

# The Tay Bridge Disaster.

## Some Vivid Reminiscences.

(Glasgow Weekly Herald.)

The terrific gales which raged over these islands, during Christmas week recall a storm of tragic memory that swept over Scotland on Sunday, 28th December, 1879, and caused the appalling Tay Bridge disaster. The breaking of the huge viaduct led to the Edinburgh train with its precious freight of 83 passengers being precipitated into the boiling waters of the Tay, with enormous loss of life. A gentleman well known in Glasgow, but who at the time of the disaster was residing in East Newport, supplies us with some vivid details of the calamity. He says:

I shall never forget that terrible day as long as I live. The gale increased in velocity from 25 miles per hour at three o'clock to 50 miles an hour at six o'clock, and at 7.10, when the train came to the bridge at Wormit, it had increased to 72 miles an hour. When the tickets were taken at St. Fort station the storm was at its height; and the roaring wind and pelting rain must have sent a shudder to the hearts of the passengers—some of whom had their doubts as to the wisdom of crossing the bridge on such a night and expressed their feelings with each other and to some of the officials. But they were told to proceed.

When the gale-buffed train approached the signal-box at the bridge end at Wormit at 7.10, Thomas Barclay, the signalman (who had been joined a few minutes before by one Watt, foreman surfaceman), got down with difficulty the signal stair to hand the baton to Marshall, the stoker on the train. Then it left promptly to time at 7.13. Struggling in the face of the gale it passed the signal-box, from which its progress was watched by the two men. All of a sudden, when it had reached the central girders, the lights disappeared. Finding their way down to the beach, the two men there, in a sudden gleam of moonlight, saw the broken arches, and the appalling calamity that had occurred became at once apparent to them. As no communication could be got from Wormit, Mr. Smith, the station-master at the Tay Bridge Station, and Mr. Roberts, the locomotive superintendent, virtually crawled along the bridge from the Dundee end until they came to the gap. When the storm abated after 10 o'clock they had got the ferry steamer (The Dundee) and with a number of gentlemen went up to the bridge—at great risk—but nothing could be seen. And none had been left to tell the tale. Mr. Gibb, the postmaster at Dundee, had got messages sent to him from Broughty Ferry that mail bags, and luggage of all kinds, with cushions and portions of carriages, etc., had been picked up on the beach there.

It will never be definitely known how many lost their lives. Fifty-six was the first list, and then 85. But I think there were only three persons in the train who came out of it after hearing the conversation on the St. Fort platform. The officials on the train were David M. Beath, guard; David Mitchell, driver; John Marshall, stoker; Donald Murray, mail guard. The train ran on the bottom of the 13 girder spans of 245 ft. each, and the whole of this portion fell—250 tons in itself. The bridge was 10, 612 ft. in length, or two miles and 52 ft. and was 130 feet from level of rails to high water mark.

### A Personal Experience.

While the gale was at its worst—the wind veering round from one quarter to another—we had to change from one room to another, and so were looking to the bridge (which we could see from our windows) just when the train was about due. The thirteen central spans were always lit up. We had only got our water supply conveyed by pipes laid across the bridge from Dundee a week before this, and one of my girls had gone to the kitchen to get a drink of water. When I heard a loud whistle I said to my wife there is surely something wrong with the water-pipe on the bridge, and, taking out my watch I found it was 15 minutes past seven o'clock. We had seen the train on the bridge, and all the lights going out, but just thought the wind was responsible. But, looking out next morning we saw only the stumps of the piers.

I was often on the bridge at the south end, but on Sunday, October 21, 1877, I, in company with two lady friends, walked over to Dundee, crossing two of the 245 ft. spans on a plank a foot wide, 130 ft. above the water. I shudder yet when I think of our daring in taking such a risk. In Gilliland Memorial Church, Dundee, on Sunday evening, December 28th, 1879, at the moment when the Tay Bridge fell, the Rev. David Macrae, by a curious coincidence, was preaching on the uncertainty of life and the frequency of sudden death and fatal accident as a reason for being ready on quick notice to leave this world, as well as to enter the next, and not leaving for tomorrow what should be done to-day.

Rumours of a fearful accident on the Tay met the people as they were dispersing. The Bridge had a remarkable career while it was being built, for on February 2, 1877, two of the largest and one smaller girder were blown down by a violent hurricane, and 50 men had a narrow escape. One man was drowned, and another got one of his legs broken. On June 22nd another girder fell, the chains giving way, but every one of the men escaped. It was visited on July 3rd by the Emperor of Brazil, on September 1st by General Grant, ex-President of U.S.A., and on September 28th by Prince Leopold.

