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EDITORS.

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A TRAGEDY IN A TUNNEL.

The night express was making its customary pause at Grantham station while the engines were changed for the next long run, 100 miles to York.

It was not a crowded train as I easily perceived when I alighted with the rest to stretch my legs. Most of the passengers had turned out, too, and we lounged about, staring at each other without keen interest until time was up and the sharp cries of "Take your seats," "Now for the North," sent us back to our carriages.

I had a compartment to myself, and I regained it without paying particular attention to those nearest me, save in the vague, unconscious fashion that would hardly serve for later recognition.

One man I noticed in the next carriage—he and I alone were traveling "first," at any rate, in that part of the train—but do not think I should have known him again but for his traveling cap with the lappets tied under his chin and his loose ulster with a cape—distinct facts in his appearance, although they made very little impression on me at the time.

Then another matter claimed my notice. There were sudden cries, "Now, sir, now! If you're going on, look sharp, sir, please." I saw a man, a laggard, hurrying down the platform, puffing breathlessly in evident distress, as though the pace was too great for him.

He made straight for where I sat, but stopped one compartment short of mine, and as the train was already moving they hustled him in neck and crop; the signal was given, "Right," the whistle sounded, the engine driver blew a response, and we steamed ahead full speed.

I felt rather concerned about this neighbor and late arrival. His white face, his staring eyeballs and hanging tongue told of great physical exhaustion, and I fancied that I heard a groan as he tumbled into his carriage. Evidently he had run it very close—had come upon the platform at the very last moment, and had all but missed his train. He had only just joined it, of that I felt sure, for I had not observed him on our departure from King's Cross nor here at Grantham. Why had he been so anxious to save his passage and such peril to himself? For he was ill—I made sure he was ill—so sure that I threw down my window and leaning out, shouted to the next compartment, asking if anything was wrong.

No answer came, or it was lost in the rattle and turmoil of the express. Once again I called, having no certainty that I could be heard, but certain at last I heard no reply. Why should I worry further? The next compartment was not empty, that I knew. If the new comer was really ill and wanted help he could get it from his traveling companion, the man in the loose ulster and cap tied under his chin, whom I believed to be in the carriage with him. So I dismissed the matter from my mind and sank back among the cushions of my seat to rest and be satisfied.

I must have dozed off, but only for a minute or two as I thought, and I seemed to be still asleep and dreaming when again I heard a groan in the next carriage. It was a perfectly vivid and distinct impression, as half waking dreams so often are. I could not at the moment say whether what followed was reality or a figment also of my drowsy brain. What I heard I have said was a groan fraught with keen anguish; what I saw was quite as clear but still more extraordinary and unaccountable.

The train had slowed down and was almost at a standstill. We were in a tunnel; the lamps in the carriages threw a strong light upon the brick walls and reflected all that was going on in the compartment next mine (none of the others had any occupant).

But in this the adjoining compartment two figures stood out plainly—men's figures, and one held the other closely in his arms. More than this I could not make out. I saw it clearly although but a brief space only, a few seconds of time, for now the train moved on rapidly with increasing speed, and we ran out of the tunnel. The reflected scene of course disappeared at once as completely as though wiped off a slate.

There was trouble next door, of what nature it was impossible to guess, but I felt that it must be ascertained forthwith. If it was a case of serious illness then the one hale man would surely ring the alarm bell and seek assistance for the other; if it was foul play he would make no sign and it then became my bounden duty to interpose without delay.

These thoughts flashed quickly through my mind, and it seemed an age while I waited to resolve my doubts. Probably no more than a few seconds elapsed be-

fore I put my hand to the signal and stopped the train. I was first to get out and hardly waiting the stoppage I clambered along the footboard and stood upon it, looking into the carriage.

No one was to be seen within. "Quick, quick!" I cried to the guard when he came up. "In here. Something has happened. There is a man sick; I fear he has fainted. He wasn't alone, but I cannot see the other man."

Now the carriage door was opened and disclosed a body lying recumbent, inert, in a strangely stiff, haphazard fashion on the floor. The guard stooped down, waving his lantern over the white, drawn face and moving the body gently on one side.

