

"Caught on the Fly."

It is not a ball game we were playing that led to the selection of the title which, for want of something better, stands at the head of this little sketch, but what we caught as we were flying many miles by land and sea. I knew little of the sea, for the good ship Kingston slid through the yielding and peaceful waters of the "Sound" as it is on well-oiled keel. I cannot too highly commend the order of the Kingston, and the breakfast was enough to tempt an epicure.

At Tacoma we had a "kick" about ticket arrangements, but the trouble was of a most unavoidable character and the kindness of the "agent" at that point "covered a multitude of sins." It was most refreshing to be told that preachers were of the greatest value to the transportation companies. I take this opportunity of returning the compliment by bearing witness to the universal courtesy received from the agents and servants of the companies over whose lines I have travelled.

When we left Victoria the weather had turned warm and the flowers were in bloom, but at Tacoma we encountered ice and slush. For this, of course, I don't blame the good people of the latter city. I don't think people—unless they are very good—can hinder a little touch of frost, while other folks further north may be enjoying balmy spring time.

Portland seems to be a smart up-to-date Coast City. The last adjective is for accuracy, as a Coast City is not supposed to come strictly, and at all time, within the scope of the Ten Commandments. In Portland, for the first time, I found the works of Col. R. Ingersol on sale in what was supposed to be a respectable book store. I also saw, among the latest publications, a work intended to prove to women that the cause of most of their troubles was the Bible and the clergy. In heroic words the author called upon woman-kind to get free from such a condition. Marriage, with the author, was a sort of incubus. The book was well bound, and we suppose the author parts his hair in the middle. As we turned from the Pacific Ocean the night had come down, and out we glided towards the mountains which challenged the advancing train, but, like sin at the death of Christ, theirs was an empty boast; they had been long since conquered by the master hand and brain of the engineer.

How sweet to be able to sleep on the train as she glides away as smoothly as a lady's mare or gallops like a cavalry charger, or swing like a camel in the desert. On, on, through light and darkness—through storm and calm—through snow and billows of blossom—to sleep with no fear, while "Dangers stand thick thro' all the ground to push us to the tomb."

Is there any greater illustration of the supremacy of faith over fear? Yonder the black, begrimed "driver" stands with his eye upon the bright light which falls far ahead and rolls the darkness from the way, while the stoker, like some uncanny mortal bent upon some awful mission, feeds the roaring monster, whose throat sends forth flames and billows of smoke. But all the while a hundred men and women

sleep in the coaches in perfect peace. Oh, could we all but trust Christ as we trust the "driver," who, in this case becomes the "Captain of our Salvation."

"The morning light is breaking," and we have reached the other side of the mountain. We consult the time and find we are late by an hour. "Stuck in the snow!" Oh, flowers of Victoria, how we adore thee.

THE ANGEL OF THE MOUNTAINS.

Breakfast with Grandma Monroe, who is the Angel of the Blue Mountains and keeps the best eating-house from the Pacific to the Atlantic. Yes, you get, in quality and quantity, more for your money's worth than anywhere else. Grandma, as everybody calls her who travels on the Oregon Short Line, is a lovely old woman with fluffy hair, as white as the snow of her native mountains, and eyes as bright as the stars which shine among the far-away peaks, and cheeks still pink with the health and happiness she has ever enjoyed. The home of this delightful old lady is a structure of logs of Douglas fir peeled and fitted with the exactness of an artist. Colored servants are ready as waiters, and the tables groan with the latest delicacies of the season.

Now, "All aboard!" and in a few moments we have dropped down from the bosom to the lap of these ranges of the Blue Mountains of Oregon. Soon we have left the snow behind and the valley through which we pass is smooth and highly cultivated, affording relief to the eye of the traveller, after the desolation through which we have just passed.

"Have something to drink?" This was the polite and well-intentioned offer of a gentleman who took me for a drummer. But on a refusal in our blandest manner, he swallowed "another" from a quart bottle of "Ould Rye." Again the request came and again the refusal, but this time the bottle was left corked. In conversation with the above gentleman the following facts came to the surface: When he found out to whom he was offering his drink he apologized in excellent language, saying he "considered it a disgrace for a minister of the gospel to drink. He, too, had the honour of being a Methodist. He was not a drunkard, but through over-brain work had been advised to 'take a little,' and now for a week he had been on a 'big drunk,' and was trying to reach his home to sober up and have a rest." The conversation led to the sad fact that he had a wife and family of little children who, though kept in luxury in a country town, were nevertheless in sorrow and sometimes in terror at the conduct of the husband and father. But good news was in store for them, as he left me with the most positive promise that he would never "touch another drop of intoxicating drink." I have strong hope that he will keep his promise to God and the stranger preacher, whom he met on the train, by the fact that the bottle disappeared and was not seen again.

A SUNSET.

The sunset over the Blue Mountains is one of the sights of the road. The scenery of these Oregon regions cannot be compared with that which is to be found anywhere in British Colum-

bia, but as we were rushing into the arms of darkness the sunset over the distant peaks was a picture of quiet beauty not to be forgotten. The unpronounced light of the afternoon gathered into a most emphatic scene; the clouds of white became transparent and drifted along the peaks like flocks of snowy sheep wandering among upland pastures. The whiteness soon changed to a delicate pink with streaks of curdling amber shadings. Then farther away there appeared dark rifts which seemed like canyons leading away to far-off lands. But the "after glow" fell as an enchantment, for the clouds and mountains (snow-tipped) blended into one grand pageant of flaming banners, which appeared like the dazzling splendour of some Oriental monarch returning with victory and spoil. But a shriek of the whistle, a lurch of the train, spoiled the vision as we swung around a curve and plunged down into the depths of the valley and into the darkness, and scenes of the day became the dreams of the night.

J. C. SPEER.
Montgomery, Alabama, March, 1899.

MY PRAYER AND MY CONFESSION.

(By Rev. J. Calvert.)

Prayer—

Lead me, blessed Jesus,
Through this dark veil of tears,
Vanquish my enemies,
Annihilate my fears;
Fill me with Thy wisdom,
That I may ever be
Wise unto salvation,
Wise to follow Thee;
Ready e'er to follow
O'er mountain, moor and sea,
Bearing Paul-like witness
In sincerity.

Confession—

Sometimes my heart is wayward
And selfish, and inclined
To murmur and be fretful,
And tarry far behind,
'Tis then, O! Blessed Jesus,
Thy face I need to see,
That Peter-like and contrite
I may weep my way to Thee.

Trail, B.C.

WESLEYAN NAVAL MISSION.

Mr. Editor,—Personally I am much pleased with the idea of a Methodist newspaper for B.C., and can see no good reason why it should not succeed. There ought to be constituency enough and Methodism enough in this progressive Province to give it sufficient circulation and support. No one will want to give up the Guardian, our strong connexional organ, but Toronto is a long distance, and we need something more available for the discussion of local questions, and I trust the B.C. Methodist Recorder will prove to be "just the thing."

As far as my work is concerned, such a paper would be of material assistance to me, and I should be pleased to send items of news pretty regularly.

The principal topic of conversation amongst us for the past few days has been the departure for "dear old England" of the flagship of the station, I.M.S. Imperieuse. I wonder how my brethren in the ministry would feel if during the next week, say one-quarter to one-third of their congregation