

When the writer first crossed the continent the railway was very much in the rough. Rails laid at the rate of seven, and, on one occasion, *ten* miles a day, can hardly be implicitly relied upon; much of the road was flimsily ballasted, and many of the bridges were temporary wooden structures of a shaky order. The train had sometimes to literally crawl along; passengers would often get off and walk some distance ahead, easily beating the locomotives, and be found seated on the boulders at the side of the road, having had time for a quarter of an hour's smoke. Mr. James Mortimer Murphy, in his "Rambles in North-Western America," gives some similar experiences on a still rougher line on which he travelled from Wallula, on the Columbia River, to a point in Washington Territory. The railroad was only fifteen miles long, and had wooden rails. Having secured an interview with the president, secretary, conductor, and brakeman of the road—represented by one and the same individual—he was booked as a passenger, and placed on some rough iron in an open truck, with instructions to cling to the sides, and be most careful not to stand on the floor if he cared anything about his limbs. The miserable little engine gave a grunt or two, several wheezy puffs, a cat-like scream, and finally got the train under weigh, proceeding at the headlong speed of two miles an hour, "rocking," says the narrator, "like a canoe in a cross sea. The gentleman who represented all the train officials did not get on the train, but told the engineer to go on, and he would overtake him in the course of an hour. Before I had proceeded half a mile I saw why I was not permitted to stand on the floor of the truck, for a piece of hoop-iron, which covered the wooden rails in some places, curled up into what is called a 'snake head,' and pushed through the wood with such force that it nearly stopped the train. After this was withdrawn the engine resumed its course, and at the end of seven hours hauled one weary passenger, with eyes made sore from the smoke, and coat and hat nearly burnt off by the sparks, into a station composed of a rude board shanty, through whose apertures the wind howled, having made the entire distance of fifteen miles in that time." The drivers of the passing "prairie schooners," as the waggons drawn by eight or more pairs of mules or oxen are called, occasionally challenged the president of the line to run a race with them in his old machine; but he scorned their offers, and kept quietly walking beside his train. This eccentric railway has since been superseded by one much more desirable, while in justice to the great line referred to, it must be said that it is now, and long has been, in admirable condition, and that it is crossed by numerous express, emigrant, and freight trains daily.

The Indians have never given the trans-continental railway companies much trouble since the completion of the lines. Early in its history a story is told, however, of the Chien or Dog Indians, from whom the town of Cheyenne takes its name. They had a strong prejudice against the iron horse with the fiery eyes, and determined to vanquish him. Some thirty of them mounted their ponies, and urging them up the line, valiantly charged a coming train. It is perhaps unnecessary to state that fragments of defunct red men were found shortly afterwards strewn about the road, and that the tribe has not since repeated the experiment. Perhaps better is the true story of the Piute Indians of Nevada, who tried to catch a train, and found that they had "caught a Tartar" instead. Annoyed by the snorting monster, they laid in ambush, and as it approached dexterously threw a lasso, such as is used for catching cattle, over the "smoke stack,"