

PROGRESS SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1895.

HIS EXCELLENCY ANGRY.

VICE ADMIRAL ERSKINE GETS A LAWYER'S LETTER.

The Funny Mistake of a Halifax Barrister Causes a Commotion—General Montgomery Moore Comes to the Rescue, Explains Matters and Pays Damages.

HALIFAX, Oct. 24.—A ludicrous mistake was made the other day by C. D. McDonald, one of the leading lawyers of this city. He mistook Vice-Admiral Erskine for some other man, or rather, it was another man who was mistaken for the vice-admiral. A client of McDonald & Jones was in a wagon standing at the side of the street when a carriage came up, driven by a coachman. The coachman's passengers were the Hon. Captain Colbourne and another, who, it transpires, was General Montgomery-Moore. Mr. McDonald and his client were shocked at the barbarous way in which the aristocratic coachman ran down the poor plebeian. Mr. McDonald knew Captain Colbourne well enough, and he thought he was aware of the bland and open features of Vice-Admiral Erskine. The crowd that gathered round echoed the words: "That's the admiral." A day or two elapsed and then the postman carried to the admiralty house a document, which was nothing less imposing than "a lawyer's letter." Often has "a lawyer's letter" brought dismay to the heart of the recipient. But Vice-Admiral Erskine was not terrified. He was angered, it disturbed his equanimity, so he says, to think that a lawyer should send "a lawyer's letter" to him, the commander of the North-American and West Indian squadron, especially when he was faultless of the charge. The vice-admiral says it was with feelings of indignation that he received the document and he determined a suitable revenge. The lawyer was to be made to suffer for his temerity. As a first step Vice-Admiral Erskine wrote to McDonald and Jones denying that his coachman had run down the citizen's team as had been alleged; administering a severe rebuke to the hapless lawyer and threatening to expose his conduct in the public press.

Mr. McDonald replied as if he was not afraid of the vice-admiral. He went so far as to half express a doubt whether or not the commander-in-chief of the North-American squadron was telling the whole truth, taking care, of course, to state that if he was varying from the path of veracity it was because he was under a misapprehension of the facts. The lawyer seemed of the strong opinion that his excellency was mistaken, and that his coachman had driven him over the poor citizen, whose damages were stated to amount to \$12. No admiral could stand such a second imputation as that. So his excellency's secretary was called in and a letter was penned which was intended to extinguish the senior member of the legal firm of McDonald & Jones. Scathingly his excellency dressed the lawyer down for having dared to write him such a letter without first having consulted him about the truth of the charges alleged, and hurling back some very severe language at the man who would seem to have laid doubt on the vice-admiral's first denial.

Lawyer McDonald, at last convinced, now lost no time in admitting his sorrow that some other man had been mistaken for Vice-Admiral Erskine, and regretting that his excellency had been put to any trouble in the matter.

As soon as General Montgomery-Moore heard of the tilt between the lawyer and the admiral, and of the undisputed presence of Captain Colbourne in the smash-up, the general realized that it must have been his own coachman who had got so many distinguished people in a mess. On looking back he realized that it must have been himself who was seated with Captain Colbourne on that eventful afternoon, and not "the ruler of the seas." The general did not need a lawyer's letter to bring him into the arena. When he heard of Vice-Admiral Erskine's experience he promptly sent down, offering to pay the damages. All he wanted to be sure of was that the smash-up had caused the loss of the \$12 as alleged. There was not much difficulty in satisfying the general that he was not being cheated and the client was made happy.

About a Major and a Horse.

The disinclination of some people to have anything to do with the law, even in a good cause, was made apparent the other day in the case of Major Waldron, an officer who for some time has been in this garrison. Major Waldron was driving on the St. Margaret's Bay road, where he saw Charles Oakley terribly illuse a horse. Oakley had over-driven and beaten the horse shamefully, and left him at the roadside to die. The Major with commendable promptitude reported the case to John Naylor of the S. P. C. Before the case came up for trial a message was sent to Major Waldron asking him to come to court on a certain day and give his evidence against Oakley, which

was necessary to receive. The major thought he must draw the line somewhere so drew it at coming to the court house, and he sent a message back to the S. P. C. that he was going fishing and could not think of spoiling his day's outing by appearing against Oakley. The case might have been lost on account of this refusal, but the prisoner knew nothing of it and he pleaded "guilty," thinking there was no use aggravating the court by making a hopeless fight. Accordingly a conviction was entered up, and Oakley went out of the court house, if not a more humane man, certainly a poorer one, to the extent of \$15. There is no society more deserving of popular support than the S. P. C. It does a good work in the face of much opposition in certain quarters, but backed up by the best elements in the community. President Mackintosh enters heart and soul into its work, and what is more, he puts money and time into it. In John Naylor the society has an excellent executive officer, who does his work conscientiously and well.

