

THE BRAKEMAN'S DEATH.

Night had set in with wind and rain, when the boy at the small hotel went to summon the doctor to the bedside of Jim Brachen—the brakeman who was hurt last week by the accident on the road, who had suddenly become worse—just as the people at the house were sitting down to supper. They were mostly railroad hands who stopped there, and all of them knew Jim, and were fond of him. It was a sad meal for them, because they felt it was the last they would eat in Jim's lifetime. His injuries were internal, and, though he had not suffered much, it was evident to them all, even if they had not been told so by the doctor, that their old companion was dying. He was a fine fellow, was Jim; young, handsome, and intelligent. Nobody about the place knew much of his history before he came among them, but it was said he was the son of a rich man in a distant city, that he had been disinherited and compelled to shift for himself, because he married against his father's wishes. Jim's wife died just after he had obtained a place on the railroad, about a year after their marriage, and the men remembered the young man's grief, and how despondent he was for a long time afterwards. Indeed, it was this that drew many of their hearts to him, and from that time all of them loved Jim. They couldn't help it; for, as Roberts, the conductor of the train on which Jim ran, said at the table that night, as he abstractedly tapped his plate with his knife: 'He was the kindest, gentlest, and most accommodating fellow that ever was.' Then the conductor related how Jim once paid the fare of an old woman who had her pocket picked on the train; and how at the risk of his life he saved a child from being run over by a train which was approaching with lightning speed on the track the little one attempted to cross to reach his mother. These incidents in the life of the sick man recalled others to the minds of several of his fellow-brakemen, and they told them to the men present, who scarcely tasted a mouthful of the food set before them.

'They couldn't eat,' one of them, a tall engineer, said, 'for thinking of their old comrade.' When the doctor came they all quietly went up-stairs with him, and waited outside the door of Branchen's room in silence, scarcely daring to breathe for fear of disturbing Jim, till they were told they could enter. By the doctor's orders all persons except the nurse had been excluded from the room for the past few days, and when the men passed in it was plain to them that their friend had been failing fast since last they saw him. His cheeks were sunken and paler, and his eye had an unnatural brightness and an expression that told but too truly that his mind was wandering. He did not recognize them when they came in—he seemed scarcely to hear them, so quietly they stepped; but in a few minutes he asked:

'Doctor, are these the boys around me?' When he was told they were, he smiled and tried to turn his head to see them better by the dim lamplight. The nurse helped him over on his side, and he murmured his thanks, and asked them all to come nearer to the bedside, and he put out his hand for them to grasp.

'Boys,' he said, as the first one tenderly, almost reverently, took the thin outstretched hand, 'I am going to leave you. I have felt, ever since I was hurt, I could not recover, and I have prepared myself to go. But I hate to leave you, boys; you are the only friends I have had since I came among you. You have been very kind to me, all of you, and I love you for it. I was in need of kindness when I came here, for I felt as though there was nothing left in the world for me to live for. I had been disinherited by my father for marrying without his consent; and though my wife—you knew her, boys, before she died—was as good as any woman in the world, she was not good enough for my proud father, and he never forgave me for what I had done. When I left my home, and struggled along in the world for myself—I, who had never done a stroke of work before—I knew what friendship and sympathy meant. I found both among you. Do you wonder that I love you for it? And so I felt that I could not die easy without seeing you all. Now, boys, one at a time. Shake hands, and say good-bye, and then I shall die happy.'

He released the hand he had been tightly holding, and the others came up and with tears in their eyes bade him farewell. Then he talked of his old home, his parents and his school-days; and then he re-enacted the last scene with his father, when he left his home forever. There was not a dry eye in the room. Even the doctor and the nurse, both used

to death-bed scenes, wept with the rest. Presently he asked if one of the men would go for a clergyman; he would like to have one there when he died, he said. None of them had thought of Jim—good, kind Jim—needing a preacher at his bedside; but a messenger was immediately despatched to the rectory, a short distance away, and in a few minutes the clergyman entered the room. Jim was glad to see him. He took the preacher's hand, and held it in his while he said:

'I have not been inside a church for years, but when I was a boy I attended regularly with my father and mother. I want you to read to me, if you please, from the prayer-book that part of the burial service, which is in 'David Copperfield.' It occurs in the chapter which tells of David's mother's funeral. Read it to me, quick, please; for I feel I am going fast.'

The clergyman opened his book and read: 'I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.'

He ceased reading; the hand which he still held in his own gave a slight, convulsive grasp, a smile overspread Jim's face, and death had freed the spirit from the dying body to let it wing its flight to the realms in which it 'shall never die.'

THE SON OF A GAMBOLIER.

Act I.—He boarded a schooner at Buffalo, and offered to work his passage to Bay City, on condition that he did not have to go aloft. 'Aye, aye, my hearty,' said the captain.

