



A ROMANCE OF THE RAIL

BY FREDERIC REDDALL

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PROLOGUE

STARTLING NEWS.
ON a certain morning in May the daily papers of the United States, from Maine to California, from the great lakes to the gulf, contained a momentous news dispatch. It was set forth with all the bold and vivid insistence of black "scare heads" and pungent headlines.

Some time during the previous night part of a limited express train on one of our great western trunk lines had disappeared without leaving a trace behind either of coaches or passengers! The occurrence was absolutely without parallel in the annals of railroad-riding, and the tragic import of the incident was intensified when it became known that the living freight of the lost cars included a well known and popular railroad magnate and financier of national reputation with a party of friends, among the latter some women of wealth and social prominence. Their complete vanishment could not have been more mysterious and puzzling had coaches and passengers been sunk fathoms deep in some dark and silent pool or engulfed in a bottomless canyon. Not a trace was left, not a clew. The railroad officials were utterly at fault. Nor was the mystery elucidated until several days and nights had elapsed.

Meantime the wires east and west were kept hot, popular interest and excitement running high in every city, town and village in the United States and even in Canada. The wildest speculations were rife as to the fate of the persons concerned, all of them more or less wide of the mark, as the sequel proved.

Yet when the truth was ferreted out it was seen that the actualities rivaled all the fiction that had been woven around the case, which thenceforth took rank as a veritable romance of the rail.

FIRST DAY.

THE START.
In the great dome roofed station of the Pennsylvania railroad at Jersey City on a certain morning in May the limited train for the west stood awaiting its lading of passengers.

The long line of vestibuled drawing room coaches was resplendent in fresh paint as though just out of the carshops. The burnished brass work on gates, hand rails and steps shone like gold plate, while the white capped and blue uniformed officials—brakemen, trainhands and negro porters—dignified and self important, yet gravely courteous withal, stood ready to welcome, direct or assist the fast arriving passengers. The conductor waited, watch in hand, for the great station clock pointed at three minutes before 10, and precisely at the hour the fiercer would be off.

The last train boat was in, and the inevitable late traveler was even now struggling down the asphalt platform. The great engine backed down and was coupled on, the engineer tested the brakes to see if his "air" was all right, the steam giant throbbed and glowed with pent up energy, and the "runner," as the engineer is called in railway parlance, leaned out of his cab on the alert for the electric cry "All aboard!"

At the other side of the station an equally interesting scene was taking place. On one of the side tracks stood two richly appointed coaches, one the private car Miranda and the other an ordinary Pullman sleeper and drawing room coach combined. Since 8 o'clock relays of porters and expressmen had been coming alongside heavy laden, departing empty handed and wiping their brows. Hundreds of pounds of ice were stowed away in the long receptacles under the cars; hampers, crates and boxes of mineral waters, "strong waters" and delicacies were taken aboard and disposed in mysterious recesses; from within came the musical clink of glasses and crockery, while the white jacketed chef could be seen fitting about in his tiny kitchen and buffet putting matters to rights.

The last load of relishes was received and receipted for, the porters for the last time flicked the dust off the richly upholstered interior, when the first of those for whom these elaborate preparations were made came straggling down the platform, at whose arrival all the train men in waiting saluted with hands to caps.

A good story is told concerning two poor Irishmen who once upon a time were debating what sort of an occupation each would choose if kind Providence should ever give them the option. After canvassing the advantages of the various vocations in life one of them closed the discussion by saying: "Faith, Mike, for a nice, clean, aisy job let me be a bishop!" This probably summed up to Mike's imaginative mind all the sunny side of life—wealth, position, authority and not overmuch work.

But I have often thought that for pure and unadulterated bliss the position of president of a great railroad,

left little to be desired. It certainly seemed so to the onlooker this bright May morning.
Here was John Draper, president of the Pacific and Atlantic railway, a self made man, a multimillionaire, old enough to have eschewed the follies of life and yet young enough to enjoy the benefits the gods send to sane mortals, blessed with health, strength, a good conscience and a better digestion, at the moment of which I write literally monarch of all he surveyed and about to take a trip of three or four thousand miles in his personal and private car, surrounded by a charming and congenial company of his own choosing, who would bask in the sunshine of his bounty and give him grateful thanks, homage and credit for all the pleasure bestowed!