Was an Honest Referee.

The appointment of a referee for last Saturday's football match between the Wanderers and Dalhousie brought out a strange state of feeling. W. D. Robertson, who is the best referee who ever gave a decision in Halifax, is an ardent member of the Wanderers club and a good football player. Dalhousie was so well satisfied with his work that they were strongly in favor of him for referee. Captain Grierson and some of the Wanderers players were also willing to accept Mr. Robertson, and the strange fact is that any should have hesitated regarding him. But it seems that Mr. Robertson's reputation for scrupulous honesty was so great that some of the Wanderers feared to have him act, dreading that in his desire to do right, Mr. Robertson might, it a very fine point came up for decision in his desire to be strictly impartial give the team from the opposing club the benefit of the doubt, rather than lay him self open to a possible charge of giving his own team the benefit of the doubt. So on those grounds the discussion stood: Dalhousians for Robertson the Wanderer, and many Wanderers against him. Failing Mr. Robertson, the students nominee would have John A. MacKinnon, a college player of a couple of years ago. Finally Mr. Robertson was unanimously agreed upon, and a marked success he made of his delicate duties. Both sides praised him. Dalhousie met her first defeat in three years at the hands of the Wanderers.

ENGLISH SCHOOL FLOGGING.

Masters Who Took Apparent Pleasure in Punishing the Boys.

Keate, of Eton school, England, was a noted flogger, says a recent writer. On one occasion when a confirmation service was to be held in the school, each master was requested to make out and send in a list of the candidates in his form. One of them wrote down the names on the first piece of paper which came to hand, and which happened unluckily to be one of the slips, of well-known style and shape, used as flogging bills, and sent up regularly with the names of delinquents for execution. The list was put into Keate's hands without explanation. He sent for the boys in the regular courses, and in spite of all protestations on their part, pointed to the master's signature in the fatal bill and flogged them all there and then. Another day a culprit who was due for punishment could nowhere be found, and the Doctor was kept waiting on the scene of action for some time in a state of considerable exasperation. In an evil moment for himself a namesake of the defaulter passed the door. He was seized at once by Keate's order and brought to the back as a vicarious sacrifice—a second Sir Mungo Malagrowth. Etonians who were flogged by Dr Keate narrated their experience on the flogging block with a pride which savored of the heroic. They boasted of their master's prowess with admiration and spoke of the number of boys Keate could finish off in workmanlike style in twenty minutes. Rapid as the performance was, there was as much ceremony observed in the operation as possible. The Doctor was always most courteous both before and after his exercise, in which he was assisted usually by two colleagues, who held the companion on the block.

At Winchester School in England the rod had a wooden handle about two and a half feet long with four grooves at one end, into which were inserted four apple twigs; these branched off from the handle at first at so great an angle that only one could touch the skin satisfactorily. This arrangement was soon iterated by the masters and one of the juniors who was delegated to manufacture these switches was forced to twist them so as to form a stick; an arrangement of great disadvantage to the floggee. All of these English methods were well known in American schools in the early part of the century. Prior to 1880 the most common punishments in recent times were rapping on the knuckles with a ruler, shaking or burning as it was called, ear pulling, and bumping of heads. Another punishment much in vogue until late years was forcing a boy to lean over and hold his head under a table.

RAPID RACES TO FIRES.

A DEPARTMENT THAT TRAVELS A MILE A MINUTE.

It is on a California Railway and Goes to a Good Many Boxes—It Runs at a Rate that Would Astonish Chief Kerr—How Snowsheds Are Protected.

There is here in California a Fire Department the existence of which is almost if not wholly unknown to 90 per cent. of the people, and this department protects property extending over a distance of forty miles and costing a million and a half of dollars. The property referred to is familiar to every one who has taken a daylight trip over the Central Pacific Railroad as it runs from the land of sunshine into the land of snowbrush.

Owing to the heavy snowfall in the Sierra Nevada the railroad has been compelled to protect its track from winter blockades by building a series of sheds to cover it. These extend continuously from the little telegraph station of Blue Canyon to Truckee, on the eastern slope of the mountains, a distance of forty miles. In the winter the snow protects these sheds from all danger from fire, but when summer comes the wind and sun soon melts the covering of snow and rapidly dry the timbers, until by July 1 the lumber in the sheds is as dry as powder.

As soon as this condition is brought about a spark from a passing engine or a forest fire, or a match lit by a malicious tramp may do untold damage, not only costing thousands of dollars for repairs, but blocking the road with debris so that all trains are stopped for days at a time. Several years ago the railroad company reduced the danger of fires being set by tramps by issuing orders to trainmen to let these gentry of the road ride through the sheds whenever they boarded a freight train, and under no consideration to put them off until the sheds were safely passed. So this danger has been to a great extent removed, but others threaten which do not offer so easily a remedy. In spite of spark fenders on the stacks of locomotives, sparks will rise, and there seems to be no way to keep the city camper from breaking camp and leaving his fire burning behind him.

