

most eminent scientific men in England. These were the little knot of gentlemen mentioned in the last chapter. Many a gray-haired man among these, shook his head with grave misgivings; the colliers anticipated a great "lark" from the total failure of the whole concern—even Gilbert's eminent chief seemed nervous for the first time.

"Are you certain, Winter, that all those plates have been proved?"

"Not only the plates, Sir, but every rivet, even."

"Have you calculated what the deflection will be?"

"Yes, Sir, I have placed a guage where you see it, and marked it myself. When the train passes over, it will be exactly as I say."

"You, are confident, Winter," said the old man with a smile. He remembered the days when he, too, had been confident in the success of many much-abused inventions of his own. He was now a very old man. The details of his craft he was now, from increasing infirmity, compelled to leave to younger men, but few opinions were more regarded in the profession, than those which he expressed with his quaint, curt, Northumbrian "burr." It had been a wonder to all that he should ever have allowed his name to appear in connection with this mad scheme of a bridge. Friends had remonstrated in vain; the old man was firm. But another and unforeseen difficulty now showed itself. Every engine driver on the line, to a man, refused to risk his life by carrying the train across the new structure. Gilbert immediately declared that he would drive the test train himself. This was too much for one old Scotchman whom Gilbert had, more than once, befriended. He, at first, looked rather ashamed of himself, then gave a loud grunt and finally volunteered.

The exciting moment had now arrived. A train rather longer than the bridge, and composed of trucks heavily laden with pig-iron, was to cross it at a speed of thirty miles an hour—a pace never allowed on any of the other bridges. This train was now seen, in the distance, approaching. It was an anxious minute for all except the young engineer himself. All the spectators, engineers, committee, directors, navvies and colliers took up a position at a very respectable distance when—"the boldest held their breath for a time." But it was a very short time. The train dashed across it as a mere matter of course. The Black Country folk who, like all Englishmen, always prognosticate failure, but idolize success, burst into a ringing cheer, and then came a perfect rush of the scientific men to see if the bridge had sustained any damage. Gerald stood apart, smiling like a pleased orang-outang. Not a flaw could be discovered—not a bolt—not a rivet was displaced. "But I saw the bridge bend perceptibly, I am sure I did," said a crusty Director who was disgusted that the whole thing had not given way, as he always said it would. "Of course it did," said Gilbert "had it not bent, it would have broken." The young man was never very polished in his manners, and in his moment of triumph, might be excused a little sarcasm. He pointed to his guage, which indicated almost to a hair's breadth, the deflection which he had foretold.

And now the train returned slowly and similarly loaded, and stood still on the bridge in order to try the effect of dead weight. The result was the same as before. There came another ringing cheer, led this time by the Scotch engine driver. Then came Gilbert's hour of triumph. Those, who but a few minutes ago had saluted him coldly or cut him altogether, were now profuse in their felicitations. The Directors remembered the very small cost of the new bridge. This would tell most vigorously with the shareholders who had grumbled, considerably, of late about the cost of new works. Last of all, his venerable chief approached him and

shook him warmly by the hand. Gilbert now, for the first time, betrayed visible signs of emotion.

"You are thoughtful, Winter, and no wonder. My boy, had the bridge failed, you would have lost all your reputation almost before you had acquired one."

"I was not thinking of myself, sir; I was thinking rather of how I had placed your reputation in jeopardy."

The old man wiped his spectacles ferociously, and shook his pupil once more by the hand. This was all they did. Railway men are not addicted to many words; and they understood each other perfectly.

Noon was now past, and the Directors conceived that the event of the day ought to be celebrated in the usual English fashion—that is, by eating and drinking. But here followed a difficulty. Every one of them having believed that the bridge would have been a miserable failure, no preparation had been made to celebrate its success. Where could they have a champagne lunch? The want of this seemed to them almost as great a calamity as the failure of the bridge itself. Now, there was, in the neighboring village, a large straggling inn, dilapidated and moss-grown, with stabling enough to have accommodated a whole racing stud. This had been a celebrated hostelry in the days when railways were not. It was now dilapidated and miserable, though scrupulously clean. Engineers had found out, with the acuteness on such subjects which is peculiar to Engineers, that its cellars still contained some of that Port and Claret for which it had been renowned of yore.

Hither they wended their way, and ordered a cold collation. The stranger might now have observed that, as soon as the party had disappeared within the doors, a respectably-dressed lad of fifteen, with a most disreputable-looking bandage over his left eye, took up a position close to one of the bow-windows and listened with the greatest eagerness.

(To be continued.)

ORGANS.

An out-and-out Government newspaper is a spectacle for gods and men. It is truly refreshing to see how it treats any shortcoming, any blunder, any corruption—even any untoward accident,—that befalls its patrons, or their humblest agent. Its friends never do wrong—its enemies never do right. The first are super-immaculate,—the second the most depraved of mankind, without truth or honor, and with less principle than a Government hack editor! Lord! how it makes even angels laugh to observe the imperative, the furious strain in which it denies the existence of an incident that tells against those who feed it,—the minutest details of which it will furnish a little lower down in the column; and, again, a little farther on, it will proclaim that those who made the statement are scoundrels, and those who believe it fools. The wisdom of such a course may be doubtful—it is more than doubtful,—for the little worms who do this sort of work, generally sink the boat to which they attach themselves. DIOGENES has no hesitation in saying that language can supply nothing more emphatic than—"YOU LIE LIKE AN ORGAN!"

UNEXAMPLED CANDOUR.

A Father McMahan may do it, but there are not many others who have been in virtuous, though compulsory retirement, who can parade their prison or penitentiary experience.

There is a very queer sort of a chap up in Ottawa—an editor, who wrote a very wonderful article, with a very "transporting" sort of flavour in it, about a mansion in that locality, just to give the public an idea of his intimate acquaintance with Botany Bay, and to relate his experiences in Norfolk Island!