So who would not be a railroad president, even if the head that carries the bondholders' woes is sometimes uneasy!
With John Draper came two ladies, an elder and a much younger one, and, faithful to the old precept which gives place to age before beauty, the former shall be described first. This was Mrs. Bradley Hurst, a married sister of our host. Fair and 40 she certainly was, but not even her bitterest enemy could have called her fat. A laughing eye, a well rounded and mature form, of medium height, with a carriage and manner that denote the thorough mistress of society and its forms—this was Mrs. Bradley Hurst, the chaperon of the party.

By her side and between the two elder people walked a girl half her age, the exact opposite of what Mrs. Hurst must have been in her youth—not too tall, graceful, dark of hair, eyes and complexion, a Vassar alumna and now a two years' society graduate; accomplished, handsome and wholesome—and there you have sketched Miss Florence Grannis, the ward of John Draper and heiress to a cool million.

Down the platform they strolled, laughing and chatting gayly, yet in the tender solitude with which the railroad magnate handed the girl into the car might have been discovered more than the ordinary regard supposed to subsist between guardian and ward.

Close at the heels of this trio came two others, both young, both vivacious, both bubbling over with good humor and good spirits, which were plainly their natural heritage and partly born of the prospect of this novel outing.
The lady was Miss Madge Hurst, daughter of Mrs. Bradley Hurst, a plump maiden of some 20 winters, blond, petite, blue eyed and altogether bewitching—at least so thought Mr. Chester Ives, who walked at her side, looking down from his five feet ten of masculinity at the five feet two of femininity under the broad brimmed Gainsborough hat then in vogue.

Chester Ives was a member of the fourth estate, whose privilege it is to wield the weapon which is said to be mightier than the sword—though it is often a mere blue pencil—and who, by dint of patience, perseverance and persistence, had risen from the foot of the journalistic ladder to be "Wall street man" on one of New York's great dailies. Not yet 30, he was already booked by his intimates for higher things. He had known John Draper when the latter was "biding his time" in comparative obscurity as a small merchant



Here was John Draper, monarch of all he surveyed.

in a southern town. Although there were nearly 20 years between their ages they were friends and confidants. Yet each held certain matters in reserve. Draper knew that Ives loved his niece, Chester thought he knew where the senior had placed his affections, but the younger man did not know that John Draper was resolved to signalize his own happiness—should it ever come to pass—by doing what he could to make Madge and Chester happy at the same time.

"Last of all came Satan also," in the person of Mr. Reuben K. Filley, protege and confidential clerk of John Draper. It is perhaps needless to say that the world knew the young man in the latter capacity only. Alert, keen, selfish, unscrupulous, a New York boy of uncertain parentage, though he

claimed English, a product of the slums and the gutter, Reuben Filley had risen to the surface of the current of life in the great metropolis by the very simple method of throttling or pushing aside every other struggling swimmer who came in his way. "Do others or they'll do you" was his cheerful motto. He attracted the notice of John Draper when the latter first came to New York; was taken into his employ as an office boy and ultimately reached the post of private secretary, a place which offered great possibilities to a young man of his peculiar proclivities and of which he immediately proceeded to take unfair advantage. "Looking out for No. 1" Filley called it. Plainly people fond of calling a spade by its agricultural name would have termed it lying and stealing; but, then, Filley took care never to be found out.

Rascal though he was, he deserves to have his pen picture like all the others of the party, and here it is: Height, 5 feet 8; weight, 140; complexion fair; eyes steely blue, shifting and treacherous; a brownish yellow or "Cain colored" beard and mustache closely trimmed served to hide an animal jaw and a cruel mouth; ears pointed and peculiarly shaped, being so joined to the neck as to present no lobe; in speech garrulous, boastful and profane.

