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NAMING THE GASPEREAU

When the rainbow tints of autumn
Deck the ancient hills,
And the dreamy river saunters
Past the lazy mills,
Let us seek the murmuring forest,
Where the pines and hemlocks grow,
And a thousand fringed shadows
Fall upon the Gaspereau.

When the old Acadian farmers,
Sailing up the bay,
Landed with their goods and cattle
On the fair Grand Pre;
Wandering through the ancient forest,
Claude, Rene and Theriot,
In a vale of matchless beauty,
Found the river Gaspereau.

Found the lithe and dark-skinned Mic-
In his birch canoe, [mac
Paddling down his "Magapskegeek"
To the Basin blue,
Little dreaming of the presence
Of the Indian's pale-faced foe;
Singing unmelodious boat-songs
On the winding Gaspereau.

'Mid the brushwood and the rushes
And the trembling ferns,
Where the river sighing, singing,
Speeds with many turns
Through the gateways of the mountain
Towards the sunny plain below;
Paused they often, lost in rapture,
By the sun-kissed Gaspereau.

Those were days of dream and legend,
Continents were new,
And the brave Acadian peasants
Had their romance too.
From their roaming in the forest,
Claude, Rene and Theriot
Brought their comrades rapt description
Of the vale of Gaspereau.

Then around the hemlock fire,
In the cabin rude,
With their stock of cheese and brown-
And their ale, home-brewed, [bread,
Gathered all the Norman peasants,
In the hemlock fire's glow,
And they named the new-found river
Gaspere-water—Gaspereau.

Gaspere was a friend and comrade,
Who had joined their band,
With an eager heart and buoyant,
For the Acadian land;
But, e'er half the voyage was over,
He, the bravest of the brave,
He, the truest heart among them,
Rested in a watery grave.

There was mourning in the vessel,
Every strong man wept,
And with limbs grown strangely weary,
Through his duties crept.
There was wailing in the vessel,
As, with trembling voice and slow,
Pere Pelician read the death prayers
Ere the loved form sank below.

Dreary seemed the voyage thereafter
On the cruel sea,
Till they reached the smiling meadows

Of fair Acadie.
Never rose their songs at evening,
For the flame of hope burned low;—
So they named the smiling river,
With fond memory, Gaspereau.

Thence in summer, when the plowing
In the fields was done,
And the busy looms were growing
Silent, one by one,
Many a lover in the moonlight,
Speaking tender words and low,
Sought the path across the meadow
To the quiet Gaspereau.

When there came some loss or sorrow
To the little band;
When the crops failed or the dykes broke
In the Acadian land,
Many a tired wife and mother,
All her spirit dark with woe,
Found release from her forebodings
By the peaceful Gaspereau.

Vanished are the Acadian peasants,
Sweet Evangeline,
Gabriel, Benedict, and Basil;
And no sadder scene
Ever gave itself to story,
Than that scene of wreck and woe,
When the English ships weighed anchor
In the mouth of Gaspereau.

Still it flows among the meadows,
Singing as of yore
To the ferns and trailing mosses
On the winding shore;
To the pines that dip their branches
In the crystal waves below,
And the crimson waves of autumn
Falling in the Gaspereau.

—A. W. Eaton in *Youth's Companion*.

HIS LIFE OR THEIRS.

In looking over the telegraphic despatches in a newspaper a short time since, I came upon a brief account of a railway collision in the West. The engineer of one of the colliding locomotives had displayed a touching heroism which had undoubtedly saved the lives of many passengers; and not only was he the only person killed, but no other was even seriously injured.

Incidents of courage and self-sacrifice are by no means unusual among railway men, as any reader of the daily newspaper knows; and after reading the despatch above referred to, I merely said to myself, "One more brave fellow gone." Just then the concluding sentence of the despatch arrested my attention. "The name of the brave engineer was Samuel S. Homan."

Homan? Samuel Homan? The name was familiar. I had once known a boy whose name was Homan, and he had left school to become a locomotive fireman. Later in the day, I learned conclusively that the dead engineer was really my boyhood acquaintance; and many old-time memories rose as I

thought of him.