"All up with him, I expect. Run, somebody, along the train and see if there's a doctor aboard. And you, sir, what do you know of this?"

I described what I had heard or thought I had heard and seen, including the glimpse reflected in the tunnel.

"You must have been dreaming or you're inventing," was the guard's rather abrupt comment. "Couldn't have seen anything like that—'tain't possible. And how comes it you know such a lot about it? You tell us, too there was another man in the carriage—what's become of him? A fine story?"

"Would I have given the alarm if I was implicated in any way?" I answered hotly. "Don't be a fool guard."

The guard would have answered me rudely, no doubt, but at that moment a doctor appeared upon the scene.

"The man is dead—beyond all question dead," he said at the very first glance.

"And the cause of death?" I asked eagerly, while the guard frowned at me as though I were making myself too busy. "Are there any marks of foul play?"

"None visible," replied the doctor, after a brief examination. "I should say it was heart, but I cannot be certain 'ill I have looked further."

"Which you can do somewhere else better than here," interposed the guard. "We've lost too much time already. I must push on to York and report there. This is too big a job for me."

"You had better go back to Grantham," I protested. "It's quite close—not half a dozen miles."

"I don't want you to teach me my duty, and I'm not going. I've got first of all to keep up time. Why should I go back?"

"To identify the dead man—he got in at Grantham—and to give information as to the other man who got out."

"Oh, bosh!" cried the guard. "There was no man—no one but yourself, and you've got to come along with me, and— that's"—he pointed to the corpse—"on to York."

"I certainly shall not go on with the train. I shall go back to Grantham alone. There is no time to be lost. The other man—"

I thought the guard would have struck me. He was obviously ready to lay violent hands on me, and he repeated that he meant to take me on to York, if necessary, by force.

"You've no authority. You're not a police officer, and I am, or as good, for I am a government official. Here is my card. Let there be an end of this. I think you are wrong in going on, but at any rate I shall walk back to Grantham by the line. Be so good as to look after my things in the next compartment," and with that I alighted and left the guard rather crestfallen.

Within a few minutes, walking rapidly, I re-entered the tunnel which had been the scene of the strange incident, and in less than half an hour I reached the station. It was dimly lighted, for the next express train, the 12.06 "up," was nearly due, and there were several officials upon the platform.

I went up to one, an inspector, and briefly told him what had happened.

"Dear, dear! Of course. I remember. That was Mr. Erasmus Bateman. He belongs here—a rich man, greatly respected; has the big stores in High street. He was in a hurry to catch that train, for he was going down to-night for the timber auction at Hull tomorrow. He buys a lot for his furniture factory—that is, he did, I suppose I ought to say. Poor Mr. Bateman. He was heavy, overfat for his age, and he ought not to have run so fast."

"Would he be likely to have much money on him?" I asked.

"Why, yes, likely enough. He was his own buyer, and he always bought for cash."

Here was a motive for foul play. I saw the disappearance of this second passenger explained. Bateman had died suddenly almost in the other man's arms.

It evilly disposed it would be but the matter of a moment for the latter to get possession of purse and pocket-book and all valuables—everything, in fact—and make off, leaving the carriage at once, even at the risk of his life.

It was a pretty, a plausible theory enough, and I put it before the inspector with the whole of the facts.

"I'm inclined to agree with you, sir, always supposing there was any such man," he replied. "Your tunnel story is a big mouthful to swallow."

"There he goes," I whispered, clutching at the inspector's arm and pointing to the tails of a check ulster disappearing into the booking office. "He must not see me; he might recognize me as having been in the north express. But

go—sharp's the word. Find out where he's booking to and take a ticket for me to the same place. Here are a couple of sovereigns. You'll find me in the waiting room."

He came to me there, bringing a ticket for King's Cross, the other man's destination.

"Traveling up, no doubt, by the 12.06 midnight express, due in London at 2.40. Mark you now, inspector, I want you to telegraph to Scotland Yard and ask them to have a detective on the arrival platform to watch for our gentleman in check ulster and flap cape and stop him. "Mention my name; tell the officer to look out for me, and we'll arrange further together."