## Key to European Peace is Spiritual.

DETROIT, Jan. 27.—Only the moral intervention of the United States can save "the decadent civilization of the old countries from utter ruin," Frank A. Vanderlip of New York declared in an address here.

The key to European peace, he said, was spiritual, rather than political or economic. He criticized the "inactivity of America" in the present crisis.

"My observations have given me a pessimistic view as to the future of Europe," said the speaker, who recently returned from abroad. "Those troubles are a state of the mind."

"Political and economic factors are involved, but politicians and economists cannot cure the conditions that have developed. Only a spiritual fellowship, an application of the Golden Rule, can prevent the absolute wreck threatening the civilization of Europe."

"Europe needs only a simple moral guidance for its salvation, and we, as a nation, should be giving it. The United States to-day is facing as momentous a decision as when we were debating our entry into the world war. But the debating now is on our part in peace, and we are lacking decision while the world waits for us. I believe we are weak morally, as a nation, and in the eyes of the world we are losing respect."

### From Cape Race.

Special to Evening Telegram

CAPE RACE, to-day.

Wind northwest, fresh, weather fine; ice moving off. The four masted schooner reported yesterday was still fast in ice at dark, drifting south. The steamer Cabot got clear off here and passed in at 9.50 a.m. Bar. 29.10; Ther. 12.

## Notes And News.

FROM BONAVISTA DISTRICT—A SERIES OF OPEN LETTERS TO FRED.

Dear Fred.—Although this is not meant to be an extensive political review, my promise of last week holds good. I wish you to note, however, that the impelling motive comes from your reference to Catholics and Protestants in this district. In this connection I might say that as far as the necessity of mixing one with the other in general business goes, I am heartily glad to be able to assure you, that the candle of ignorance has practically gone out. On common grounds, neither Catholics nor Protestants have any need, to-day, to school themselves into pretence and to confirm the general idea of unbridled genuine friendliness. Men meet as men, not as representatives of sects each with the idea burned into his brain that difference of religion is a poor subject for the general run of men who follow their own lights in a haphazard fashion. Still I am sorry to say—with decreasing consciousness, however—sectarianism still plays a part in politics. To a lesser degree there is still the unwarranted fear of results in the event of one sect having a political ascendancy over the other, therefore it would be useless for me to say that it does not influence the votes at the booth. In time, of course, this will die out, but the prolonging of this (above all others) disgusting evil will depend to a high degree upon the change of attitude on the part of unprincipled politicians. What you and I should do—what we must do, is to keep before us the fact that we are indeed pitiable specimens of humanity if we refuse to others the privileges we so loudly demand for ourselves. I can assure you the present political atmosphere is refreshing—of itself an infallible disinfectant for the present rotten state of affairs.

At last there is hope in the air! The United Fishermen's Movement is spreading. Our people have been many times accused of apathy. We ought to realize that our people are widely scattered and they therefore very often feel intuitively that our isolation is a natural check to movements that might be quickly organized in a large city. This, however, will not stop us this time. We are going to prove that apathy is largely circumstantial, not hereditary or natural. Taxation must come down, we say it, and we mean it. Why not consider cutting out one M.H.A. from every district of two and three representatives as a means to this end? In any case let us say: Well done Bonavista! First to err—first to repent.

Now Fred, one of us is mistaken! Is your Dick Jewett my Nick Hewlett? With the Editors permission I will tell you a story—then decide. Have you a picture of old Dick? I have—a mental one. Dick Hewlett was his ditto. I knew him for six months—forty, tall, and muscular. He made two trips to G— in a vessel of 30 tons. He wore a devilish look, had an evil smile which he displayed continually. Any injury he did your person, any dirty despicable trick he performed, any string of blood curdling oaths with constant threats to kill you was fun—unmitigated fun for Dick Hewlett. Thus by fear, the haunting fear that he would kill me if I opposed, he got me body and soul in his possession.

"Any salmon yet?" he said to me one blooming June morning. "A few sir," I answered. "Well you young get one and bring it on board the M—to-night or," said he, "this is your last day on earth." Prompted by boyish terror I assured him I would, though where or how I could get that salmon I certainly did not know. I racked my brain all day for a plan and in a way that I am ashamed to tell you of, now I succeeded, and just about dusk when the captain had gone ashore for the night I went on board with my bundle. Hewlett went right extatic. He hugged the salmon then he hugged me, bounded on deck and ashore.