He was by nature coarse and vulgar, yet by contact with the world had been licked into what passed current for bluff frankness and good nature. Voe betide the man, woman or child who trusted Reuben K. Filley, for treachery was in his heart, and self was his god.

His arrival was hailed with an exclamation of satisfaction by John Draper, who took from him several letters and telegrams and darted into the car. Filley was the last of the guests, and with the coming of Mrs. Hurst's maid, Annette, and of Draper's man, Henry, the personnel of the party was complete.

Filley followed his employer into the car.
"Mr. Draper," he said, standing before the desk where that gentleman sat, "is it absolutely necessary that I go along?"

"I thought we settled all that yesterday, Reuben," was the reply. "I shall certainly need you when we get to Denver. There will be a hundred and one things to attend to and mighty little time in which to do them. So let's hear no more about it."

With this answer, delivered in a quiet but emphatic manner that brooked no argument, Filley was forced to be content, and with a sulky frown of his shoulders he turned away, muttering to himself as soon as he was out of Draper's hearing:

"The party will be smaller by one several miles this side of Denver, or my name's not Reuben K. Filley!"
"Was exactly three minutes of 10 when a switching engine pushed the president's private car and its attending sleeping coach out of the station and on to the main track. Here the "limited" was halted long enough to permit the necessary coupling, and then, with a final toot, the monster engine lay down to its work and with a full head of steam went rushing and panting across the Hackensack meadows, past Newark, Elizabeth, New Brunswick and Trenton, 60 miles an hour, and so into Philadelphia.

By this time the millionaire's party were fairly well settled in their respective nooks and quarters. The three ladies and the maid were assigned to the double stateroom in the Miranda. John Draper took the other and the smaller one. Between them was the saloon, where all meals were served and which answered for a general rendezvous and lounging place. Ives and Filley and the manservant bunked in the Pullman, with the negro porter Aleck for additional company and sport.

All the way between the metropolis and the city by the Schuylkill Draper and Filley were busy over their correspondence at what might be dubbed the business end of the saloon. Arrived at the Broad street station, the secretary jumped to the platform and hurried to mail several letters and dispatch divers telegrams. Rising from his table, their host came toward the ladies, saying:

"Now I am free until we reach Pittsburgh. Which shall it be, luncheon or recreation, the mind or the body?" For, plutocrat and man of affairs though he was, his heart was young, and the secret of much of his health and success lay in the fact that when he chose to play nothing else was allowed to interfere.

Mrs. Hurst looked up smilingly, but it fell to Madge to answer, though John Draper happened to be regarding his ward solicitously.

"I move you, sir," she said, with grave lips, yet dancing eyes, "that the car now proceed to business and take its pleasure afterward. I'm desperately hungry. Aren't you, Flo?"

Florence admitted in her stately way that "some slight refreshment would be acceptable," and no sooner had the wish been uttered than the millionaire clapped his hands—a survival of his southern training—when Aleck appeared and received the laconic order: "Luncheon immediately!"

A very merry party it was which sat down to what Madge christened a "car picnic." A long and narrow table was set up in the center of the saloon. A chair at either end was occupied by Mr. Draper and Mrs. Hurst. Florence Grannis was seated at her guardian's right hand, with Chester next to her. Reuben Filley sat on his employer's left. Madge and Chester were vis-à-vis at the lower end, as were, of course, Miss Grannis and Reuben Filley. These positions were unchanged during much of this memorable journey.

It is a safe assertion that only one member of the party felt any regret at being there. This one was Filley.

SIBLEY, LINDSAY, & CURR CO. SIBLEY, LINDSAY & CURR CO.

Christmas Store Complete

The last decorative touch has been given to the Christmas store—the Main floor has been painted green. Christmas stocks are at the acme of their completeness. The same conditions which make this the best place to trade at other times, make it the best Christmas store. Assortments are the largest, prices most reasonable, and there's the fairest most liberal store management.

About Our Furs.

With warm weather all along, our Fur store has been a busy place this fall. Busier than ever with fur temperatures.

You want to trade in a busy store. It's evidence that there is something worth your while to note. Remember that we are showing finer, richer furs than ever before.

Scarfs, Boas and Muffs.

