

THE EVENING NEWS.

Tuesday, April 4, 1871.

[From Chamber's Journal.]

THE EXPRESS TICKET.

One of the pleasantest journeys I ever took was made a short time back, in company with a total stranger, but who proved one of the most chatty, most communicative persons I ever met with although his code of morals was undoubtedly rather lax. We got in at the London terminus, and as he almost at once asked me where I was going, we found we were both bound for the same large city. I fumbled about, trying to find a little flushed; he had plenty of excellent cards, and was very liberal with them; and we had ridden a half a dozen miles, he produced a pack of cards and asked me to play. I declined; and he said with a smile: "Afraid of strangers with cards?" Well, you are quite right; but we shall do no harm to each other.

I hastened to assure him that I was under no suspicion as regarded himself, but that I did not care for cards.

"There you are to blame," he returned, "you should always suspect strangers what want you to play at cards? Why should it not carry a pack to play with if he did not intend to profit by their use?" Take my advice and always be on your guard."

"But that," said I, with a smile, "by your own rule, you would lead me to suspect you."

"You wouldn't be far wrong if you did," he replied, with a very meaningful nod: "I only wished to play for a cup of coffee at the refreshment station, but I have played in railway carriages for very great stakes—and won them. However I am all right-to-night, and don't want to win anybody's money. I cleared eight hundred over the Ledger and that will last me some time."

I congratulated him on his good fortune, and said I wished I had been as lucky.

"It shouldn't do you more good than it will me, you needn't mind," he returned, "light come, light go; but still it is better to have a few hundred in your pocket, than to be without a penny to pay your fare, as I have been on this very railway."

"Indeed?" I ejaculated, as he made a pause here; "that must have been awkward!"

"A'kw'ard! I believe you," he said. "But there's a man with his head screwed on the right way, need never be at a loss, in a rich country like this. I had not a penny—at any rate I didn't have the tenth part of the required fare—with me; I was bound to keep an engagement, a long way down the line, and I had not a friend that would give me a sixpence, and hence I turned myself, one evening, a quarter of an hour before the train started. Something like a fix, eh?—What should you have done?"

"Well," I replied, "I hardly know. If I had a watch—"

"But I hadn't," he interrupted, "nor anything else that would bring two pound seven, the price of a ticket. A first class ticket, of course. I mean; I had it up, and, under the circumstances, it was just as feasible as any other."

"Then, perhaps, I should have gone to the station master or superintendent," I said, "and told him all about it; and if that wouldn't do, I must have stopped in London."

"Then it wouldn't have done, you may swear," he replied, "station masters or superintendents are not so soft as that. Well, now, I will tell you all about it; and it may be of use to you some day, and what is possible to be done in such a fix."

I nodded my thanks, and he began.

"I need not tell you how I came to be placed—speculative men are not in such a position as to get out of it sometimes, however, and I did this time. When I arrived at the station, there was the train, with the engine waiting a little way off, blazing and hissing away; some of the passengers had already taken their seats, but most of them were walking up and down, or having a parting glass with their friends, and looking at the board, which now I carried the shabbiness of them all for he who ever he was, had got his ticket and I could not get mine. If the train had gone right through, I would have taken my seat, and changed dropping out just before they stopped; but I knew they examined tickets half way, so that would not do. If the journey had been by the same engine, I would have lain at the back of the tender, on the coke, as I did once, to a place nearly a hundred miles down the line; but I knew they changed engines, so this again wouldn't do. I saw one person on the platform whom I recognized, but as he was a clergyman—a dean in fact—who was always preaching against us racing men, and had actually persuaded the train not to put their name on it. I knew he was of no use. Yet I couldn't keep away from him; he had a sort of fascination for me. I may call it a sort of presentation that he was to help me out of my trouble. Well, the bustle increased; you know how busy the station gets just before an express starts. The engine came back and hooked on; the porters were about with their barrels of luggage, the passengers in the platform-cars and buggies, and clustered around the doors of the carriages; the dean got into a compartment by himself, and there was I walking up and down in the dark part of the platform, and only five minutes left.

I paused for a moment before a little room where I saw the guards go in and out, and wondered whether the man would let me ride with him if I told him of a friend that I knew—I really did not know of it—for the Cambridgehire, when, all at once, a splendid idea struck me. It was the very thing! The door of the little room was half open, so that I could see that no one was there, and several coats and caps, belonging to the guards, were hanging on the walls. I glanced down the platform, and my railway agent seemed up to his eyes in business, so I went in looking that way. I popped into the room in an instant—had put on a coat and cap, which fitted me beautifully—and was out again in a few seconds. There was no time for reflection, nor did I need any, my mind was already made up, so, pushing past the people with the air of a regular guard, born and bred, I put my coat on, and, clutching the coat collar, said: "Ticket, if you please?" The old gentleman was reading a book, and looking around, pushed his spectacles a little higher on his nose, and, explaining: "Dear me! I had quite forgotten," he handed out his ticket, which I very coolly pocketed, and was moving away when the old gentleman said: "This is a present, to take the ticket at starting, isn't it?"

"To sir," I answered, touching my cap, "only been in the forces this month, sir."

"Oh," he said, and began reading his book again.

To be continued.

MINING

TIMBER

10 x 10

10 x 12

12 x 12

12 x 14

FROM

TEN TO THIRTY

FEET

LENGTHS,

AT

Truckee & Salt Lake

LUMBER YARD.

D.

SHADY CREEK SPRINGS

W.

SHADY CREEK SPRINGS

W.