II.—The weather was pleasant and work was light, so the men gathered in the fore-castle and played cards, and the son of a gambolier showed them how to 'throw monte.' At eight bells he was the only capitalist on board. '—our — to — — —,' said the jolly tars.

III.—A storm arose. The captain bade the jolly tars rig a deck pump through the centre-board box, and called upon the son of a gambolier to work that pump until it 'sucked,' as the schooner had sprung a leak and their lives were in danger. 'Shiver my lay-outs!' said the son of a gambolier, and he began to pump the lake up.

IV.—'Land, ho!' exclaimed the lookout, as the good ship made Detroit on her weather-stern. 'Captain,' said the son of a gambolier, 'lemme go ashore here.' 'Avas, ye land lubber,' cried the aged mariner; 'you shipped for Bay City, and to Bay City you'll go. To the pumps!'

V.—When they got to Bay City, they took back all the money the son of a gambolier had won from them, and kicked him ashore. 'Blast my advantage cards!' exclaimed the son of a gambolier.

A young husband and wife from an interior county stopped at the Weddell House in Cleveland, one night recently, and were assigned a room on the first floor—from the skylights. About 1 o'clock the young man made his advent in the office with a small water pitcher in his hand, and glancing inquiringly around, stepped to the front door and looked out into the gloom. He then retraced his steps and started for the ladies entrance. A bell boy, whose curiosity had arisen, followed in pursuit and overhauled the solemn visaged guest on Superior street. Turning quickly, he said: 'Bub, where's your well? Strikes me things are mighty unhandy about this tavern.' The boy found the 'well' and then initiated the visitor into the mysteries of the electric bell.

The conductor of a certain train on the Union Pacific Railroad charges that a fly having alighted on the glasses of the engineer's spectacles, the engineer thought it was a buffalo on the track and turned on the air brake to avert a disaster. The engineer retorts that one night the conductor saw what he thought was the headlight of an approaching locomotive. He kept his own train waiting awhile, and then, somewhat confusedly, started her. He is the safest man I ever ran with, said the engineer. 'Venus is millions of miles away, and yet he waited twelve minutes on a siding to allow her to pass.'

'How it does remind me of my courting days!' exclaimed Mrs. Goodington, remarking the blush that the delicately turned compliment of Araminta's young man had brought to the girl's cheek. 'In those halliard days, when I was young and perceptible, how frustrated I used to feel when Daniel paid me a compliment, as he always was a-doing! Yes,' she continued, stopping to brush off the tear that trembled at the tip of her attenuated nose—'yes, Daniel was one of a thousand. And he never changed during all our years of patrimony.'

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HENRY GAUL'S LUCK.

Some people don't believe in luck. We do. Right in our town there was born a man who had the awfulest, most terrible, soul-appalling luck that ever came to mortal man.

His name was Henry Gaul; and, to begin with, he was born with one eye; the other he wore shut all of his life, and his left foot set on backward, so that when he came around the corner the boys used to make bets as to which way he was walking.

When he was three years old he swallowed an iron poker, and the doctor was not able to get it all out. About six inches stuck in his throat, and gave him a voice like a rooster not yet introduced into society.

And when he tried to sing—well, folks have been known to get killed in their mad rush to get out of the door.

When he was five years of age he went out into the street one cold winter's day. People was skating when he went out, but before he got home the weather changed, the thermometer took a flying leap to one hundred and one, and Henry Gaul came home sunstruck. That was a sample of his luck.

He got over that and went to school. The first day he was there the school burned down, and he broke his arm climbing out of the chimney. He broke it into two pieces, lost one of the pieces coming home, and henceforth his right arm was six inches shorter than his left.

At the age of ten, while out in the woods, he met a rattlesnake. It was the first and last rattlesnake ever seen in our section of the country; but of course Henry Gaul met it, and it went half a mile out of its way to bite him. They did not think that he would live, but he did; only his ear, where the snake had jumped up and bit him, resembled half a ham ever afterwards.

By and by his father died and left him considerable money.

Half of it he put in a steamboat. The day after he bought it it blew up, and no insurance. That man was Harry Gaul, and he was knocked senseless by a piece of the boiler, as he stood on the bank watching the boat go by.

After he recovered, he put the rest of his money in a stone-quarry in Illinois. One night a land slide came along, and Harry found that if he wanted his quarry he would have to dig down about six miles after it.

Then he got married, and the next day after the event his wife ran off with a circus-rider, and took Henry's clothes along with her.

He felt so bad that he tried to shoot himself.

But he had his usual luck. His hand trembled, the bullet missed his head, and killed a man across the way, and Harry was locked up for murder.

However, he was acquitted; but inside of an hour after his acquittal, he fell down in front of a locomotive, and lost all of his toes.

Completely discouraged, he went to the Black Hills.

