

Through to the Pacific

CHICAGO, May 21.—"Halloo!" exclaimed as he ran against the...

Through Bergen Tunnel and past Jersey villas and villages I study the...

Our coach has the regular complement of characters. The man who...

The breakfast bolted at Hornersville, and our train divided, the head glides...

Chicago, May 21.—The great halls and parlors of this crowded hotel are...

A mile further down it leaps again, a hundred and ten feet, and yet a mile further, ninety feet. The two lower...

At Buffalo—the only change between New York and Chicago—we take a sleeping car of the Lake Shore and Southern Michigan, convenient, smooth running, and tastefully finished in black wood.

After a second night among the smooth fields, noble forests, broad apple orchards and generous farm houses of the lake shore, morning finds us on the...

Thirty-nine hours out, we reach Chicago. Not, however, until our train has grown very long and every car is crowded; for we are on the high tide of the spring travel.

Chicago, May 21.—The great halls and parlors of this crowded hotel are a continental exchange. Here are trunks and valises piled up like cord wood, and...

Man while, one of the most marked, original characters of all this throng is one of the quietest and least noticeable. There he sits, chatting carelessly in low tones, a rather tall man, in middle life, his hair and whiskers beginning to show streaks of gray, and his worn, mild, thoughtful face shaded by the rim of a low crowned brown hat.

He was born among the Berkshire hills of Massachusetts. He studied science and medicine at Albany, and to continue his studies he professed medicine, but was no better vent than...

It often carried supplies for new railway companies, taking their securities in payment. Negotiating these bonds familiarized him with the stock market. Then he got to building roads himself, taking enormous contracts, piling forward the work and selling the bonds—making fast friends and bitter enemies—and becoming widely known as contractor and operator.

In the early doubtful years of the war, he went into the Union Pacific Company. His first step was to spend several months in inducing Congress to change the law and make the government lien only a second mortgage upon the road, that the company might issue its own bonds as a first mortgage. Even after this was done, his Eastern associates lacked faith in the enterprise. But his whole soul was thrown into it, and he furnished from his private means a large portion of the first resources.

It was hard study. Even after the money was raised, labor could hardly be found. "The boys" were all in the war. But men were gathered up in Canada, in New England, in Pennsylvania, and sent forward fifty hundred miles at the company's expense. And the number kept increasing till at one time 18,000 laborers were employed.

After two or three hundred miles were finished, Durant's associates began to see that there were great profits both in the construction and in the traffic. Fierce struggles arose in the company—regular Wildcat battles, all of which he saw and part of which he was. There were men who said his recklessness and extravagance would ruin everything—that he was unfit to manage a ward corporation—but I never heard of one who, after a conflict with him, disparaged his ability.

Things were upon a grand scale. Enormous excursions were sent out on a grand scale from the east over the line in palace cars, with a sumptuous regard for expense. The officers of the company were among the most elegant in New York. Banquets, concerts, and choice paintings surprised the eye of the visitors. Durant's horses were the envy of Central Park, and his yacht was the admiration of the New York Yacht Club. I have seen him entertain a party of ladies and gentlemen upon it, down the bay, through an entire afternoon, as if he had not a care in the world beyond the comfort of his guests; and at 1 o'clock say concludingly, "Well, good bye, I must go ashore; I have a million of dollars to pay factors 3 o'clock. Have your suit out, and don't return until you get ready."

Meanwhile he was working like a galley slave. Sometimes he was hardly in bed for a week; again he would spend nights and Sunday's upon the road for the price and the cool air—Narcotics and stimulants by a cocktail that he might keep his brain clear. He plunged into the controversies in the Company with characteristic energy; and I fancy there were times when he could not tell whether the next turn of the wheel would have him worth a few millions, or a few millions worse than nothing. But the great work never flagged. The expenses were enormous. Laborers were paid as high as \$3 per...

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day and board. As the road pushed on everything, workmen, food, iron, timber, fuel, had to go forward upon the single track. It was like building a road from Chicago to New Orleans, and carrying all the supplies, even coal and bridge timber, from Boston. The telegraph bills alone amounted to a small fortune. Sometimes, in an emergency, ties, which had been transported 800 miles, were burned for fuel.

"I never saw such a man as Durant," exclaimed an old Western steamboat captain, as they sat in the hall together. "Years before he made a contract with me for transporting supplies to Omaha, amounting to a million and a half dollars; and he actually signed that contract without ever reading it. He just glanced at it and said, 'Well, captain, I suppose this is all right, and I wrote his name at the bottom.' And he fulfilled it?" "Oh, yes; he paid me to the last dollar."

"I never saw him excited but once, observed my companion, Dr. Ray, of the Chicago Post, and that was at Bull Run. He had started out with a good many of his troops to Richmond. When the stampede began, he was the angriest man I ever saw. He picked up a stake and sprang right in front of the running soldiers, and in spite of their muskets and fixed bayonets, lit right and left, shouting 'Go back you d—d cowards—go back!' And a good many of them actually did turn back."

At last, after his every nerve has been strained for four years, he is fast losing much more. "The rails are laid," he says, with a quiet smile, "and now I don't care whether school keeps or not." As he gets up for a stroll, we see the chief mark of his terrible labor has left on him; his frame is bowed, and he looks like a modern Atlas, a little surprised to find that his heavy burden has fallen off. He has done the work; let him have the credit of it. He is said to own one-fourth of the entire road. Now he will devote himself to care of themselves during three busy years. Perhaps for this summer's recreation, he will build the plaything of a railway to the Adirondacks, in which he has a controlling interest, and where he owns half a million acres of land more or less.

When with his indomitable energy next find love? His uninspiring seems to be not love of money for itself, or of notoriety in any sense, but a "urge for large enterprises—a restless desire, to be 'swinging' great enterprises, and doing everything on a magnificent scale. And yet, this man, who has chosen such his private affairs, which have, taken a stormy career and who white get under fifty has carried forward such a stupendous and historic work to completion, half considers his life a failure. Because it has not been devoted to Natural Science, the subject of all others which fascinates him, and in which he always finds rest and recreation.

Gen. Sheridan's headquarters are here. His field, in which Hancock, Schofield, and Angur are subordinate, extends from British line to Louisville, and from the Mississippi River to Nevada. In hours not devoted to official duties he leads a quiet bachelor's life, with his brother, in a pleasant residence on Michigan ave. The back windows of his cozy library commands a delightful view of the lake, and the full enjoyment of its cooling breezes. I had never chanced to meet him since the employment of Shiloh, when he was undistinguished among the young officers of the regular army, until yesterday.

G. & B. & S. Crandell

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Advertisement for George A. Green's clothing store, featuring an illustration of a man in a suit and a sign that reads 'GEORGE A. GREEN, MANUFACTURER AND DEALER IN CLOTHING, CLOTHS, CASSIMERES, HATS, CAPS, &c. &c.' The text describes the store's offerings and location.

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