- Alaska sable cluster scarfs, \$5 to \$18.
- Alaska sable muffs, \$8, \$9.50 and \$19.50.
- Alaska sable fox long boas, \$9 to \$25.
- Alaska sable fox muffs, \$8, \$13.50 and \$16.50.

Fur Coats.

- Electric seal coats, \$21 and \$35.
- Near seal coats, \$35.

Fur Capes.

- A fur cape is a garment particularly suitable for an elderly person.
- 27 in. plain electric seal cape, \$37.
- 30 in. plain electric seal cape, \$39.
- 30 in. electric seal cape with Alaska sable collar and edging down front, \$4.
- 27 in. Baltic seal cape with sable opossum collar and edging down front, \$30.
- 27 in. plain astrakhan capes, \$14.50 and \$17.
- 30 in. plain astrakhan capes, \$15 and \$19.

Furs for Misses.

- Misses' blue fox boas, \$7.
- Misses' blue fox muffs to match, \$7.
- Misses' krimmer collarettes, \$3.50.
- Misses' krimmer scarfs, \$2.95.
- Misses' krimmer muffs, \$2.95.

Warm Winter Capes.

Those preferring a cape as a wrap will find our Cloak Room amply supplied. There are astrakhans, plushes, beavers, kerseys, montagnas—all the warm materials and made up on all the lines which fashion permits this season.

- 30 in. black astrakhan cape, full sweep, medic collar, collar and front edged with thibet fur, serge lined, \$3.50.
- 33 in. black astrakhan cape, full sweep, medic collar, collar and front edged with bear fur, serge lined, \$5.
- 33 in. black astrakhan cape, full sweep, medic collar, inverted plait in back, front edged with thibet fur and solid thibet collar, serge lined, \$10.
- 28 in. plush cape, full sweep, medic collar, edged with thibet fur, serge lined, \$5.
- 30 in. plush cape, full sweep, medic collar, edged with thibet fur, serge lined, \$7.50.
- 34 in. plush cape, full sweep, solid thibet medic collar, front edged with thibet fur, serge lined, \$10.
- 30 in. plush cape, full sweep, with inverted plait in back, medic collar, collar and front edged with opossum fur, satin lined, \$11.50.
- 31 in. black beaver cape, full sweep, medic collar, edged with thibet fur, serge lined, \$5.
- 27 in. black beaver cape, full sweep, medic collar, inverted plait in back, collar and bottom trimmed with braid; edged with astrakhan fur, serged lined, \$7.50.
- 27 in. black beaver cape, full sweep medic collar, braided around collar and bottom, edged with opossum fur, serge lined, \$8.50.
- 41 in. black kersey cape, full sweep, solid opossum, medic collar, front edged with opossum fur, serge lined, \$14.50.
- 42 in. black kersey cape, full sweep, solid opossum, medic collar; trimmed with five rows of stitching around bottom, front edged with opossum fur, serge lined, \$19.50.
- 42 in. black montague cape, full sweep, solid opossum medic collar, front edged with opossum fur, serge lined, \$25.
- 44 in. castor or black kersey, L'Alfion cape—a double cape, \$15.
- 31 in. tan kersey cape, full sweep, medic collar, trimmed with four rows of stitching, satin-lined, \$15.

UMBRELLAS.

To help along the umbrella distribution, to make it easier for you and ourselves, they have a selling place in the Basement—back on the way to the Toys, etc.

Cheaper umbrellas here—selling prices, 25c, 35c, 75c and \$1—umbrellas for men, women and children.

At regular Umbrella store—the finest showing of rich novelties from which it was ever your privilege to choose a Christmas gift in Rochester.

Ladies' umbrellas up to \$25. Men's umbrellas up to \$15. How much you will miss if you wait until the last moment to select an umbrella.

OSTRICH FEATHER BOAS.

Trimming counters have a particularly fine assortment of ostrich feather boas. There are blacks, naturals and greys. Lengths, 1 1/2 and 1 3/4 yards. Prices from \$7.50 to \$16.50.

A \$1.75 CORSET FOR \$1.25.