An electric bell sounded in the signal box and the inspector cried: "Here she comes! You wait, sir, till the last, I'll mark the ulster down to his carriage and I'll put you the next door. You must be on the lookout at Petersborough and Finsbury Park. He might get off at one of those stations."

"No fear," I said, as I got into the carriage with a parting injunction to the inspector that he had better telegraph also to York, giving the deceased's name, and inform his relatives in Grantham.

My man in the ulster did not move on the way to town. I was continually on the lookout, alert and wakeful, watching in every tunnel we passed through for some corroboration of my former experience. In the flying train probably at this time of night every one but myself was sound asleep. The lights were certainly reflected onto the brick walls, but no action or incident. Nevertheless I was now quite convinced that I had made no mistake as to what I had seen.

I was close behind the check ulster directly its wearer alighted. So was my friend Mountstuart, the detective, to whom, as he ranged alongside, I whispered.

"Take him straight to the nearest station. I will charge him there with robbery from the person. Mind he does not sling (throw away) any stuff."

Except for my caution I believe he would have got rid of a fat, bulky pocket-book, but Mountstuart caught him in the act and took it from his hand. He began to bluster, shouting "What does this mean? How dare you interfere with me? Who are you?"

"You will hear soon enough," said Mountstuart, quietly. "In with you, we are going to Portland road."

I never saw a man so dumbfounded.

He was a dark-eyed, lantern-jawed, cadaverous looking, and he was shivering, no doubt with the sudden shock of his unexpected arrest. He gave his name at the station as Gregory Carstairs, a commercial traveler, and it came out that he had had business dealings with Mr. Bateman. The temptation had been irresistible when he held the dead man in his arms to search and despoil him. He thought it was quite safe; no one could know of his presence in the carriage, and the sudden death would be attributed to natural causes.

His possession of the stolen property was enough to secure his conviction for theft, the only charge pressed, for death had really been from heart failure. My evidence as to what I had seen was heard in court, and heard with mixed feeling in which incredulity predominated. The judge and some others were sufficiently interested, however, to put my statement to the test by actual experiment on the Underground Railway, and the fact of the telltale reflection was triumphantly proved.

The next time I met the guard of that night express he was very crestfallen and admitted that he had made an ass of himself.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

Coal tea without soap is good to remove stains from varnished wood.

One of the newest colonial papers is in yellow in divisions which give a panned effect that lends a dignified air to a room.

A mingling of clove and lemon flavors in the afternoon tea is delightful. Drop a whole clove into each cup just before serving.

A heavy broom should always be selected in preference to a light one for thorough sweeping, as the weight aids in the process.

A scant teaspoonful of granulated sugar put in the water in which green corn is to be boiled will add considerably to its flavor.

Dip jelly tumblers in boiling water and fill them while still scalding hot. This prevents the glasses from cracking and aids the jellifying process.

Oxalic acid will remove ink stains from books. It should first be diluted and then applied with a soft brush and then blotting paper used on the spot.

All sorts of cooking utensils are to be had in nickel, and the saucepan of various sizes. Nickelware, however, costs a little more than some other varieties.

Every few days the coffee pot should be thoroughly cleaned by rubbing salt on the inside. This will remove the coffee and egg that adhere to the pot. This should be well rinsed after the salt is used.

Oil marks on wall paper may be removed by applying paste made of pipe clay and cold water. Leave it on all night and brush it off in the morning. It is possible that a second application may be necessary.