He was the champion base-ball player of our class, during the first year at the High School—not a showy but a very thorough sure player. Perhaps he gave too much time, interest and attention to the game; the ordinary boy cannot put himself heart and soul into athletic amusements and stand high in his studies. And Homan was not a quick scholar. He was one of those boys who are obliged to give time and hard study for what they learn.

Towards the end of the year, we began to fear that he would not pass the examination and secure promotion with the rest of us. For this reason during the last week we tried to "cram" him in his studies, for we were eager to have him in our class the next year.

But Sam did not take kindly to the cramming process. I well remember what he said one morning when Plummer and I were drilling him in his neglected algebra.

"But if I haven't fairly got it, fellows I don't want promotion, and perhaps it wouldn't help me much if I passed." Something in the way he said this made me always remember his words.

He did not pass—much to our regret and a month or two afterwards he obtained a situation as fireman on the railroad that ran through our town. We used to go to the station to see him occasionally. In old, greasy, drilling overalls, with a smutted cap on his head, and with face and hands grimy with contact with the coal and oil of the locomotive, he did not look like the same boy that was with us at the High School. But he was, nevertheless, the same "solid" Sam; and we liked him as well as ever, if his hands were grimy. A boy's a boy for all that; and if he has honest stuff in him, a pair of white hands and a handsome suit of clothes do not make him truer or manlier in conduct or character.

It happened that Sam was promoted to the place of engineer, or engine-driver, sooner than is generally the case. I do not know that the promotion was on account of his merit entirely; but a vacancy occurred, and he was chosen to fill it after he had acted but a year and a half as fireman. The superintendent, no doubt, saw that he was a steady fellow, thorough in his work, and therefore to be trusted, although he was scarcely twenty years old at the time.

He now received three dollars a day, and sometimes more for extra running; and during the first year, he received the prize, given by that railway company to the engineer who ran his locomotive with the least expenditure, to the mile, of coal, oil, and money for repairs. This at least shows that Homan was a careful and intelligent driver.

But in railroading, there are always "chances," or risks, which must be encountered; so, at least, railroad men tell us. The most careful men on a road may meet with a mishap. Accidents certainly occur after a manner of seeming freakishness. For this reason it sometimes happens that a careful engineer may seem to be heedless, or at least, unlucky.

After Homan had been running his engine about a year, an accident occurred, caused, it was said, by negligence on his part. At the end of his usual trip, he was ordered one morning to take his engine back over the line to bring in a special train. His regular trip then occupied a part of the night, and he did not arrive at Polo, the terminus, until two o'clock in the morning. After a rest of only thirty minutes, he was, on this morning, started on his way back up the line with his locomotive.

An engine running alone on special service, is termed a "wild" engine; and by the running-rules of the railway on which Sam was employed, the engineer is obliged to report his arrival to the telegraph operators at certain stations along the line, and to get an order from them to proceed before starting out.

It had been a bleak winter night; and the two boys no doubt had a cold time of it. I call them boys, for, though holding men's positions, Sam was not yet twenty-one, and his fireman, Martin Fallon, was but nineteen. They stopped at Z station at six in the morning, in the midst of a thick snow-squall. Getting off the locomotive, half-frozen, Sam reported to the operator, and thought the man gave him a verbal order to proceed. This the operator subsequently declared he did not give him.

Jumping into his cab, Sam started the engine at once in the thick, blinding squall, and was soon running at a high rate of speed. When four miles out from the station they came suddenly in violent collision with a down-freight. So thick was the weather, that neither Sam nor the freight engineer saw the approaching engine until they were within a hundred yards of each other. Neither of them had much more than time to reverse his engine when the collision followed; Sam and his fireman jumped from the locomotive, and landing in a snow-bank, were not greatly injured.

The freight-engineer, however, had his leg broken; his fireman was instantly killed; and two brakemen were thrown to the ground, one of them killed and the other badly hurt. Both engines were wrecked—converted into masses of iron rubbish; and eight or nine freight-cars, loaded with corn, were more or less injured.

In the investigation that followed,
(Concluded on Fourth page.)