It's a W. B. corset top—made particularly for stout figures; heavily boned.

Miss Steele will be here all the week to fit La Vida corsets.

La Vidas not only have our endorsement, but that of hundreds of Rochester women who have found them the most satisfactory corset that they have ever worn.

MELBA SHOES.

We have seven styles of Melba shoes—welts and turns, button and lace—footwear for every season, for every occasion. Those ladies who have worn them pronounce them the best \$5 shoes they ever purchased. We are selling ladies' Good-year glove rubbers, storm and low cut, all sizes from 2 1/2 to 8, in narrow widths, for 35c a pair. Another ladies' rubber—storm or low cut—in all sizes and all widths, half-dollar value, for 40c a pair. Ten cents is worth saving on such a staple article as rubbers.

Black Silks.

This Black Silk event is scheduled for Christmas; if you don't completely clear your closets and counters before.

We attempted to do the usual thing—sell you Black Silks as Christmas gifts at reduced prices. We have done the most unusual thing—spread out twelve thousand yards of the makes of American Black Silks on terms below manufacturing cost. Make your own many silks.

- Black Taffeta Silks at 39c, 53c, 55c, 69c, 49c, 53c, 59c, 69c, 78c, 85c, 98c and \$1.05 a yard.
- Black Satin Duchesse and Peau de Soie at 48c, 58c, 68c, 78c, 88c, 98c, \$1.08, \$1.15, and \$1.35 a yard.
- Black Armure Silks at 65c, 75c, 85c and \$1.08 a yard.
- Black Grosgrain Silks at 78c, 85c, \$1.15 and \$1.25 a yard.

Lenox Sewing Machines.

What an agreeable surprise for wife or mother on Christmas morn' a Lenox sewing machine would be. Sewing would then be a delight rather than a drudgery.

Best materials, highest skilled labor, best some finish—all combine to place the Lenox on a par with any. Price—about half.

Lenox machines have ball bearings—a complete set of attachments—a guarantee for five years.

- Three drawer Lenox, \$19.
- Five drawer Lenox, \$21.
- Drop-head Lenox, \$24.50.
- Automatic Lenox, \$32.50.

Our "Lender" is a Lenox grade—slightly smaller head—plainer, but serviceable and popular, \$16.

A competent instructor to explain all workings. We always have in stock a full line of parts and attachments. We do our own repairing.

KNIT GOODS.

Christmas business necessitates some changing around. Knit goods have moved to the Ladies' Underwear counter—marble stairway. You'll not find them so easily.

If we were to note anything particular among all these goods which are right reasonable moves we should call attention to the ladies' knit skirts and the Tam O'Shanter and toques for misses and children.

Ladies' knit skirts in plain colors and fancy patterns, \$1.95 to \$3.

Tam O'Shanter and toques—anything wanted in the way of patterns, \$5c to \$1.95.

MUSIC CABINETS.

Gift-giving time rapidly approaches, and there are many members yet to be selected.

Third floor Furniture is showing some twenty styles of music cabinets—new, modern. A truly Christmas gift. Many will think the suggestion good one.

Music cabinet—golden oak finish, any finish, white enamel, four drawers, mahogany finished music cabinet with brass rod for curtains and \$25.

Natural birch music cabinet, with four drawers, \$12.50.

Mahogany finished black music cabinet with door, five drawers, \$12.50.

All questioned oak music cabinet, polished, with carved legs, \$12.50 plain and rich \$7.25.

Mahogany finished black music cabinet with door, five drawers, \$12.50.

Mahogany finished black music cabinet with door, five drawers, \$12.50.

All mahogany music cabinet, with carved top, carved legs, with carved top piece, oval drawers, \$12.50.

Large mahogany music cabinet, with mahogany top, mahogany sides, mahogany back, mahogany drawers, four shelves, \$25.

Extra large mahogany music cabinet, with mahogany top, mahogany sides, mahogany back, mahogany drawers, four shelves, \$35.

Carved oak music cabinet, with mahogany top, mahogany sides, mahogany back, mahogany drawers, four shelves, \$25.