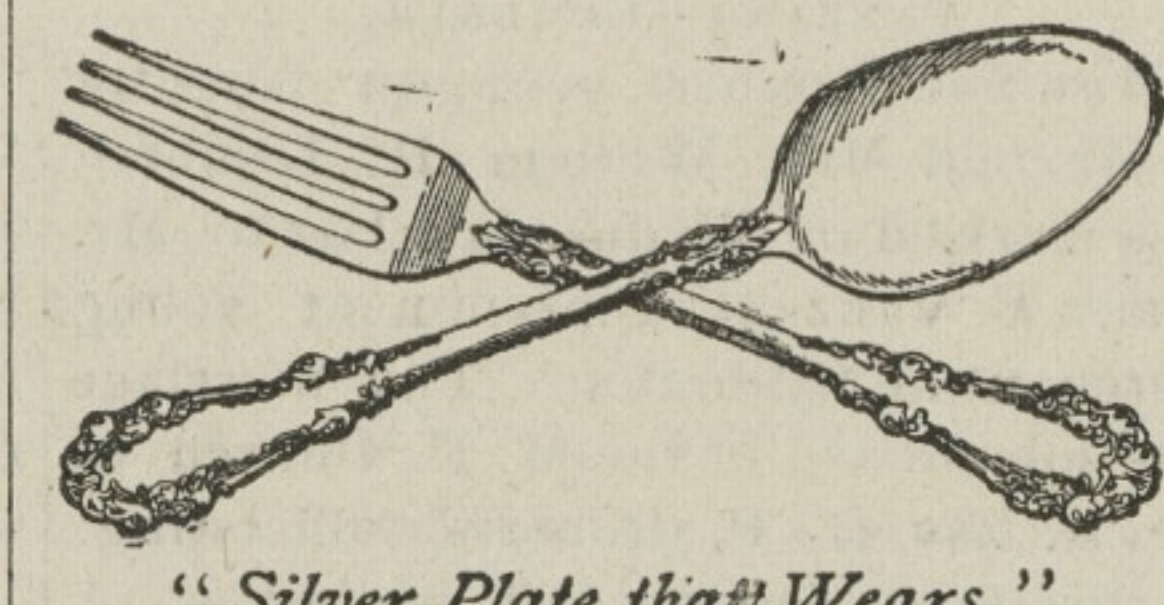
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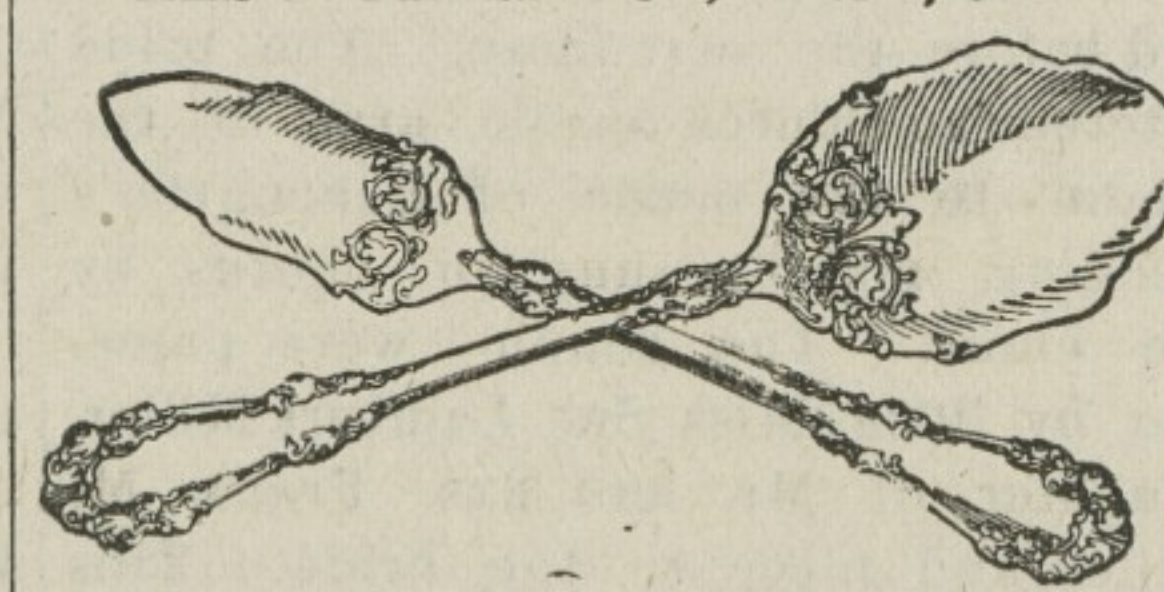


