

THE DESERET WEEKLY.

DESERET NEWS PUBLISHING
COMPANY, LESSEES.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

Per Year, of Fifty-two Numbers, \$2.50
Per Volume, of Twenty-six Numbers, 1.50
IN ADVANCE.

Saturday . . . September 23, 1893.

IS "REVERSING" A SNARE?

In the September number of *McClure's Magazine*, Mr. Archibald Buchanan, one of the oldest and most experienced engineers of the Hudson River railroad service, replies as follows to the question what he would do if it were his cab he saw that a collision was inevitable:

What I would not do is to reverse my engine, although many engineers are liable to lose their heads at a critical moment and make that mistake. It is a curious thing that reversing your engine when going at high speed makes the train go faster instead of slower. The reason is that the drivers slip and the locomotive shoots ahead as if she were on skates.

Only a few days ago, immediately following the terrible fatality on the Long Island railroad, a New York Sun reporter gave the following incident which singularly verifies the above assertion of Mr. Buchanan:

Engineer Conrigo discovered the train ahead of him and opened wide the brake valve, at the same time throwing over the reversing lever. The brakes of the cars clutched the wheels and held them fast, while the wheels slid over the tracks as though they were greased. The reversed driving wheels of the locomotive whizzed around, but they did not stick. With every wheel sliding, the train shot forward like a sled on a frozen millpond. To the engineer and fireman, and to the one or two passengers on the Manhattan train who saw it, and lived to tell what happened, it seemed that, rather than diminishing, the speed increased. But almost before there was time to think the crash came.

People who ride much on the cars without necessarily knowing a great deal about the operation of a locomotive, are so accustomed to hearing that the engineer "reverses his engine" in a moment of peril that the foregoing will come to them as a surprise little short of astounding. It opens up quite a field for thought and inquiry, and it would be interesting to know if the experience in the wreck alluded to, as well as the calm forecast of what the effect would be, as given in the first quotation, is verified in the experience of other engineers. If "reversing her" has the immediate effect of increasing instead of retarding the speed of the train rushing to destruction, the practice has been probably abandoned and the reporters will at once want a new term to describe the engineer's attempt to avert the catastrophe. What shall this term be? And since the matter is always of interest, will not some of our Utah engineers, of whom both in active service and on the retired list we have some of the best in the land, tell the News readers what they would do if from their cab window they saw that a collision was inevitable?

NANSEN IN THE ICE.

The London *Times* yesterday published a letter from Dr. Nansen, the Norwegian explorer. It is dated aboard the ship *Fram* at Ubarabona, Yugorsk strait, August 2, and it is thought to be the last letter written by him before he is enclosed by the ice in the Arctic regions. Hence more expresses the hope that the ice will carry him across the north pole.

Nansen's vessel, the *Fram*, is a curiosity in itself. It is built of Italian oak, American elm, Norwegian pine and German oak, and the protecting armor, the so-called "ice skin," is of green hearts of oak. Her length is 118 feet 2 inches, her beam 36 feet 1 inch and her displacement 800 tons. The daring explorer has constructed a theory of his own, which he is about to put to a practical test. It will be remembered that the American *Jeannette* was caught in the ice north of the Bering sea in September 1879 and drifted to the north of the New Siberian islands, the ice carrying it at a rate of about eight miles daily. Nansen thinks that the polar currents originate here, as fragments of the *Jeannette* were ultimately found on the northwest coast of Greenland, having probably passed the pole in the voyage. He says the only correct way is to drift with these currents instead of navigating against them, and he is prepared to devote five years to this hazardous experiment.

The explorer lives a few miles from Christiansia, where he leaves a young wife and an infant child to wait for his return. He is still a young man determined to contribute his share towards the solution of some problems in physical geography, meteorology and other branches of science. For any mercantile purposes his voyage must be considered without value.

A GROWING DISTRICT.

Toward the end of this month, unless the unexpected should happen, an event will occur in Beaver county which is expected to diffuse the ruddy glow of a coming golden dawn upon that part of the Territory, perhaps upon all of it. We have heard and read desultory accounts of the discovery and working of gold mines a few miles north of Beaver city, in a chain of hills whose base is washed by a beautiful stream known as Indian creek; so many such discoveries have been claimed and announced at various times that the people of Utah have become pretty well seasoned to them and thus the Indian creek finds were "sifted" at this end of the line—that is, they were received with due allowance not unmixed with incredulity. Nothing short of actual demonstrations can secure general recognition now, and these are promised not only for the date named but steadily thereafter with increased volume.

A stamp mill and battery have been in operation about a week on one of the mine's product of ore, and after a twenty days' run a "clean-up" will be made; that is, the amalgam formed by the particles of gold settling in quicksilver will be segregated through evaporation—heat will drive the latter

metal away in vapor and leave the other behind. The company will then know not only what they have got but what they may reasonably expect hereafter. If the showing is sufficiently encouraging it is proposed to have a sort of celebration at Beaver, and in truth we believe such an event entitled to a meek kind of special recognition because of the possibilities which it fore-shadows for a part of our Territory which has been most unreasonably retarded and, along with Bingham and other gold producers, showing what our department of the public domain is capable of when enterprise stimulated by prospective rewards and sustained by labor properly applied enters upon the scene.

The new mine, however, great as is the promise for immediate prosperity which they hold out, are not the only transformation agencies at work in that region by any means. From the town of Mineville as far north as the eye can reach is a rolling valley which, but for an oasis here and there, would seem to be a barren desert, and a few years ago not even these reliefs appeared upon the dreary landscape. As water could be obtained and utilized the soil was shown to be as rich for the general purpose of agriculture as any in the Territory, meaning, with but rare and peculiar exceptions, that it is equal to any on the exterior of this planet. Realizing this, a company was formed a few years ago having in view the reclamation of a few thousand of these acres and in this end a huge reservoir, of which the News has spoken several times, was begun and prosecuted to a successful completion. Already are a number of families making homes there and more are going. This year there was produced on what shortly before was a barren waste some 25,000 bushels of grain, more than enough to supply the whole county with bread-stuffs for one year! This is the kind of enterprise that makes communities independent; and when to it is added a goodly output of the precious metals whereby the surplus may be moved and activity prevail in a general way, the nucleus of a new inland empire is already well developed.

Of course it is not practicable to establish reservoirs in all portions of our presently uncultivated but cultivable soil, for the reason that there is no available flowing water with which to fill them. But in many such places there could be established systems of drive-wells, or artesian wells on a small scale, by means of which all the water that is needed could be obtained. It is well worth a trial anyway, especially by those who are in moderate circumstances and would not be altogether broken up if success did not attend their labors for a while. Those who produce something out of nothing are surely benefactors to this extent even if they never do anything more; and those who add to the agricultural area of the land they inhabit are more nearly statesmen in the true meaning of the term than are many of those whose chief claim to that distinction is graduation in the more or less questionable school of politics.

We cannot have too much grain, nor, after that, any too much gold. Also we feel moved to say, judging by the shadow of apparently imminent