

before the old Frisco became something more to me than a pay check.

Therefore, when my father, who like many of his kind, knew nothing of railroad service and judged it accordingly, proceeded one evening to denounce the Frisco in unmeasured terms, I decided for the sake of peace, I had better move and arranged the next day to board at the section house.

I often wish I could find food that hit the spot like that which the foreman's wife put in my dinner bucket, but calendar additions and dental subtractions spoil appetites. Full tonnage for the dinner pail was her motto. Bread, meat, dried apple pie and coffee was its cargo. The foreman always kept a quarter of beef in a dug-out cellar. He carved with a hatchet, and, though he was neither a sculptor nor a butcher, he was a liberal provider.

Get up at day break and lift, pull and haul things ten times your weight for four or five hours and see if this bill of fare ain't bully fare.

Until you get what might be termed a bird's-eye view of things, the biggest man is the man that can fire you. Therefore, the most important man, in fact the greatest man in my world, was the old foreman. I could relate a thousand things he said that were wise and witty, and of all the men I have ever known, none ever had as warm a spot in my heart as that old foreman, not long since passed away.

One of the best traits which he possessed was the reluctance which he always displayed in criticising officials. This good quality is not common even now, and, section gang and switch shanty verdicts, I am ashamed to say, have caused me to be prejudiced for many years against men whom I had never seen and, who,

when I finally knew them, proved to be not only capable, but fine fellows.

On the other hand, those who had been lauded to the skies, turned out upon acquaintance, woeful disappointments. But I am rambling—

Not many weeks after I started to work and while we were at dinner, a man strolled up the track whom I had never seen before. The old foreman went down to meet him.

"Who's that?" I asked one of the men.

"That's the roadmaster," he replied.

"Who's the roadmaster?" I inquired.

"The roadmaster," he explained, "is the fellow who tells the section foreman where to head in."

Immediately my idea as to the importance of the foreman underwent a change. He was as wide as the track, but this new man filled the entire right of way.

It was at this time the old foreman said something I have never forgotten.

The roadmaster was telling him about a new "super" who was going to make things hum, and he wound up by saying, "and I hear he's somewhat of a reformer too."

"What sort of reformer is he?" asked the foreman.

"I don't know what you mean," replied the roadmaster.

"Well," said the foreman gazing down the track, "the word reformer always makes me think of the word Bermuda—it suggests either an onion or a lily."

"You know," he continued, "that the biggest field in the world for the right kind of reformer is in railroad-in', and, if this new 'super' will show us how he wants things done, encourage us to make suggestions, leave the cuss out of discussion and make criticisms sound like helpful advice;

if he don't forget that we're human, and will get down to ballast with us as man to man, they ain't a livin' soul on the railroad, from water boy to president—and you know most water boys have a through ticket for the president's job—that wouldn't grab his little horn, jump into the wagon, and whoop'er up for him.

"To catch on to this railroad work is like getting the measles; you have got to rub against it; and, as for the men, to understand them, you've got to know them, work with them, and encourage them.

"Standin' here now, in the middle of my track, monarch of all I survey—savin' your presence—I know that I can tell any director or officer of the Frisco Railroad somethin' about my section that he don't know. *HIS* success depends almost entirely upon the way in which he gets information from me. Of course, some of us can talk like a quart on Saturday night and lead to nothin' but confusion, but the majority of us are pretty fine fellows and if this reformer will go out amongst us and teach us how and why to do better—we'll go to it."

The roadmaster laughed, and, as he started on his way to the next section—this was before the day of butter flies and section men frequently met the roadmaster personally instead of viewing him from the rear end of a train—he said:

"John, your ideas on reformers are O. K. The thing for us to do is give the new man a chance to prove whether he is an onion or a lily."

In the two months of my work with the section gang, I was the first on our division, and I believe the first on the Frisco—but of course Bob Holland will deny this—to introduce the use of what we call shims—what was then called "chunks."

It was while we were working near Cherryvale, on the line which ended at that time at Halstead, that zero weather had converted the ground into cast iron.

Drainage and ditching were not the fine arts then they are now and the sudden cold snap had marcelled the track. The foreman cussed in helpless perplexity. Nothing less than dynamite could obtain even a spadeful of earth to resurface and all he could do was to issue slow orders and hope for a thaw.

While we were discussing the condition, I noticed some blocks of oak which looked to me as if they had been sawed from the ends of ties. These suggested a plan which I put up to the old foreman something like this:

"Where the track has sunk, let's draw the spikes in a few of the ties at the lowest part, pry up the rail, and between the rail and the ties put some of these 'chunks.'"

The old foreman looked at me and then at the chunks—then he said:

"Boy, I believe that's a darn good idea—we'll try it," and try it we did.

