

## FIREMAN'S BRAVE DEED

GEORGE POELL TAKES HIGH RANK IN BAND OF HEROES.

Railroad Men Have Reason to Be Proud of Act of One of Their Brotherhood—Child's Life Saved at Terrible Sacrifice.

To George Poell of Grand Island, Neb., fell the honor of receiving the first of the medals authorized by congress especially for the reward of heroism in connection with the fascinating and dangerous occupation of railroad engineering. Geo. Poell at the time he performed the courageous act which should have made him famous in a land less likely to forget such deeds than is the United States, was a fireman on the

St. Joseph & Grand Island railway. On June 26, 1905, his train of 30 loaded freight cars was humming down the line from Grand Island to the little town of Hanover. C. H. Bishop, the engineer, had his throttle open, and the train was making 30 miles an hour, when suddenly, about a mile from the town of Powells, the engineer made an emergency application of brakes, reversed his engine and sounded his whistle.

Started, Poell leaned from the tender, and, looking ahead down the track saw a quarter of a mile away a little sunnier-haired baby standing between the rails. The child did not realize its danger, and faced the engine smiling. Then it turned and toddled down the track.

The train was running on a down grade, and the brakes worked badly, causing the cars to "bunch" and shake. Poell realized that the train could not be stopped in time. Without saying a word to the engineer Poell went out of the window of the cab, crept along the running board and finally gained the pilot, on the left hand side. Leaning forward he swung out ahead of his engine, and, just in the nick of time, grasped the child with his left hand, while he clutched the pilot with the other. The step upon which the fireman had stood was only four inches wide, and it was slippery from passing through the weeds and grass which lined the right of way. In attempting to swing the child into safety he lost his footing and fell. As he went over he threw the baby to one side, but in doing so his own left foot was caught in some part of the engine gear. Poell went under the wheels, but to one side. He was dragged over the ends of the ties for 120 feet and over a bridge 30 feet long. Then his left foot was wrenched from the ankle socket, the man's body was released, and, with both arms broken, and face and body terribly bruised and torn, he plunged down an embankment.

When the train was finally stopped and members of the crew reached the man, they found him unconscious. His first thought was for the baby, and before he would permit anything to be done for him he sent his comrades back for the child. The baby, little Paul Ussary, the 2½-year-old son of John Ussary, a railroad station agent, escaped with a few bruises, but Poell was in the hospital for a long time. Even after he would have been ready to walk with a crutch he could not owing to the fact that both of his arms had been fractured so that the man had to be carried about in a helpless condition for weeks. His medal of honor, the first under the new act of congress passed in 1905, accompanied by a special letter of commendation from President Roosevelt, reached Poell on October 4, 1906. Since then 11 other names have been added to the roll of merit in the railroad world.

### Spring Hats.

Miss Lillian Russell, at a luncheon at Sherry's in New York, was talking about the Easter hat of 1911.

"It is to be tall," said Miss Russell. "The new French beauty, Mlle. Lanterne, has settled that. The Lanterne hat, which all Paris is raving over, has in the back a plume that rises up almost to the clouds.

"What do you think of my new hat?" a young girl asked me in Fifth avenue the other day. "Don't you think it's a poem?"

"I looked at it. It was a genuine Lanterne. The plume in the rear was nearly three feet high.

"Hardly a poem, my dear," I said. "Rather a short story."

### Very Strong.

"I see," said Slaters, "that our old friend Bilkins had a strong article in one of the Boston papers the other day."

"Really?" said Bilkins, incredulously. "I'd never have believed that of old Bilks. What was it?"

"A recipe for pickled onions," said Slaters.—Harper's Weekly.

### Desert Railroad.

Egypt has a desert railroad which runs 45 miles in a straight line; but the longest straight piece of railway-line in the world is from Nyngan to Bourke, in New South Wales. This railway runs 126 miles on a level in a straight line.

## THE U. P. DOUBLE TRACK PLAN

Plans Made Assure That Work Will Begin at Several Places in the West This Spring.