When from these or any other causes a fire does start in the sheds, immediate action is imperative. Built as they are, they form a sort of funnel through which the air rushes with great force, and this draught is increased when a fire starts. The result is that the structure is consumed with tremendous rapidity, and stories are told of instances where a man could not run fast enough to keep ahead of the roaring flames. Then woe to him if the fire is behind him and he does not succeed in finding an opening through which he can crawl to the outer world.

All of these dangers have been reduced to a minimum. The necessities of the occasion demanded a remedy, and this has been found in a system of fire alarms, patrols, and fire trains that probably surpass anything of the kind in the world; situated at distances of a mile apart throughout the entire length of shed-guarded track are placed unlocked electrical call boxes similar to those in use in the cities. On the face of these are inscribed the words "East—West—rock on track—shed down—train wreck—car off—slide—fire." Besides these there are thirty-four fire-alarm boxes, which are kept locked. These are used exclusively for fire. When an alarm is rung in on one of these a gong strikes the number of the box in Sacramento, 100 miles away, and on the different points where the fire trains are situated.

The forty miles of sheds are constantly patrolled by men selected for that purpose. Each man's beat is less than three miles long, and it is so arranged that he passes over it a short time in advance of every train. The most important of all, however, are the duties performed by the fire trains, of which there are three. These trains consist of an engine and tender and two flat cars, upon which are mounted immense boilers filled with water. These boilers are decked over to afford room for the crew when at work on a fire. The regular crew consists of three men—the engineer, fireman, and brakeman. But when an alarm is rung out this is enhanced by picking up the nearest section gang. Of these fire trains one is stationed at Blue Canyon, another at Summit, and a third at Truckee.

Whenever a patrolman discovers a fire in a shed he hurries to the nearest box and turns in the alarm. Instantly the number is sounded on a huge gong in Sacramento and at fire-train stations. The crew of the fire train nearest the point of danger spring to their places and await orders from Sacramento. At the latter place the train dispatcher seizes his key and sends his orders along the road to sidetrack all trains. A few minutes pass and the word comes flying over the wire that the last train is out of the way. The dispatcher then strikes the key "Track clear; box 28; go." The engineer seizes the throttle, the



are remarkable for their chic. The skirts hang just right and never become limp nor sag in the seams, and the set of the sleeves is perfect. It is also much in vogue for lining flaring capes, the fashionable sailor collar, reverses etc., and no matter how closely gowns are packed for travelling they keep their shape beautifully if lined with the light and uncrushable Sponge Crépon. White, slate and FAST black.

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fire train moves out on the main track, starts for the scene where it is to do battle.

The nerves of every man in the crew are strung to the highest tension, for these men well understand that they are about to make a run at the rate of sixty miles an hour, down the side of the mountain and around the curves so abrupt that it seems almost impossible that the engine can stick to the rails. As the train gathers headway the engineer begins an incessant blowing of the big chime whistle with which the engine is mounted, and whose sound is familiar to every railroad man in the mountains. At the first sound of this whistle every one within hearing springs from the track and hugs the side of the shed, for he knows that there is no time for hesitation, and that in a few moments the train will bound past him like a cannon ball.

In 1877, J. A. Fillmore, general superintendent of the Southern Pacific, had occasion to reprimand "Johnny" Fitzgerald of the Summit fire train, who is the old fire train engineer in the service, for not running fast enough. A few weeks later Mr. Fillmore happened to be at the Summit when an alarm was rung in from Emigrant Gap, twenty-two miles away. He thought he would like to make the run, and so he boarded the engine. "Johnny" saw his opportunity and determined to make the most of it. As soon as the words "clear track" were received, "Johnny" pulled out, and throwing the throttle wide open, let her go. In less time than it takes to tell it, the train was running a mile a minute. Open places in the sheds a hundred yards in extent seemed little more than flashes of light, and the Cascade bridges were crossed with such speed that the train seemed to leap them, as a greyhound does a fence. Mr. Fillmore sat perfectly still, except that once or twice he asked the engineer to test his air. In twenty-three minutes they had made the run of twenty-two miles, and when "Johnny" turned a look at the superintendent, expecting to get a ripping up the back, Mr. Fillmore said cheerily, "That's the way to go to a fire."

The march of progress is so rapid that it may not be many years before fire trains and crews are a thing of the past and old railroad men will tell their younger brethren of the mad speed with which "Johnny" Fitzgerald and his comrades used to tear down the mountain side in answer to the fire alarm. Already the railroad is talking of putting fireplugs and hose reels throughout the sheds and of drilling the section hands in the use of the apparatus, but it will be many years before the system that exists to-day will be forgotten, and the railroad company is itself convinced that as far as effectiveness is concerned it could not be improved upon.—San Francisco Chronicle.

down the sheds, so as to reduce as far as possible the chances of their being ignited by sparks from passing engines. For this purpose the fire trains are rigged with spray nozzles, which completely deluge the interior of the sheds as they steam slowly through them. This wetting down is done two or three times a week through the hottest months.