There were some amusing incidents during the examination of suspected persons. "The Germans had been using spies people belonging to travelling circuses and shows, as being less likely to invite suspicion than the pseudo-commercial travellers, of whom we had taken a heavy toll. Consequently, a sharp look-out had been kept for pulled in the skirts and came back in a boat. That salmon soon met a change of temperature and came on the table done up nicely and five of us—which included a Mr. Willard, Hewlett's bunkmate, and two other boys from amongst Willard's relations on shore hauled in for a feed. During supper Hewlett was kindness itself. He assumed, I thought a very gentle attitude and I grew bold enough to have a joke with him which he took good naturedly. He finished eating at last and jumping up suddenly, he grabbed a short-handled axe. "Now," said he "you young—all of you vanish or the Devil will be picking your noses before daylight." By common instinct we rushed for the ladder. I happened to be the last to mount it and Hewlett made a hack at my legs. The blow missed me and as he swung back for another, under the pressure of terror I kicked him square in the face and scrambled on deck and jumped into the boat just as the other boys were about to push off. Hewlett popped up instantly and hauled several somersaults at me, amongst which was, I remember a ship's drawbuckle and an old shoe—presumably one of his own—but failed to strike either of us. A few days later the M— weighed anchor and I haven't seen Hewlett since. No, for goodness sake don't! Just think it over and remember, that the time when your influence for good or bad shall cease will be marked by the time when the full moon shines brightly from the Heavens shall refuse to cast your shadow on the pure snow—but not till then. Watch for quotation marks—originality or otherwise. Agriculture and education of the district in its turn.

Yours truly,  
J. T. BENSON.  
Bonavista Dist., Feb. 5th, 1923.

## "Queer People."

Sir Basil Thomson, late Assistant-Commissioner of Police and Director of the Special Branch at Scotland Yard, probably knew as many war and peace secrets as any man in this country. His book "Queer People," by Basil Thomson, Hodder and Stoughton, 21s.) contains the portraits of some of the German spies who were shot in the Tower. It was in Sir Basil's room at Scotland Yard that they learned the game was up. But it is the lighter side of the author's experiences in tracking spies and criminals that we prefer to dwell upon in this page.

### THE SPY MANIA.

Sir Basil had to investigate some extraordinary reports arising out of the spy mania that possessed this country and other countries during the war. Here is one amusing story: "On one occasion a very staid couple came down to denounce a waiter in one of the large hotels, and brought documentary evidence with them. It was a menu with a rough sketch plan in pencil made upon the back. They believed it to be a plan of Kensington Gardens with the Palace buildings roughly delineated by an oblong figure. They had seen the waiter in the act of drawing the plan at an unoccupied table. I sent for him and found before me a spruce little Swiss with his hair cut en brosse and a general air of extreme surprise. He gave me a frank account of all his movements, and then I produced the plan. He gazed at it a moment, and then burst out laughing. 'So that is where my plan went! Yes, monsieur, I made it, and then I lost it. You see, I am new to the hotel, and in order to satisfy the head waiter I made for myself privately a plan of the tables, and marked a cross against those I had to look after.'"

### THE BLUE MAN.

There were some amusing incidents during the examination of suspected persons. "The Germans had been using spies people belonging to travelling circuses and shows, as being less likely to invite suspicion than the pseudo-commercial travellers, of whom we had taken a heavy toll. Consequently, a sharp look-out had been kept for

## Well Known Story--AT THE NICKEL for the Week End Programme.

### "SCHOOL DAY LOVE."

(Comedy.)

With MARGUERITE SNOW, LOUIS BENNISON and SEENA OWEN, directed by LLOYD INGRAHAM.

MONDAY—DE LUXE SPECIAL ATTRACTION—NORMA TALMADGE in a tremendous social drama in 3 Big Acts "THE WONDERFUL THING."

### "LAVENDER — AND — OLD LACE."

From the great story by MYRTLE REED

### "The Hope Diamond Mystery."

(Serial Story.)

# SUGAR!

(On the "Silvia" to-day.)

GRANULATED in barge's, sacks and cartons.

BROWN in 1-lb. cartons and 100-lb. sax.

CUBES in 50-lb boxes, loose & "Crystal Dominoes"

## HARVEY & CO., Ltd.

### TOO MUDDY.

Sir Basil is reminded of a story of what happened at Shoburyness, when a live shell fell in the mud in the middle of a class of young gunners.

"Lie down, gentlemen," shouted the instructor, and no one moved. When the shell had been rendered harmless he asked why they had not obeyed orders; they might all have been blown to pieces. One of them faltered, "Well, sir, it was so muddy!"