He staked out a claim, worked it for three months, and didn't scrape up enough gold to buy a tooth-pick with. He sold it out for an old hat and a tin dipper, and the man who purchased it had not worked it over an hour before they found a nugget of gold worth fifty thousand dollars. More of his luck.

Henry then joined the army, and went to fight Indians.

There was only one soldier scalped during the whole campaign, and that was Henry Gaul. And he was scalped twice.

Soon after he deserted and reached Omaha. There he went into a gambling saloon, broke the bank, won twelve thousand dollars, and got knocked over with a sand-club before he got home and robbed of all his gains, and ten cents in addition.

The sand-club had smashed his teeth, and thereafter Harry had to chew with his gums.

At Omaha he engaged with a circus and went East.

With the circus there chanced to be a phenomenally mild-tempered elephant, who could be swayed by a child.

But at St. Louis that elephant, for the only occasion in his life, went on a jamboree, and danced the Caledonia upon one of the circus men. Henry Gaul was the name of the gentleman who was used as a dancing platform; it cost him three ribs and a lung. Still he lived.

By and by he drifted back home. Folks felt sorry for him, and they elected him State Senator. The very first session of the legislature a bill was passed wiping Henry's senate district out and consolidating it with the next.

With his last dollar he bought a lottery ticket, but got tired of waiting for the drawing, and sold it for fifty cents. When the lottery did draw, Harry found that

his ticket was good for the capital prize—thirty thousand dollars.

Completely heart-broken, he started out to drown himself.

But his luck still pursued him, even in death.

Before he reached the river he got run over by a hearse, and finally killed. If his history is not an example of the fact that there is ill-luck in this world, I don't know what is.

SLIPS OF THE PEN.

Head dress for a gossip—A false-hood. Woodmen are always supposed to be first-rate fellers.

It's a sure sign of love when a woman uses her husband's tooth-brush.

A full hand is what a Nevada father calls his six unmarried daughters.

Signs of spring—ulsters are rapidly accumulating on pawn-brokers' shelves.

Some folks are so mean that they sweat to save the cost of taking a bath.

Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth is at least a woman of letters in one sense.

When a shoemaker 'breathes his last' he may be said to be stone dead.

Galloping consumption—A cavalryman chewing hardtack on a charge.

An emaciated archer, although modest, is yet an arrow-gaunt fellow.

A Minneapolis man has had his left leg cut off or broken to pieces eight times. He wears it wooden.

A New York youth's wardrobe is generally on the scale of twelve neck-ties to one pair of socks.

Louisville, Kentucky, girls carry seven-dollar pocket-books with about three cents in them.

Straw-colored paper, pale, violet ink, sixty-seven verses on "summer," will soon make ye editor's heart jump with delight.

A monument to Adam is talked of at Elmira, N. Y. A good inscription would be 'A—No. 1.'

Cincinnati should not be ashamed of the nick-name 'Porkopolis.' That makes her the meat-ropolis of the country.

What military order would be most likely to quell the workmen's strife? Why, pay-raid rest!

They are going to erect a monument to a man at Syracuse. He could sit down in an easy chair for an hour without knocking down and getting on top of a tidy.

Women never know what it is to get all ready for a Sunday morning shave and then find that Bobby has been using the razor to sharpen slate-pencils with.

A Clyde, Ohio, man has been married eight times, and he has got so many children that, when they come to see him, one half of them have to sleep out of doors.

No more romance nowadays. A man named Lopez, who married an heiress by the romantic experiment of bribing a maid-servant, and carrying off the lady by force, got six months in the penitentiary.

The first question the State examiners put to a supposed insane person is whether he eats sugar on his tomatoes. An affirmative reply settles the case, sure.

Boarding-house hash is said to be like Faith, because it is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things unseen.

An Elmira, New York, girl has found out that, when you rub a hair-brush slowly over your lip, it feels just like a moustache. And now hair-brushes command a fabulous price in Elmira.

An ordinary man will loaf around an office two hours, spend half a dollar in drinks and cigars, and tell six stories, all for a chance to steal a three-cent postage stamp to put on a letter that he's got in his pocket.

What makes men kill is getting their faces all out by an inexperienced barber, and then have him rub bay-rum in the sore places.

Shad time now, and only boarding-house keepers know how to make three square inches of shad do for sixteen board-ers.

Newark girls will stand for hours on the sidewalk waiting for a car, and won't take one till they see a good-looking conductor bossing the bell-punch.

There's a brother in Zanesville, Ohio, who actually took his sister out three nights in succession. And now his folks have got him in bed, with ice on his head, and are fearful that he isn't quite right.

Nothing like living in a brown-stone front, even if you have to scrape the whitewash off the parlor wall to make soup with.

'What is love?' asks Chaucer. We won't charge anything for letting you know, old man. Love is what makes a young fellow, who gets three dollars a week, spend four of it buying collars.