

# RUIN ON THE RAIL

## One Disaster in the Wake of Another.

### Two Trains Wrecked but No Lives Lost.

#### Double Sumsup on the Southern Pacific in the Outskirts of the City.

Wakeful residents in the vicinity of Dolores and Twenty-seventh streets must have heard the night freight train rumbly over the big iron bridge of the Southern Pacific Railroad at that point soon after 3 o'clock yesterday morning, and whether they were wakeful or not they must have been roused from their slumbers by the crash that instantly followed the rumble of the train. People heard the crash several blocks away. Some say it sounded as if a great telegraph pole had been broken in two. It

which, after the occurrence, is accurately shown in the accompanying illustration.

The engineer of the upturned engine was J. J. Hookwell and J. J. Noonan was the fireman. These men had no chance to get out of the engine cab until they found themselves in the ditch, and then they discovered they had only been well shaken up. Scarcely a bruise had been sustained. Conductor A. M. Pest, who was on the rear of the train, escaped without injury, and so also did the brakemen. The only other living creature on board this train was a bay horse in the car next behind the refrigerator cars. Nobody seemed aware of the presence of this animal in this scene of disaster until he managed to get his head out through a window in the car, as if to inquire why the road had been so rough and why no one came to feed him. The horse was not at all injured.

An examination of the switch which had caused the disaster showed that it had been partially opened. The railroad people think it was the work of some malicious mischief-maker. The switch lock had been broken and was found on the ground beneath the half-turned switch target. Cases of similar tampering with switches are not unknown in the neighborhood and there really does not seem to have been any other way in which the switch could have been turned.

The early morning brought great crowds of people to the scene of the wreck. Work trains were busy removing the debris as fast as possible and it was thought that traffic would not be long delayed. Soon after 6 o'clock, however, it became noised around that another wreck had taken place a little further down the road, and sure enough the first disaster had bred a second one, and one

locomotives were not in the way of the safe passage of trains, so the immediate efforts of the railroad people were directed to the scene of the first wreck. Here the laying of a temporary track was begun. All day long there were thousands of people watching the work. Teams came there and carted away the beef from the refrigerator cars and the ice also. And by and by the owner of the lone lone horse came and got him out safely. But it took nearly the whole day to clear the track, and the 8:30 train down was the first that passed. The contents of several hay cars were dumped off of the Dolores-street bridge at the time of the accident, and the children of the neighborhood had rare sport dodging the policemen who had been placed to guard the bales from being broken. Some of this hay was there at sundown, and unless that policeman had help there is not likely to be so much for him to watch when the Palm Sunday sun has risen.

There will be work for several days to come getting the smashed-up engines and demolished cars to the shops of the railroad company, but there should be no delay in regular traffic to-day. The company estimates the damage to track and cars and engines at \$10,000, and its officials insist that the switch must have been tampered with by some miscreant who holds life very cheap.



THE OVERTURNED LOCOMOTIVE AT TWENTY-SIXTH STREET.

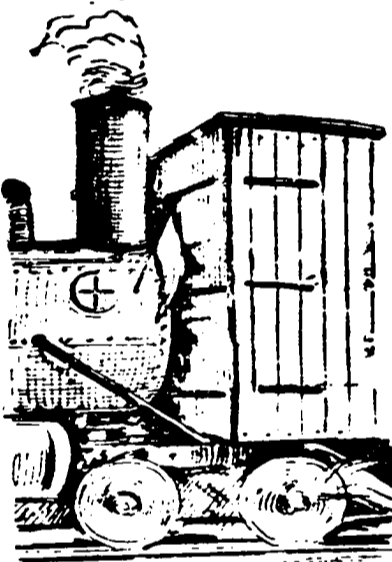
was a sound of disaster long drawn out and there were splinters in it. Everybody who heard it felt sure it was a railway wreck and so it proved to be. A score or two of curious ones came out of their warm beds into the foggy morning air and saw an engine and half a dozen freight cars toppled over on the side or piled up in a promiscuous heap of debris, while a number of train hands were moving about like shadows in the darkness, seeking to know if any one had been hurt and trying to define just what had happened.

