting letters occasionally, telling me how he is faring out there and what life is like in the Golden State.

One of these long letters came only a week ago, and among other things, describes a somewhat startling adventure which befell him while on the way to the railway station with a load of lambs.

Young Coburn's new place, as I shall have to explain, is up among the Sierras, at no great distance off the stage road which leads from Berendo and Raymond over to the famous Yosemite valley. At the old Coburn farm in Maine the boys were trained to dairying, sheep-raising and fruit-growing, and Charley wished to follow these lines of farming in California.

He therefore settled in one of the elevated mountain valleys, where sheep can be pastured and apple-trees thrive.

For climatic reasons it is only in these Sierra districts of California that apples grow well. Here they flourish, and Charley was able last season to market 4000 bushel boxes of winter fruit from his young orchards. With the thrift of a true son of the old Pine Tree state, too, he is putting his savings into sugar-pine timber lands up in the mountains, which bid fair to yield large profits in the not distant future.

But my present story is of his adventure on July 1st with a crate of spring lambs, while he was driving down from his mountain farm to the railroad.

There were 23 fat lambs in the large crate on the double wagon, and the distance which he had to drive was a little more than 30 miles, over three mountain ridges, much of the way being through pine growth.

He had made an early start, and expected to get down to the railroad-station by nightfall.

One of his horses was taken sick on the road, however, when only ten miles out. He had to unhitch, and for a time expected to lose the animal. It lay writhing about in great distress for several hours. At last he rode the other horse to the ranch and store of a settler eight miles away for a bottle of "colic cure."

Altogether the day was far advanced before he was able to proceed on his way, so far that, owing to the weakened condition of his horse, he was at first minded to drive back home; but as the night was warm and not very dark, he decided to go on. The lambs, in fact, were required in Los Angeles on the 3d.

He therefore drove on rather slowly, hoping to make the outward trip during the night.

Meanwhile the lambs, huddled in the hot crate, were getting hungry and thirsty. As yet, no really humane method of transporting such animals is available in cases like this. Ere long, as the horses descended through the dark pine growth into the valley of a little creek, the lambs all began bleating plaintively.

Otherwise the night seemed absolutely still. Through the dense black boughs of the treetops a few stars shone dimly; but not a breath of breeze stirred the sultry air, and the bleating of the lambs woke strange cadences off in the silent depths of the woods.

It touched the young farmer's heart; and as soon as they reached the creek and had crossed, he stopped and began watering all the lambs from a bucket, dipping up one bucketful after another, passing it in to them at the door in the rear end of the crate.

He was thus engaged when a crash in the brushwood close at hand, followed by a loud, harsh screech, broke the stillness.

Well he knew what it was! but one denizen of the forest ever gives vent to that blood-curdling screech—the mountain lion, or panther; and that he had one of these ugly brutes to deal with there alone in the night was far from adding to the pleasure of that belated trip! There was little time for considering the matter, however. Both horses started violently and sprang forward.

Without stopping even to shut the crate door, Coburn jumped to get hold of the reins, crying, "Whoa, Jim! Whoa, Topsy!"

He heard a splash in the creek behind him, but leaped forward beside the wagon, and with a quick bound, regained the driver's place, only to find that the reins had been pulled off the dashboard under the horses' feet. They were now running.

It was ascending ground here, and the road turned sharply to the left. Still calling out reassuringly to the horses, he attempted to get the reins by swinging forward on the wagon tongue and reaching them at the saddle; but just then the nigh horse trod on them, jerked her own head round, and plunging aside out of the road, brought the wagon up with a heavy shock against stumps and stones.

Coburn was thrown headlong between the horses, but falling partly on the wagon tongue, he recovered himself, sprang off in advance of the team, and got the frightened animals by the bits. They reared, snorting, and swung the wagon out into the road again, for they heard, or scented, the panther stealing up behind. Coburn was dragged along for some distance, and had all he could do to prevent the horses from getting clear away.

In the midst of the scuffle and clatter, he had heard a savage growl and jumped to the top of the crate. He could see it there indistinctly, in the dim starlight, balancing itself, trying to tear off the crate slabs, to get at the lambs. The horses now went nearly frantic, pushed violently back, then sprang on again, and going off the road on the other side, stuck the pole back of a tree in such a way as to bring the tree between them. With his arms round the tree, Coburn now got hold of the bits of each horse and held them there, and after some moments—catching his breath—he pulled the reins through the bits and tied the heads of both horses close to the tree trunk. They could not now get away; in fact, they held each other there hard and fast.