Plans for the double tracking of the Harriman system from the Missouri river to the Pacific coast, recently authorized by the directors, have been completed, and preparations are under way to begin the work.

The work will begin at a number of places at the same time. One stretch will be from Benicia, Cal., to Sacramento, about 60 miles. About the heaviest traffic on the Southern Pacific goes over that place of track. Filling this gap will give a double track from San Francisco to Colfax. The facilities of the ferry at Benicia also will be doubled to accommodate the increased traffic.

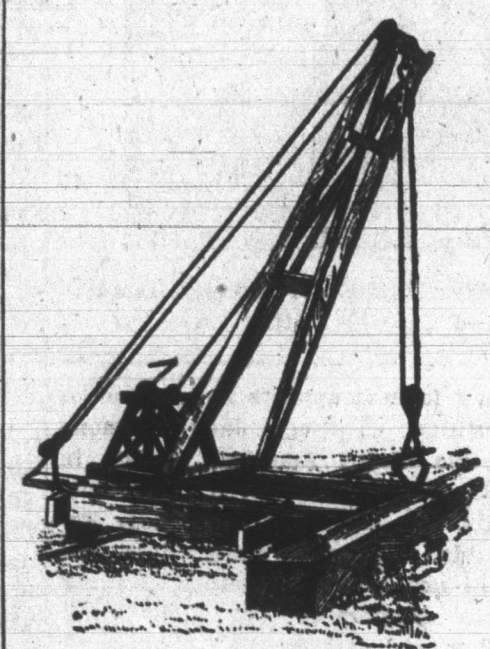
Another stretch will be at the end of the Salt Lake cut-off. In connection with it there will be some changes of the line and reduction of grades, which will improve the train loading on the Central Pacific. The road will build a low grade line up the mountain and use the present high grade line for the down traffic.

The Union Pacific will be double-tracked from Julesburg, Col., west about 100 miles, and from Ogden to Farmington, Utah. It is already double-tracked from Farmington to Salt Lake City.

## MAKES WORK MUCH EASIER

Push Car Derrick Lightens the Labors of Bridge Gangs Working on Railroad Lines.

The bridge gangs of the Chicago & Illinois Eastern railroad use a little push car derrick that is a giant in the work it accomplishes. The arm is guyed by ropes in preference to rods, and the hand hoist is anchored down



Handy Push Car Derrick.

to the rail by means of a chain and hook, the latter tightly gripping the rail flange, so that danger of tipping is done away with.—Popular Mechanics.

### Kept on Knocking.

"Congregations are getting more superstitious in little things," said the minister. "At every sermon I have preached in the last six months I have been annoyed by somebody in the congregation knocking wood. Sometimes I can hear a little chorus of taps coming from different parts of the church, again I can only see the motion of their hands, but I know they are knocking on wood just the same. Every time I give thanks for any good fortune that has attended us superstitious parishioners knock on the back of the pew for it to continue. Two weeks ago I preached a scathing sermon on the foolish superstitions of the age, but I guess it didn't hit the bulleseye, for when I thanked Heaven that after all our church had been spared some of the superstitions that had rent other congregations asunder half the people in the house knocked wood."

### Gauge of Chinese Railroads.

Speaking generally, China has adopted the British railroad gauge, that is, four feet eight and a half inches, but she is apparently not insisting upon this. The Chentai line in Yunnan has used the meter gauge, and the Kwangsi authorities appear to have determined to break away from what is supposed to be the standard and have either the meter or a narrow gauge instead. The eventual conversion of these lines will be an expensive business, and China has no money to waste.—National Review.

### Dining Car Service in India.

Dining car waiters on railroads in India are barefooted natives, in long white gowns held in at the waist by a broad band, their heads wrapped up in puggrees (a light scarf). The dinner service is rough and coarse, and the price higher than in this country. Most of the food served comes in tins. Between courses dishes are piled on the floor. India is a land of contrasts, and this contrast between the dirty black feet and the dirty white dishes is one of the things to which the traveler gets accustomed, but never reconciled.