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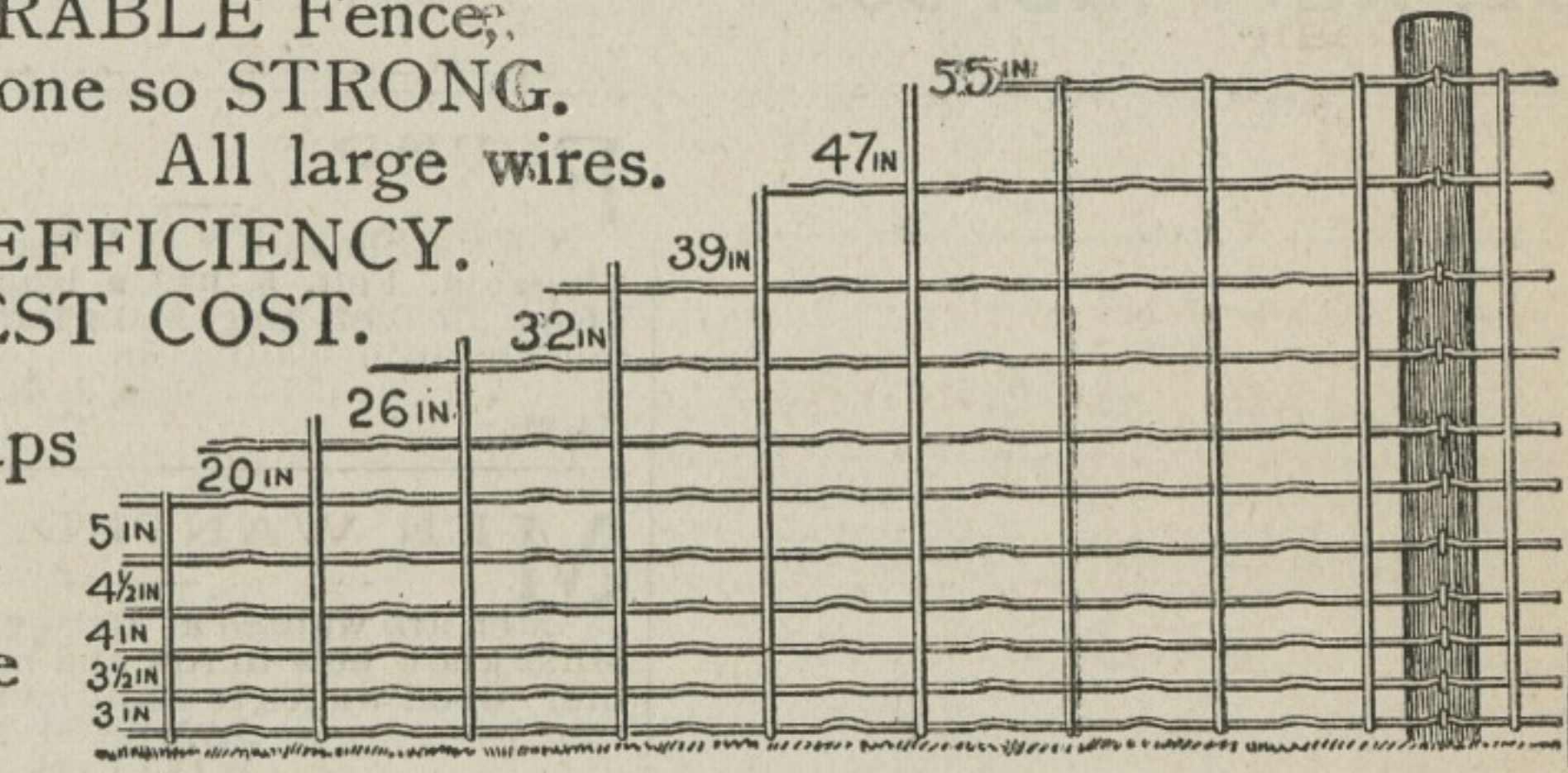
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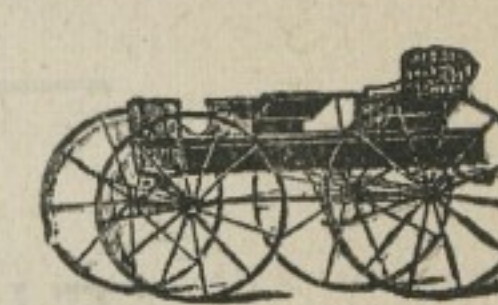
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