Meanwhile a frightful racket, accompanied by a loud bleating of the lambs, was going on in the crate behind.

When the horses bumped off the road the last time, the lion had fallen or jumped off the crate. It was not now in sight, and Coburn stepped cautiously back beside the nigh horse, to see where the brute had gone and what it was doing. By the sounds, the lion was evidently in among the lambs; and Coburn's first thought was that it had torn the top of the crate off.

In the wagon box, under the driver's seat forward, was his coat and also his belt, in which he was accustomed to carry a revolver when out on the road at night. The day had been so hot that, while doctoring his horse, he had taken the belt off and put it in the box with his coat. The revolver was what he was now trying to secure. Creeping low beside the horse, he reached up to the box, and raising the lid, got hold of the belt and pistol.

From the noise in the crate he was sure the panther was in it, killing a lamb; and he slipped quickly along by the wheels, to the rear end of the crate, determined to risk a shot at close range if he could see the animal. Now, however, he discerned that the crate door was open and that the lion had sprung in there. But the lambs appeared to be all huddled at the front end, and it instantly occurred to him to clap the door to and fasten it; for he saw now that the top of the crate was still intact.

While he was securing the door, however, he nearly ran over two small creatures close to the wagon-wheels. They sprang away, but stood, snarling, a few steps off, looking in the dim light to be no larger than house cats. He at once surmised that these were cubs, and that it was an old female had attacked him.

He was not afraid of these little fellows; but when he clapped the crate door to, the old one suddenly dashed back at it with a lamb in her mouth, snarling frightfully. He fired at her head as well as he could see—and then pandemonium reigned inside the crate!

The alarmed lambs rushed to and fro, bleating loudly, and the lion appeared to be going heels over head among them!

Coburn meanwhile was holding the crate door, trying to get another shot. Some moments passed before matters quieted enough for him to do so. The awful snarls and growls of the entrapped beast guided him as to its whereabouts, however, and at last making out its darker form among the lambs, he fired again—several times, in fact.

None of these first shots appeared to do the brute any harm, and after every flash lamb and lion went all over the inside of the crate again. It is not easy to shoot with anything like accuracy in the night, even at close range. He emptied his revolver, then recharged it, before a shot really disabled the lion and brought it to the floor of the crate. Even then it thrashed about, making hideous outcries, until, reaching in between the slats, Coburn had fired several other shots into its body.

Satisfied at last that the beast was done for, he got his lantern from the box, lighted it, and opened the crate. The interior presented a sorry spectacle. The lion had killed two lambs, and shots from the revolver had wounded another—which had to be killed later.

He pulled the body of the lion out of the crate into the road behind the cart. It was a lean, bony beast, and would have weighed, Coburn thinks, as much as 150 pounds. As he flung the carcass off the highway, the cubs began snarling near by. He could make out their fiery eyes in the brushwood, and at last knocked one over with a shot by lantern-light. The other ran off to a greater distance; but for an hour or two—before he was in condition to go on—he heard the little beast yawling fearfully off in the underbrush. At last he made a fresh start, and eventually reached the railroad with his crate of lambs.

He buried the carcass of the lion and her cub beside the road on his way home the next day. The cub was about a quarter grown, and Coburn conjectured that it may have been two months old. The other one was still lingering about, but had become so shy that he could not get near it.—Youth's Companion.

Glasgow's Great Success in Running Her Own Street Car Lines

By Frederic C. Howe.

THE private company predicted failure, said the city would go bankrupt. So they refused to sell the council their cars, because they expected the system to come back to them in a short time.

The first thing the city did was to reduce the hours and increase the wages of the employes. Then free uniforms were added, along with five days' holiday each year on pay. This increased consideration for the employes now costs the department something like $500,000 a year. The council did not stop here. Hauls were lengthened and fares cut down 33 percent. To-day one may ride a half-mile for a cent; two and one-third miles for two cents, and three and a half miles for three cents. For fares are arranged on the zone system. You pay for what you get. The main thing is, what does the average rider pay? In 1905 it was 1.89 cents, while the average fare charged per mile was nine-tenths of a cent. Of the 195,000,000 passengers carried, 30 percent paid but one cent, 60 percent but two cents, and only 10 percent of the total number carried paid more than the latter sum. All fares in excess of two cents might be abolished and the earnings would hardly show it.

