

ENGINEER'S STORY OF A BANK NOTE.

BY MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON.

"When the first day of March came, I went as I had been instructed, to head-quarters, for my orders, only to find that the 'old man' had forgotten all about me, and had promoted a fireman to the identical situation that had been promised to me. I shouldn't like to say in mother's presence that I was mad, for she would repeat that little verse about letting the 'angry passions rise,' but I did feel a righteous indignation, and gave that man a piece of my mind. But it didn't make the least impression upon him. He was about starting on a trip, on the line of the Union Pacific, with a party on a hunting expedition, and couldn't be troubled with my small affairs; would pay no heed to the matter of expense I had been subjected to while waiting for his orders; wouldn't give me a pass to Chicago, nor lend me a dollar, although I asked him for that more to bother him than for any other reason, he was so disagreeable. Happily there are but few such railroad officials. "Well, I went back to my hotel as down-hearted and homesick a boy as you could care to see. It was eight o'clock Monday morning. I paid my bill, and had five cents left. I had not much appetite, and hadn't much appetite; so, taking my travelling bag, I left for the station: On my way there I bought two apples with my five cents, and put them in my pocket with a queer consciousness that they were all that stood between me and starvation. "I took the first train for Chicago via Peoria, Illinois. There was no trouble about my fare, for I had my papers proving me to be a railroad man. "Arriving at Peoria, I inquired for a former chum of mine who had been a telegraph operator there the last I knew of him. "He left for the east a month ago," said the station agent. I turned on my heel, too disappointed to speak a word, and jumped aboard a train which stood waiting. It two minutes I was steaming toward Chicago by the way of Joliet. "I felt pretty blue I can tell you. I wasn't brought up to beg, and there wasn't much of a show to borrow, and, under the circumstances, borrowing would look very much like begging. "On and on we went, all day and all night. You may well believe that I thought of this old New England town and the little cottage at home, its pantry, and mother and the girls, and of little Tommy here—how full his stomach probably was of bread and milk. "As it grew toward morning, I said with prayerful uncton, and with a pervading sense of the real meaning of the words, 'Give us this day our daily bread;' for I hadn't had a mouthful to eat, excepting those apples, since Sunday night. "John paused a moment to recover his voice, which he had, somehow, lost just here. Aunt Mary took of her glasses and wiped them on the corner of her black silk apron, while little Tom left his place at the table, and softly coming round, leaned on his brother's shoulder. John went on:—"We drew up in the Chicago depot in the gray March morning, and I picked up my carpet-bag and stumbled out of the car, faint and heavy-hearted, not acquainted with a soul in the city, and without any definite aim, or any idea of what was to become of me. "I happened to glance down on the depot platform as I jumped from the car steps, my eye falling upon what I supposed to be a wad of refuse paper. I impulsively stooped and picked it up, and, going along under a gas jet that was still left burning in the early morning, I soon found that the muddy little ball, which many feet had stepped upon, was a green bank! There was no use in looking for any owner in that rushing, crowding mass of people, and somehow I felt as if the money had come straight from heaven in answer to my prayer. I had never had a doubt since, and never shall have again, that God cares momentarily for even the smallest of His creatures. "I shut my hand tight upon the bank note, and made a dash for the nearest eating-house, where, very hurriedly, and, no doubt, in rather an im-

perious manner, I ordered the waiter to bring me ham and eggs, brown bread and coffee. "After the waiter brought the meal to my table, and I began to eat, I felt there was one truly thankful heart in that restaurant that morning. "I hadn't looked at the note long enough to ascertain its denomination until I walked up to the check-counter to pay for my breakfast, when, carelessly taking it from my fob pocket where I had tucked it, and smoothing it out, I found it to be a twenty-dollar green-back, as true as I sit here! Wasn't I rich?" and John brushed the tears from his eyes with the rest of us, and choked up, and swallowed two or three times before he proceeded. "As I went out upon the street again with my carpet-bag still in my hand, I met some men whom I took to be railroad hands, entering the eating-house, talking quite loudly about an engineer whose name caught my ear, it being familiar to me. "A good-hearted but reckless sort of chap," said one, "who takes pride in getting the officers of the road into his cab when the train is behind time, and scaring them with his fast running." "Where is Jim Mathews now?" I asked, stepping up to the man as he paused a moment in his story. "Up in Wisconsin," he replied very pleasantly; "he drives the fast express from Madison to La Crosse." "I ran back to the depot again, and, as luck would have it, a train for Madison would start in fifteen minutes. I got aboard, and was soon on my way. "I had no difficulty in finding my old acquaintance—Jim Mathews—in Madison. There was no vacancy on the road where he was at work, but he sent me to Winona, Minnesota, where I found a job, and went to work March fourth. "As we were all exclaiming over the mysterious ways of Providence, other neighbors came in, enlarging the circle around our cheery fire. The general conversation turned, after a while, upon travelling, losing baggage, small articles, etc. "The only time that I ever lost anything, when travelling," said Mrs. Hutchings, "was a year ago last spring when I came home from Chicago. I started east on the early morning train, and just before I stepped from the depot platform, where we had been standing a moment hurriedly exchanging our final messages to our friends, to my car, my brother William handed me a bank note. "I don't want it," I said, "I have money enough for my journey, and that is as much as I care to have about me." "But he insisted that I might need it; so I took the note and tucked it in my glove, as I supposed, between the glove and my hand, as I have a trick of doing with my change when I am shopping. I frequently come home with my glove so stuffed out with scrip that my hand looks deformed. "I didn't think of the note again until the train was miles away, when, having finished reading the morning paper, and being about to settle myself into a comfortable

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