### THE BOMB ADVERTISEMENT.

Writing about the outbreak of foreign anarchists in this country and of the anarchist who blew himself to pieces when attacking Greenwich Observatory, Sir Basil says:—

"Shortly afterwards one of the popular weekly newspapers offered a reward to the man who would suggest the most effective form of advertisement, and some bright spirit conceived the plan of sending the Home Secretary a bomb containing a copy of the newspaper in question. From the point of view of advertisement it achieved more than he had counted upon. The parcel containing the bomb was opened by the private secretary, who immediately summoned the Inspector of Explosives. When he entered the room he found the bomb lying on the hearth-rug before a bright fire, with an office chair standing over it, and a group of Home Office officials in a respectful semicircle round it. He asked what the chair was for. They explained that if the bomb went off they thought it would be some protection."

"When the bomb was opened and the newspaper was disclosed it was found that it was not an offence to scare the wits out of a Cabinet Minister. But the young gentleman had neglected one precaution: he had not removed from the bomb a percussion cap, and this was his undoing, for under the Postal Act it was unlawful to send explosives by post. When he appeared at the police court upon this heinous charge he had all the advertisement that he wanted."

### THE BOGUS DOCTOR.

One of the author's best stories is about a bogus doctor, whose only claim to medical knowledge was the possession of a stethoscope:—"His method was to select a little artisan's house in a quiet street in South London on a Sunday morning, ring the bell, and when the tenant opened the door ask for Mr. Smith."

### Artificial Gullet.

The Danish surgeon Professor Thorkild Rovsing has just disclosed details of an interesting operation he performed early in 1921. The patient was a woman of 34. Owing to trouble in the gullet it was impossible for food to pass to the stomach—in the natural way.

Professor Rovsing therefore made a double incision down the skin of the chest, and, raising the two edges of the skin lying between the two incisions, wrapped them around a temporary rubber tube in such a way that when the edges of the skin joined together they themselves formed a natural tube. The skin of the chest, beyond the two incisions was then stretched over the exposed parts.

Later the upper end of the natural skin tube was by a further operation attached to the gullet, and later the lower end was attached to the stomach, making a continuous channel for food chewed in the ordinary way in the mouth to pass inside through the gullet and thence outside the body, through the skin tube, and into the stomach. The complete operation took about six months.

The patient left the hospital in August 1921, and is now able to look after herself, her home duties, and her five children.—Exchange.

### Household Notes.

To candy sweet potatoes, cook medium-sized sweet potatoes, and then split. When tender, place in baking pan and sprinkle with brown sugar and lumps of butter. Brown in oven until a rich brown.

Tartar sauce is very easily made if one has a cup of mayonnaise already made. Add to the dressing three tablespoons finely chopped mixed pickles and a tablespoon of finely chopped parsley.

Few people know that there is such a thing as a banana sandwich; butter a slice of bread, cover with pulp of banana, sprinkle with brown sugar and dab with butter. Toast in the oven and serve with cream as a dessert.

The white pleated skirt of crepe will appear often during the summer, and suede jackets will be worn with the skirt.

### Valentine Greeting Cards.

Something new in Valentines. Very pretty design with appropriate greetings, priced from 8c. each—envelope with each card.

Also an attractive assortment of Fancy Lace Valentines at 5c., 10c., 15c., and 50c. each.

GARRETT BYRON  
Bookseller and Stationer



### THE BRAVE FIREMAN

can save lives and often your party, but the surest way to avoid a loss is to insure it in the Chester Fire Insurance Co. Table the Fire Insurance Co. Ltd. represented by us in this city. Call policy with us and avoid the worry. When fire comes your way, we are covered.

TESSIER'S  
INSURANCE AGENCY  
St. John's.  
m.w.t.f.



### The Maritime Dental Parlor

You duty to your teeth is to health and happiness. You cannot afford to neglect them any longer. You can afford to join our group, who make it easy for you to have the best of dental services. Call for information.

Painless Extraction . . . . . Full Upper or Lower Sets . . . . . and \$15.00. Crown and Bridge Work and all kinds of dental work at most reasonable rates.

M. S. POWER, D.D.S. (Graduate at Philadelphia Dental College, Garrettsville Hospital of Surgery, and Philadelphia General Hospital.) F. O. Box 1229. 176 WATER STREET. (Opp. N. Chaplin's)

If your hands perspire when chiseling, with talcum powder on hands and crochets hold.

### MUTT AND JEFF



### MY! OH MY! WHAT A RUDE SHOCK.

By Bud Fisher