And the cost to the city for carrying the average passenger (not including interest charges) was just under one cent in 1905. An examination of the earnings and expenses shows that the Glasgow tramway could pay all operating expenses, could maintain the system, could pay local taxes the same as a private company, and still carry passengers at a universal fare of one cent. It could do this and make money. On the basis of last year's earnings it would make about $75,000 even if there was no increase in traffic. For the operating expenses and maintenance charge in 1905 were $1,884,150. If the 195,767,519 passengers carried had paid one cent each, the earnings would have been $1,957,675.—From Scribner's.

Improvements in Pekin

More Real Advance in China in the Last Two Years Than in Previous Millennium.

By Joseph Franklin Griggs.

A COMPETENT authority on things Chinese states that during the last two years China has made more real advancement than in the previous millennium. That his judgment is sound is apparent to those who enjoy the vantage point of a residence in Pekin. It has long been predicted that changes would be surprising in their speed, but the most sanguine had not hoped for what is taking place.

In passing through Pekin, the streets seem to be the most striking phenomenon. Three years ago there seemed little hope that the black mud, and the disgusting sights and stenches would ever give place to anything better. The board that had been appointed to repair the streets was considered to have an Augean task and was the butt of many facetious remarks. Now the broad thoroughfares are fast being converted into handsome avenues. The central portion, a strip of about seven yards in width, is being well macadamized with the aid of steam rollers. This is flanked on each side by shallow drains of brickwork, a row of trees, an unpaved strip of five yards in good repair, then a curbed sidewalk of varying width, cheaply cemented with pounded lime and earth. The building line has been straightened, necessitating the rebuilding of many shops, the rehabilitation of which is in keeping with the rest. Long-forgotten sewers have been reopened, and places of conveniences erected, the use of which is made compulsory. Innumerable unsightly sheds which have occupied half the roadway are being removed, forever, it is hoped, and the squatters have sought other fields in which to ply their trades. The new roadways are guarded by uniformed police in their sentry boxes, and kept in order by numerous laborers. Fine telephone poles, strung with countless copper wires, replace the topsy-turvy line of the last few years. The telephone is no longer a curiosity, but is fast becoming a necessity to progressive business men.—From The Century.

Where Do Wild Animals Die?

By Dr. Theodore Zell.

WHERE do wild animals die and what becomes of them after death? The question is simple enough and easily answered in some cases, but extremely difficult in other cases. In a large number of cases the animals are killed by other animals or by man and eaten. They find their graves in the maw of their enemy, who in turn may find his grave in the stomach of some other more powerful creature. Of all living creatures man is the most bloodthirsty, and more animals fall victims to his greed, cruelty or appetite than to the murderous instincts of carnivorous or other animals.

It has been asserted that man is compelled to kill to prevent an excessive increase in the number of animals which would threaten his very existence. The mission of the carnivorous animals seems to be a similar one. In Russia 180,000 head of cattle and other large animals and 560,000 smaller animals are killed by wolves every year, not counting the poultry which becomes their prey.

Some have made the assertion that certain animals, when they feel the approach of death, retire to some hiding place, a cave, hollow tree, or some crevice in the rocks, and there await the end. That may be true and is decidedly probable, but does not explain the fact that only in rare cases are the remains of dead animals found in such places. It has often been commented upon that even in the districts where monkeys are abundant dead monkeys are scarcely ever found. Ancient writers like Pliny speak with remarkable erudition of the age which certain domestic and wild animals reach, but their writings throw no light upon the question as to what becomes of the animals after death. The number of carcasses and skeletons which are actually found is fr too small to give a satisfactory evplanation of the puzzling question which is still witing for its Oedipus.—Chicago Tribune.

Looking Ahead

By Paul Alwyn Platz.

EMPLOYES in the entry department of a wholesale clothing house were on the anxious seat because it was known that a promotion was close at hand. During all their discussions, however, one young man was too busy to talk as he was working upon the sales-book which was in a tangle and a month behind the orders. To bring it up to date was a task that made all of the young men in the entry department avoid it, as it involved much detailed work. One day, while they were discussing who would be the lucky one, the young man closed the book with a cry of joy and exclaimed: "It's up to date!" "It's work wasted!" was the comment of the others.

The next day the head of the firm came into the entry-room with a troubled look. "We're in a great fix. I wish the sales-book was up to date!" "It is," responded the young man who had been working upon it. "You do not understand me correctly," said the head of the firm. "I mean the big order-book." "The book is up to date," and the young man reached over and picked up the sales-book, opening it on his desk.

