

# Sylvan Valley News

Our County—Its Progress and Prosperity the First Duty of a Local Paper.

MINER & BREESE.

BREVARD, TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY, N. C., FRIDAY, JUNE 19, 1903.

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Dunns Rock Lodge No. 267

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## Death on Our Railroads.

Love of Money and Its Power, Negligence of Railway officers and Improper Government Control are Responsible for the Loss of Human Life.

For the last few years in general and the last few months in particular the number of lives lost on the railroads has been appalling. In any paper can be found numerous accounts of railroad accidents in which few or many persons have lost their lives as well as much property destroyed. While appreciating the value of railroads to any community and being opposed to ranting against corporations simply because they are such, still in the case of these numerous accidents it is but just that an effort should be made to lay the blame on the guilty parties.

The first question confronting us is "Who is to blame for the frequency of railway accidents," and the second is "Why are railway accidents more common and more fatal in the United States than in other countries" and the third is "By what means shall we prevent recurrence in the future of the accidents of the past." These three questions and their answers affect a large portion of our citizens and deserve the close attention of our readers. The first question as to where the responsibility is to be placed is easily answered by naming the railway officials. They are the guilty men and on their heads rest the responsibility for many untimely deaths, great suffering and much destitution. Controlled by a spirit of greed and avarice, desirous of becoming wealthy in a short time these officials will take any chance to make a dollar, and the value of money overbalances the value of human life. While a few dollars can be saved in inferior equipment, the increased danger to life and limb is not considered; money is of greater value than man to them, if the money is theirs and the man is not.

Our railroads are now controlled by men who have been speculators in the stock and bond markets for years and the gambling spirit is predominant. These officials, for the certain daily saving of a small amount, will risk the occasional loss of large sums. In other words they will allow a road to be operated in an unsafe manner in order to save money, although it is probable that an accident will eventually occur where the losses and damages will be great. Therefore our first question is answered and the blame for the frequency of railway accidents is directly attributable to avaricious and heartless officials.

The second question, "Why are accidents more common in the United States than in other countries," is answered as follows: Until quite recently there has been no proper government supervision of railways, their construction and operation. In recent years an effort has been made in those states that are yet

free of the control of railroads to establish commissions to control the railways and see that proper precautions are taken for the safety of human life and the preservation of property as well as to control the freight and passenger rates and tariffs. The commissions are not perfected as yet and their powers are so limited that their control is not near so thorough as similar bodies in other lands. So perfectly have the Boards of Control been managing the English railways for the last few years that the records show that not a single man was killed in that country last year by a railroad. Those English commissions not only control the roads but they see to the proper construction of all the cars and engines. No risk is taken and the factor of safety is much greater than is usually considered necessary, but the results show the wisdom of their method. In order therefore for us to enjoy the same immunity from accidents we will have to secure honest and competent Railway Commissioners and vest them with sufficient authority to enforce their rules; give them the power to regulate the construction and operation of all railroads, to the smallest detail; place them beyond the control of railway influence, and we will then have roads that will compare with those of other countries and on which the lives of the employees will be safe.

The third question, "How shall we prevent recurrence of these numerous accidents," has but one answer: The majority of accidents are caused by some carelessness, and our courts have been too lenient in the past in prosecuting those who were guilty of criminal negligence. The mere loss of thousands of dollars in way of damages does not seem to cause the railway officials to take the proper steps for the safety of their employees or patrons. They get large salaries, and prerequisites worth a ransom. The payment of damages comes out of the owner of the stock, so it does not affect them directly. There is one way of reaching them and one only, and that is by trying, convicting and imprisoning them for their negligence. When a man is made to work overtime; when unnecessary risks are taken under direction of the officials; where fast schedules are in force over roadbeds unable to safely bear the strain, and fatal accidents occur, it should result in a criminal prosecution of the one in authority. Do not punish the employee who was simply obeying orders, but go to the fountain head and punish the official. Make them personally liable and subject to imprisonment, and you will see a revolution in railway management. You can then go on a trip

without feeling that the chances are against your returning home alive and sound, for the officials know that they will be held responsible for accidents that can be traced to them and when you trace most accidents to their prime cause you will find that 90 per cent are caused by recklessness on the part of the management.

Therefore let us save the lives of our fellow working men and our own as well by having such laws enacted as will punish the guilty parties in a manner that will effectually deter them from being either reckless or careless. We must not go to the extreme of Communism or Socialism or any other 'ism, but act within the bond of reason and unbiased justice. Give all parties their just representation but when an accident is traced to the source from whence it received its initial impetus, then punish the guilty party severely and without fear or favor.

### Mutilated Clipping.

Our summer visitors will soon be with us, and those nuisances and relics of the barbarous ages are still in evidence on our principal streets.—SYLVAN VALLEY NEWS.

We are surprised to learn that the NEWS regards summer visitors as "nuisances and relics of barbarous ages." Here in Hendersonville we have a very high regard for summer visitors and want as many of them as we can get. But possibly the office cut is responsible for the extraordinary sentence which we quote from our contemporary.—HENDERSONVILLE TIMES.

That the item quoted by the Times appeared in the NEWS, is true, but added to it was the explanation. "The barbed wire fences are what we are referring to." Mutilating this item has given the Times scribbler an opportunity to say something mean about Brevard, and that seems to be the only object in life for the average Hendersonvillain. "Possibly the office cut" writes squibs for the Times—no human being with brains could have misunderstood the item as it was published in our columns.

Vivisection is the painful experimentation upon living animals. They are mutilated and dissected when alive and in full possession of their faculties. They are bruised, burned, and their bones are broken; nerves are laid bare and connected with an electric battery, from which currents of electricity are passed over these nerves, causing probably the greatest suffering of which sentient beings are capable. Numerous severely painful experiments are often made for trivial purposes. This is done, in medical schools and elsewhere, in the alleged "interests of science;" but in comparison with the terrible agony to sentient creatures, the "scientific results" are but as a drop in the bucket.

"I have been troubled for some time with indigestion and sour stomach," says Mrs. Sarah W. Curtis, of Lee, Mass., "and have been taking Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets which have helped me very much so that now I can eat many things that before I could not." If you have any trouble with your stomach why not take these Tablets and get well?  
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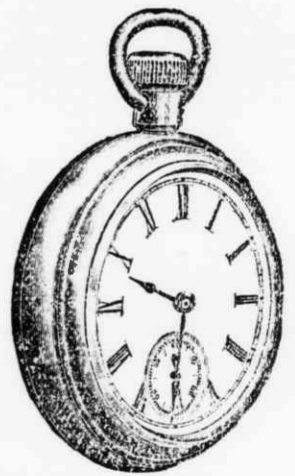
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