Near Cisco is one of the highest mountain ridges on the western slopes of the Sierra. On the topmost point of this ridge, at an altitude of nearly 8,000 feet, there is a little cabin, in which a man, his wife and a boy live from the time when the snow first begins to disappear in the spring of the year until it reappears in the autumn. This man and boy from the point of observation which they occupy can see thirty-five miles of snow sheds. They can also see the entire stretch of mountain and valley country from Mount Lyel, in the Yosemite Valley, away in the south, to Mount Shasta, 200 miles to the north. They can see the lights of a dozen cities, the canons or valleys of as many rivers and thirty-seven mountain lakes; but it is for the purpose of watching the sheds that they occupy the place which they do. The track walkers, hemmed in, as they are, by the sheds, cannot see the fires which may threaten the structure from outside, and this is the reason that the little cabin was built on the top of that mountain.

Day and night, no matter how stormy the weather, this man and boy keep their vigil, and at the slightest sign of fire threatening the sheds a telephone message locating it is immediately sent to Cisco, from which place orders are issued to have it extinguished. These fires are located from Red Top, the name by which the site of the little cabin is known, by means of a dial, in the centre of which an arrow swings like the needle of a compass. The point of the arrow is directed toward the fire, which causes the feather end to cover a marking on the dial indicating the name or number of the place toward which the arrow points.

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A Female Submarine Diver.

From Palm Beach, Fla., comes the story of a woman 38 years of age, a native of Jamaica, who has for twenty years been engaged as a submarine diver. Her husband, Pedro Gomez, came from a Spanish family of sponge divers. While at Funchal, Madeira, in the Canaries, he became acquainted with an English diver, who gave him some ideas as to submarine exploration under scientific auspices. He went to Central America and met his love and his business partner of to-day at Colon, on the isthmus. She fell into his line of life easily, and for ten years has done the better part of the hazardous work which he as a manager, contracts for. She carries less armor than he does, and has invented a helmet with a system of air pipes that she and her husband alone hold the secret of. It is claimed that with this helmet, securing her breathing connection with the upper world, she can wander almost at will through a sunken wreck. In a recent interview with the editor of a Jacksonville newspaper she says that in the course of 1,000 descents to the ocean's bed within the ten years that she has been in the business,

she has never met a sea monster or any other fish that would not fly from the merest wave of her arm.

SPANISH PEASANTRY.

They Are Said to Be Fully a Century Behind the Rest of the World.

In Spain, a century behind the rest of the world, machinery has not been introduced; everything is done by manual labor. The tillers of the soil often have to go long distances to the work. Cottages are few and far between; the plains are far-reaching. They start before daybreak and return after nightfall. Tired with their long day they make a frugal meal and then to bed. Of home they really see nothing excepting on Sunday, their only day of rest and leisure. Very picturesque they look standing in groups about the villages, dressed in the long cloak that often sits upon them as gracefully as upon the noble.

Most of the people work in the fields, men, women and children, and not infrequently overwork themselves into ill health and shortened lives. All are simple and primitive, happy as people living under the sun and a generous climate generally are. Wisdom has taught them not to expect the impossible, and they are easily contented. Fun and laughter, a light heart and gay temperament are the characteristics of the dwellers in the plains, healthy lives and influences which bear good fruit.

As a result of their toil many an acre, many a mile of the plain country will be seen at certain seasons gorged with the yellow flower of the railroad. This is in great demand in Spain; no kitchen is without a large supply, and it is said to cause the ugly yellow tinge that often distinguishes the Spanish features. Other crops known in the plains are Indian maize in great abundance, and garbanzos, or chick peas. The latter forms almost the staple food of the peasantry, and is supposed to have been brought into the country by the Carthaginians. This also will be found in most of the Spanish kitchens, laying the foundation to many of their dishes.—London Argosy.

Coming Down the Nile.

Some years ago an Englishman was coming down the river Nile, in Egypt, on a large boat loaded with grain, and the birds came off from every village and ate the grain piled on the deck. The Englishman asked the Egyptian captain of the boat, "who owns this grain?" The Egyptian captain said, "I own it." Then the Englishman asked why he let the birds eat up the grain. The Egyptian asked the Englishman, "who made the birds?" The Englishman answered "God." The Egyptian asked "whether grain was a food which God intended birds to eat?" The Englishman said "it was." The Egyptian said "can the birds sow and raise the grain for themselves?" The Englishman said "they cannot." Then said the Egyptian "let them eat. God has provided enough for both them and us."

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