When the promotion was announced, the young man who worked in his spare moments was the lucky man.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE NEWS

MOVE IN BANK CASE

Former Officials Make Application for Examination of Books.

Washington.—William L. Lenhart of Brownsville, indicted jointly with Oliver L. Piper, former cashier, and Max Avener on a charge of conspiring to defraud the Peoples' bank of California, which was temporarily closed, made an application in the Washington county court to have the books, papers and records of the bank examined by an expert accountant.

The district attorney is required by the court to show cause why the application should not be granted. In his petition Lenhart claims he has no personal knowledge of false entries in the books and records charged against him.

In the indictments against Lenhart and Piper the first 190 counts charge the making of false entries to hide unlawful transactions between the two. All three of the men charged with fraud and conspiracy will be tried at criminal court next month.

SUBPENAS IN CAPITOL CASE

Names of Former State Officials on List of Witnesses to be Summoned.

Harrisburg.—Detectives started to subpena the witnesses for the trial of the second capitol case which will begin on May 11 in the Dauphin county court. On the list are the names of ex-Governor Pennypacker, exGovernor Stone, ex-Treasurer Harris, ex-Auditor General Hardenbergh, ex-Superintendent Eyre and others.

The case is known as the metallic furniture case, because it involves an alleged fraud in contract for such material. There are about 20 witnesses to be subpenaed.

DENIES INJUNCTION

Judge Orders Gas Company to Put Wall Around Well.

Washington.—Judge James Inghram of the Greene county court has handed down a decision denying an injunction in the case of the Dilworth Coal Company against the Ten Mile Gas Company.

The proceeding was brought by the coal company to prevent the gas company from drilling a well through an abandoned portion of the Dilworth company's mine at Rice's Landing. It was claimed by the coal company that gas would escape from the well and probably fill the mine. The court denied the injunction on condition that the gas company put a brick and cement wall around the casing of the well.

WANT POSTPONEMENT

Attorneys Ask for More Time in Capitol Cases.

Harrisburg.—In the Dauphin county court application was made for postponement of the arguments on motions for new trials for Snyder, Mathues, Shumaker and Sanderson, convicted of conspiracy in the first capitol case.

Counsel argued that they could not find time to prepare arguments in advance of the next capitol case, which is set for May 11, and the argument will therefore be postponed until after the trial of Congressman Cassel and the others. The argument was fixed for Wednesday.

May Be Highwayman's Body.

West Newton.—The body of an unknown man was found floating in the Youghiogheny river here. It is thought the man was one of two who held up a Hungarian a week ago. A posse overtook the highwayman. One escaped, but the other was driven into the river and was not seen to emerge. In the pockets of the body found today were $30, a watch and a razor.

Fifth Survivors Celebrate.

Altoona.—The survivors of the Fifth Pennsylvania Regiment, who served under Colonel Burchfield in the Spanish-American War, met here on the 27th to celebrate the tenth anniversary of their departure for Mount Gretna. A regimental association was formed, and a campfire and banquet was held tonight. The association will meet next year at Huntingdon.

Trainmen Are Reduced.

Johnstown.—As a result of the continued decrease in the slow freight movement over the main line of the Pennsylvania railroad, 16 engineers were reduced to firemen and 26 firemen were indefinitely suspended at the Conemaugh headquarters. The orders issued will affect 169 men on the Pittsburg division. A few weeks ago a large number of suspensions took place at Conemaugh.

Robbers Tie Farmer to Tree.

Berlin.—B. R. Hersch, a merchant and miller in Northampton township, six miles east of town, was assaulted at night by two robbers, who after taking $19 in cash and a gold watch tied him to a tree and beat him almost into insenbility. He was brought here this morning and Dr. R. J. Heffley attended him.

Ten Hours in Reading Shops.

Reading.—The Reading Railway Company put its 650 car shop employes on ten hours a day. For a long period they have been on nine hours.

Altoona.—Ernest Wise, a railroad car inspector, stepped between two cars in the Altoona railroad yards when the cars were moved violently and was killed.

New Castle.—A four days' convention of the State Board of Agriculture and the Farmers' Normal Institute will open May 26.

Easton.—The body of Michael Gallagher, an Allentown boy who was swept away in the flood last February, was found in the Lehigh river.