### Deer Trained for Harness.

Probably the only team of trained deer in the United States is the one owned by Frank Clemens.

They were captured in the northern part of Bonner county when small and are now eight months old. They are well broken to drive, and when hitched to the sled can make a trip to the Great Northern depot as quickly as any team.—Sandpoint Correspondence Spokane Herald.

## OUR VANISHING SHOREBIRDS



THE term shorebird is applied to a group of long-legged, slender-billed, and usually plainly colored birds belonging to the order Limicolae, writes W. L. McAtee in a bulletin issued by the bureau of biological survey, United States department of agriculture. More than sixty species of them occur in North America. True to their name they frequent the shores of all bodies of water, large and small, but many of them are equally at home on plains and prairies.

Throughout the eastern United States shorebirds are fast vanishing. While formerly numerous species swarmed along the Atlantic coast and in the prairie regions, many of them have been so reduced that extermination seems imminent. The black-bellied plover or beetlehead, which occurred along the Atlantic seaboard in great numbers years ago, is now seen only as a straggler. The golden plover, once exceedingly abundant east of the great plains, is now rare. Vast hordes of long-billed dowitchers formerly wintered in Louisiana; now they occur only in infrequent flocks of a half dozen or less. The Eskimo curlew within the last decade has probably been exterminated and the other curlews greatly reduced. In fact, all the larger species of shorebirds have suffered severely.

So adverse to shorebirds are present conditions that the wonder is that any escape. In both fall and spring they are shot along the whole route of their migration, north and south. Their habit of decoying readily and persistently, coming back in flocks to the decoys again and again, in spite of murderous volleys, greatly lessens their chances of escape.

The breeding grounds of some of the species in the United States and Canada have become greatly restricted by the extension of agriculture, and their winter ranges in South America have probably been restricted in the same way.

Unfortunately, shorebirds lay fewer eggs than any of the other species generally termed game birds. They deposit only three or four eggs, and hatch only one brood yearly. Nor are they in any wise immune from the great mortality known to prevail among the smaller birds. Their eggs and young are constantly preyed upon during the breeding season by crows, gulls and jaegers, and the far northern country to which so many of them resort to nest is subject to sudden cold storms, which kill many of the young. In the more temperate climate of the United States small birds, in general, do not bring up more than one young bird for every two eggs laid. Sometimes the proportion of loss is much greater, actual count revealing a destruction of seventy to eighty per cent. of nests and eggs. Shorebirds, with sets of three or four eggs, probably do not on the average rear more than two young for each breeding pair.

It is not surprising, therefore, that birds of this family, with their limited powers of reproduction, melt away under the relentless warfare waged upon them. Until recent years shorebirds have had almost no protection. Thus, the species most in need of stringent protection have really had the least. No useful birds which lay only three or four eggs should be retained on the list of game birds. The shorebirds should be relieved from persecution, and if we desire to save from extermination a majority of the species, action must be prompt.

The protection of shorebirds need not be based solely on esthetic or sentimental grounds, for few groups of birds more thoroughly deserve protection from an economic standpoint. Shorebirds perform an important service by their inroads upon mosquitoes, some of which play so conspicuous a part in the dissemination of disease. Thus, nine species are known to feed upon mosquitoes, and hundreds of the larvae or "wigglers" were found in several stomachs. Fifty-three per cent. of the food of 28 northern phalaropes from one locality consisted of mosquito larvae. The insects eaten include the salt-marsh mosquito, for the suppression of which the state of New Jersey has gone to great expense.

The nine species of shorebirds known to eat mosquitoes are: Northern phalarope, Wilson phalarope, Stilt sandpiper, Pectoral sandpiper, Baird sandpiper, Least sandpiper, Semipalmated sandpiper, Killdeer and Semipalmated plover.