When daylight came the extent of the wreck became fully apparent, and wonderful to relate, nobody had been hurt. The story of the accident, as told by the train hands was this: A freight train, known as No. 34, through from Pacific Grove, and picking up freight all along the line, had made its last stop at South San Francisco. At that point three of the new refrigerator cars of the South San Francisco Land and Improvement Company had been put on at the head of the train, and immediately next to the locomotive an ordinary freight car loaded with ice. The train was due in the yard at Fourth and Townsend streets at 8:30 A. M. It was a little late and was being pushed ahead at good speed. A helper engine had been coupled on at San Mateo and, with the service of two locomotives, the train of thirty-five cars was making something like thirty miles an hour.

Engineer Pittam, keeping a lookout from the cab of the forward engine, No. 188, saw a clear track ahead as he came on the Dolores-street bridge. Just a few

that might have been a far more serious affair.

Engine 1880 had been sent up the road from Colma to help clear away the wreck at Twenty-sixth street. Half a dozen cars were still standing on the track at the western end of the Dolores-street



A SMOKESTACK IN THE BOX CAR.

yards from the eastern end of the bridge is a spring switch where cars are sometimes sidetracked across Twenty-sixth street. This switch had not been used for a week or more, and in the dim light available at the time referred to it appeared to be all right. The instant the forward engine had passed over it, however, it was apparent to Engineer Pittam that something was wrong. His engine was on the right track but the tender was bumping along on the ties. Another second and his tender had jumped on the track again, but it had become detached from the second engine, and that and the rest of the train were in the ditch. The forward engine was brought to a standstill as quickly as possible and the engineer and fireman returned to the aid of the others.

The second locomotive, 1880, had run her nose into the earth about two rods east of the Twenty-sixth-street crossing, and had keeled over so that the drive wheels on the right side stood up about four feet from the track. The momentum of the rest of the train had forced the tender into an elevated position at a perfect right angle with the locomotive, so that its end was away up against the board fence on the top of the embankment. Wedged up against this end of the tender was the end of the first freight car. This car was a total wreck, and its cargo of ice

and threw half of the passengers in the three coaches off their seats, but no one was seriously injured. Engineer Hurd sustained a sprained leg and had to be carried home. His fireman, J. Arena, came out of it all right. George Cornwall, the engineer of the passenger train, and Fireman Fisher, also escaped without scratches or bruises. One lady passenger had her face scratched by being thrown against the water cooler, but no other injury was reported.

A special train was run down from Fourth and Townsend streets to the Valencia-street station, and the passengers from the San Mateo train walked up through Bernal cut and across the Dolores-street bridge to meet it, or came around in the electric cars. The same plan was pursued with regard to passengers on other incoming trains during the day. The trains stopped at Ocean View and the electric road reaped a rich harvest.

When the colliding locomotives were pulled apart at the west end of Bernal cut the forward tender was found to be a total wreck, and the tender of the passenger train looked like the jaws of a mammoth crocodile when the baggage car had been pulled out of it. Luckily there was a long piece of siding at that point, and the half-smashed cars and

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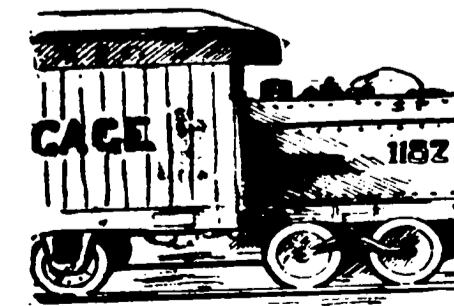
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WALKING THROUGH BERNAL CUT.

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A TONGUE-LOOKING TENDER.

was scattered all over the twisted track and broken roadbed. All of the refrigerator cars had jumped the track, and their trucks were badly twisted, but the cars themselves were not demolished. Weaker cars farther back in the train were more or less smashed up, but the worst part of the wreck was made up of the engine and tender and the ice car, the condition of