$20,000 FIRE ON THAW FARM

Horses and Farmhouse Are Destroyed in Flames.

Greensburg.—The farm owned by the Thaw estate in Mt. Pleasant township, near Hecla, where the Magee Cook Company is building a large plant, was the scene of a fire in which twenty-four horses and three cows perished. The blaze was discovered shortly after midnight by John Snyder, who lives on the farm, the big frame barn being a mass of flames.

Snyder succeeded in saving three horses, but a stallion valued at $1,000 was burned, together with twenty-three draught horses owned by Contractor H. Frank Stark of Greensburg. Stark had a grading contract at the new coke plant. The total loss is $20,000 with little insurance.

TAX COLLECTOR MISSING

Writes Letter to His Wife Threatening to Commit Suicide.

Philadelphia.—Lewis J. Chester, tax collector of Glen Olden, Delaware county, near here, it was learned today is missing, having, it is alleged, embezzled about $10,000 of county and school funds.

The alleged defalcation became known through a letter written by Chester to his wife in which he stated that he had gone to parts unknown to avoid arrest and intimating that if he was captured he would commit suicide. Chester was elected tax collector in 1903. A warrant has been issued for his arrest.

THIS MAN HARD TO KILL

Sustains 2,200-Volt Shock and Falls 35 Feet.

Uniontown.—Ira Barber of Thompson No. 1, is in the Uniontown hospital, suffering from the effects of an accident in which he was almost electrocuted. While working on a stable he came in contact with a high tension wire of the West Penn Electric Light Company and 2,200 volts passed through his body.

For fear of being killed, men refused to go to his rescue and Barber fell 35 feet from the top of the stable. Physicians believe he will recover.

ASK FOR RECEIVER

Proceedings Begun to Wind Up Vandergrift Company.

Washington.—Joseph H. Vandergrift has commenced proceedings to have a receiver appointed to wind up the affairs of the Vandergrift Distilling Company of Allenport. The property consists of the distillery and a large quantity of whisky on hand.

John M. Vandergrift, by will, devised his whole estate to his widow, Julia A. Vandergrift, and appointed her executrix. Since his death she has been managing the distillery and selling the output.

Five Buildings Burn.

Three stores, with all their contents, and two unoccupied storerooms in Herman avenue, Wilmerding, were destroyed by fire that started at 2 o'clock in the morning, causing a loss of $10,000, covered by insurance. An overheated gas stove in the confectionery store of Harry Zaslaff destroyed the building, with a loss of $1,000.

Arrested in Hospital.

Bradford.—A. L. Whellan the engineer in charge of the light engine which crashed into the passenger train on the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburg railroad on the evening of April 18, has been arrested at Rochester, N. Y., where he was confined to a hospital suffering from injuries received in the wreck.

Organizes for Campaign.

Hollidaysburg.—The Blair county Republican committee organized for the presidential campaign. Mayor Jesse L. Hartman of Hollidaysburg, was re-elected chairman. The secretaries are Archibald Brumbaugh, Charles Manlove, W. E. Howe and Edward C. Marks.

Kittanning Farmer Maltreated.

Kittanning.—James Sowers, a farmer, came to Kittanning Saturday afternoon. Sunday morning he was found under a wagon in an alley, beaten and unconscious, and died at the hospital a few hours later. His money and watch were missing.

Mystery Cleared Up.

Warren.—The mystery surrounding the disappearance four weeks ago of J. H. Jennings, a wealthy resident of this town, has been cleared up through the finding of his body in the Allegheny river a short distance from here.

Bomb With Lighted Fuse.

Butler.—An attempt to blow up the store of Kirkpatrick Bros. at Renfrew, near here, was made. An Italian was seen placing something under the building and then running away. An investigation disclosed a bomb with a lighted fuse.

To Build Court House.

Sharon.—The grand jury instructed the county commissioners to proceed at once with the construction of a new court house for Mercer county to cost $200,000. The work of tearing down the walls of the old building will start tomorrow.

New Castle.—An appeal for clemency, signed by nearly every lawyer of the Lawrence county bar, was forwarded to Governor Stuart in behalf of Rosario Serge, the 18-year-old Italian under sentence to be hanged here May 7. It is alleged the jurors were prejudiced against all Italians.

Strail to Die June 2.

Harrisburg.—The governor ordered a warrant to issue in the case of James Strail of Venango county, fixing June 2, 1908, as the date of his execution.