Cattle and other live stock also are seriously molested by mosquitoes, as well as by another set of pests, the

horse flies. Adults and larvae of these flies have been found in the stomachs of the dowitcher, the pectoral sandpiper, the Hudsonian godwit and the killdeer. Two species of shorebirds, the killdeer and upland plover, still further befriended cattle by devouring the North American fever tick. Among other fly larvae consumed are those of the crane flies (leatherjackets).

Another group of insects which the shorebirds are very fond of grasshoppers. Severe local infestations of grasshoppers, frequently involving the destruction of many acres of corn, cotton and other crops, are by no means exceptional. Aughey found 23 species of shorebirds feeding on Rocky Mountain locusts in Nebraska, some of them consuming large numbers. Even under ordinary conditions grasshoppers are a staple food of many members of the shorebird family.

Shorebirds are fond of other insect pests of forage and grain crops, including the army worm, which is known to be eaten by the killdeer and spotted sandpiper; also cutworms, among whose enemies are the avocet, woodcock, pectoral and Baird sandpipers, upland plover and killdeer. Two caterpillar enemies of cotton, the cotton worm and the cotton cutworm, are eaten by the upland plover and killdeer. The latter bird feeds also on caterpillars of the genus Phlegotholus, which includes the tobacco and tomato worms.

The principal farm crops have many destructive beetle enemies also, and some of these are eagerly eaten by shorebirds. The boll weevil and clover-leaf weevil are eaten by the upland plover and killdeer, the rice weevil by the killdeer, the cowpea weevil by the upland plover, and the clover-root curculio by several species of shorebirds.

Bill bugs, which often do considerable damage to corn, seem to be favorite food of some of the shorebirds. They are eaten by the Wilson phalarope, avocet, black-necked stilt, pectoral sandpiper, killdeer and upland plover. They are an important element of the latter bird's diet, and no fewer than eight species of them have been found in its food.

Wireworms and their adult forms, click beetles, are devoured by the northern phalarope, woodcock, jack-snipe, pectoral sandpiper, killdeer and upland plover. The last three feed also on the southern corn leaf-beetle, and the last two upon the grapevine collops. Other shorebirds that eat leaf-beetles are the Wilson phalarope and dowitcher.

Crayfishes, which are a pest in rice and corn fields in the south and which injure levees, are favorite food of the black-necked stilt, and several other shorebirds feed upon them, notably the jack-snipe, robin snipe, spotted sandpiper, upland plover and killdeer. Thus it is evident that shorebirds render important aid by devouring the enemies of farm crops and in other ways, and their services are appreciated by those who have observed the birds in the field. Thus, W. A. Clark of Corpus Christi, Tex., reports that upland plovers are industrious in following the plow and in eating the grubs that destroy garden stuff, corn, and cotton crops. H. W. Tinkham of Fall River, Mass., says of the spotted sandpiper: "Three pairs nested in a young orchard behind my house and adjacent to my garden. I did not see them once go to the shore for food (shore about 1,500 feet away), but I did see them many times make faithful search of my garden for cutworms, spotted squash bugs, and green flies. Cutworms and cabbage worms were their especial prey. After the young could fly, they still kept at work in my garden, and showed no inclination to go to the shore until about August 15. They and a flock of quails just over the wall helped me wonderfully."

To summarize: Shorebirds have been hunted until only a remnant of their once vast numbers is left. Their limited powers of reproduction, coupled with the natural vicissitudes of the breeding period, make their increase slow, and peculiarly expose them to danger of extermination.

In the way of protection a beginning has been made, and a continuous close season until 1915 has been established for the following birds: The killdeer, in Massachusetts and Louisiana; the upland plover, in Massachusetts and Vermont; and the piping plover, in Massachusetts. But, considering the needs and value of these birds, this modicum of protection is small indeed.

## Skinning a Cat

By MARSHALL CROMWELL

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"Well, what do you think?" Cyrus Standen regarded the young physician with undisguised contempt.

"Examination proves what I suspected," said Guy quietly. "If you do not take a complete rest, you will become a physical wreck and possibly a mental one."

"Complete rest," scoffed Standen. "Look here, Dr. Bray, you can lead a patient to the physician—but you can't make him take his prescription. I get a rest; a complete mental and physical relaxation every afternoon. I tell you there is nothing like a game of golf to set a man up."

"It has, in part, enabled you to keep up as long as you have," was the even answer, "but it will not keep you going forever. Before it is too late, Mr. Standen, I urge upon you the necessity for taking a rest. Three months will set you on your feet again."

"That's all nonsense," was the impatient reply. "I came here to please Irma. I thought that if I submitted to an examination, you might possibly be able to perceive how thoroughly incorrect your absurd theories were. I see that I have flattered you even in my somewhat slight estimate of your skill. Good morning, sir."

Slowly Guy closed the door and went to the telephone to make an appointment to meet Irma after office hours. It was at her request that he had made the examination and it was for her sake that he had withheld retort in the face of Standen's churlish speeches.

Bray had won Irma's heart before he had made a name for himself in his profession, and it was for her sake more than for his own that he was anxious to get ahead rapidly.

Irma shook her head as Guy gave his report a little later.

"I can't do anything," she cried tearfully. "I have begged and begged him to take a rest and he will not do it. He says his golf is all he needs."

"That's just the trouble," explained Guy. "He makes his game of golf his excuse for all excessive strains upon his physique. Of course an hour or so in the open does him a great deal of good, but his mind is still on his affairs. He is planning new coups as he goes from hole to hole and so he does not gain the fullest benefit."

"Dr. Tracy recommended it," she explained.

"He said golf was better than all sorts of medicine."

"Tracy is a golf crank himself," explained Guy. "He is also a medical politician. When he sees that a prescription is not to his patient's liking he changes it to suit."

"What can we do?" she asked. "Father places such implicit faith in Dr. Tracy that we cannot hope to prevail. Perhaps it was a mistake to urge him to submit to your examination."

"Not at all," was the comforting reply. "You did not make a mistake, dear. It is simply that the problem is more difficult than we anticipated. I'll find a way yet. There is no organic trouble. It is simply that your father's nerves are all run down and need a rest—a complete rest. He is going to take it, too."

"But he won't listen to you," she cried. "How will you do it?"

"Did you ever hear that homely old proverb that there was more than one way of skinning a cat?" he asked. "I'm going to skin the feline in a different way since the approved process is objected to. Don't fret and don't contradict your father when he tells you that his golf is all sufficient. And now I have to run along and see some patients. I will call you on the 'phone this evening."

Bray took his leave and went down the street with a step as springy as though the father of the woman he loved had not recently intimated that he was entirely lacking in sense. There was a squareness to Bray's clean cut chin that argued that he would not readily give up the fight, but to Irma, even with her faith in Guy Bray, the outlook seemed black enough.

But it seemed blacker still when her father came home to dinner and spent the greater part of the time telling what an incompetent Bray was.

"I saw Tracy this afternoon on the links," he concluded. "He says Bray doesn't know what he's talking about. With a little golf I'm good for 2½ years yet."

But as golf had been his panacea, so it became his warning, for the first intimation of a breakdown came in a certain weakness of stroke. His eye seemed as clear as ever, but now the ball frequently went wide of the mark.

At first it did not worry Standen much, but as his game became worse and worse his anxiety grew. At last there came a day when the ball behaved so unaccountably that he left after the fifth hole and drove into town to see Tracy.

That genial physician laughed at his fears.

"We all have our off days," he reminded.

He bravely started a game the next afternoon, but he no longer seemed to have any control over the ball. At times he would play up to his old form and then the very next stroke would send the ball wide of the mark. Once it fell only six inches from a hole, and yet it required three strokes to hole. That night Standen sent for Bray.

"I don't know but what you may be

partly right in what you said the other day," was the apologetic preface to the visit. "Tracy is an ass."

"Dr. Tracy is a very clever man," defended Guy. "But we are all apt to err in diagnosis at times. I may have been wrong in your case."

"But you were not," was the energetic reply. "By George, sir, you called the turn. I am going wrong. Guy, I used to know your father. I dandled you on my knee when you wore skirts. For the sake of those old times, my boy, try and save me. I'm going insane."

"Nonsense," was the answer. "You are not going insane at all. You have overtaxed your nervous system and it needs a rest, that's all. You show no signs of insanity. Your affairs are in pretty good shape just now, are they not?"

"There's only one deal pending. I can close that out tomorrow if necessary. It will close naturally in a week."

"Don't be in a hurry," counseled Guy. "Close up your deal but do not engage in any new ones until after your return. Have the yacht put in commission to take a cruise. Go to Bermuda and then to Florida and the West Indies. Don't touch a club or go near a golf links until you reach Nassau, and I'll warrant you that by then you'll be in championship form again."

"You've given me new hope, my boy," he declared. "I was in an inferno until you came. I'll take your prescription faithfully and if it works—"

"It's going to work," was the laughing reply. "I'll stake my professional reputation on the result." Bray and the sailing master had laid out the cruise and it was three weeks before the yacht sailed past Hog Island and into the harbor of Nassau. For a week Standen had looked forward to the day when he could unpack his clubs and play golf again, and as soon as the customs formalities were over he made for the hotel and presently was off for the links.

For a moment his hand trembled as he picked up a club but the troubled look on his face vanished as the ball sped true from the stroke.

"Guy was right," he cried exultantly. "That was one of the prettiest strokes I ever made in my life. All I needed was a little rest. I tell you, Irma, that boy knows his business."

"I thought he was right," smiled the girl. "I'm glad that I persuaded you to go to him."

"It was the most fortunate thing," declared Standen as he strode toward the ball. "He's a fine young fellow. Seemed a little bit gone on you, didn't he?"

"Don't talk nonsense," cried Irma with a blush, but her father only shook his head.

"It's not nonsense," he declared vigorously as he watched the caddy locate the ball. "You go in and win him. That's the sort of young fellow I want for a son-in-law; none of these cheap society dudes."

It was more than the prescribed three months before the Standens came home. The financier was tanned by the sub-tropical sun until he was as brown as a sailor. His eye was clear and as keen as his appetite. Irma's first call was at Guy's office.

"I thought it would work," he said with a laugh when she had amplified her mail reports. "All that your father needed was a rest from worry. The trouble was to induce him to take the rest."

"It was fortunate that his golf failed him," she said. "It seemed almost like an act of providence."

With a laugh Guy went to his safe and drew from it a pasteboard box. "I told you there were more ways than one of skinning a cat," he reminded. "This is my patent cat skinner."

He raised the lid of the box and disclosed a dozen golf balls.

"These are persuasive pills—to be taken as directed," he explained as he picked one from the box and tossed it upon the flat-topped desk.

The ball wobbled drunkenly across the table, and falling off the side, pursued its erratic course across the carpet. Bray tossed a second one over and this ran more true, but with a decided variation.

"I saw that something must be done to check the golf idea," he explained to the puzzled girl. "I had these balls made and tipped your father's caddy to use them instead of the regulation balls. They are hollow and are loaded with a metal ball inside. The first and lightest load took the ball only slightly off its course. You see what the last one is capable of doing. That was the one that caused him to come over to my way of thinking."

"And it was all a trick?" she cried, half laughing, half scandalized. "To think of what you made poor Dad suffer!"

"It was for his own good," defended Bray. "And, besides, think of what he made me suffer!"

"I think that under the circumstances," said Irma demurely, "the employment of the cat skinner was perfectly permissible. It has given Dad back his health and it has given me you."

"No," said Guy tenderly. "It has given you to me, and for that, dear heart, I'd skin all the cats in Christendom."