Several days later the roadmaster appeared—as roadmasters then seemed to do from nowhere—and again the old foreman taught me a lesson.

The roadmaster noticed these blocks of wood under the rail and asked the foreman what he was doing. I was working some distance away and did not know what they were talking about. It would have been easy for the old foreman to swell up and tell how he thought out this idea, but he was not that kind of a man. He yelled for me to come over and when I joined them he said:

"This is the boy that thought out that scheme, and because he did we

have cut out slow orders on my section."

The roadmaster looked me over and said, "well, we're looking for men who can think of things like this."

With me, as with almost any one, the greatest good fortune that could happen to a man starting out in life is to have a boss like the old foreman. Indeed, I am convinced that what little success I have attained is due to the fact that my first boss would not only listen to suggestions I made, but would take the trouble to explain why my schemes would not work.

I can look back now and see that if he had ignored my suggestions, before long I would have got into the rut of never really thinking and would have probably ended as I began—one of a section gang.

This encouragement of the foreman and what the roadmaster said, did far more for me than I can explain; taught me a lesson which I have always remembered and tried to impress upon others.

Immediately when I realized that suggestions were wanted, every detail of my work became a problem

which I thought out and tried to plan some new and better way of doing.

For example. I noticed that the men would throw the tools on the car in a helter-skelter way and one evening as we were about to start to the section house, a pick fell from the car across the rail. It occurred to me that if that should happen while the car was going at a high rate of speed it would derail her, and perhaps some of us would be badly hurt.

I suggested to the foreman that it would perhaps be a good idea to put the tools on the rear end of the car, leaving the front end clear and explained my reason. From that moment tools were never placed on the front end of the car.

The men liked the old foreman because he was fair to them, and, as result, things on his section went smoothly and I don't believe he ever worried over the possibility of losing his job, and I have yet to hear of his getting a real call down.

Always remember that the men below can put carpet or tacks on your stairway.

(To be continued.)

Magnates Take Notice

A baseball team, made up of employees of the Memphis shops and freight house, to be known as the "Frisco Baseball Club of Memphis," has just been organized.

In order to get the team properly started; that is, equipped with uniforms and other necessary paraphernalia, it has been decided to call upon some of the officials of the road for contributions.

The players are now in the game for the season and it is believed that a nine has been organized that will be a credit to the city of Memphis.

Please Contribute

Attention is called to our "Ballast" department and contributions are solicited. These epigrams occur to everyone and when good are very, very good. ———

During revival meeting in a Western city placards giving notices of the various meetings, subjects, etc., were posted in conspicuous places. One day the following was displayed:

Subject—"Hell: Its Location and Its Absolute Certainty."

Thomas Jones, baritone, will sing "Tell Mother I'll Be There."—*Ladies Home Journal*.



The photograph above reproduced, showing two Western Sixty-Second Track Division section gangs, was taken as the trackmen were leaving Frederick, Okla., where they were at work putting in ballast. Andy Howard, foreman of Section E-41, may be seen standing on the first car at the left. Mr. Howard has been in the em-

ploy of the company for the last three years. Sitting on the end of car, in front of Mr. Howard may be seen Charley Blachet, who has been running the Frederick, Okla., Section K-40 since February 1. Standing on the ground at the extreme right may be seen John Howard, who has been in charge of the extra gang putting in ballast, since January 8, 1914.

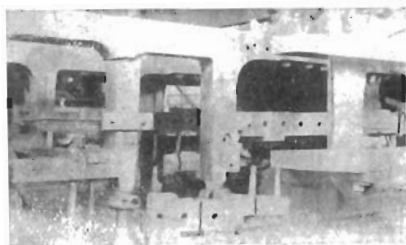
Thermit Welding

Between February 20 and March 2, 1914, ten thermit welds on heavy engine frames were made at the Kansas City shops, which it is said is the largest number of welds made in the shops in that length of time.

The pictures herewith show engine 1022 before and after welding. The pieces taken off were broken in two places on both sides and new pieces forged $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7$ inches, after which they

discarded pieces. All holes were drilled before making welds and no machine work was required after except fitting binders.

It will be noted from the reproductions that the front sections were alike and also the weld on top of back pedestal jaw.



Before.

were machined on one side and slotted to fit in place. The sizes given are $\frac{3}{4}$ inch wider and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch higher than



After.

The ten welds including engines 1299, 1283 and 778, were made in ten days—one each day and averaging a little over nine hours each for the welder and helper. The average average amount of thermit used was eighty pounds.



Much good is being derived from the meetings which Roadmaster J. F. Lambert has been having from time to time with the section foreman of his district. The sessions are held in Mr. Lambert's office at certain specified periods for the purpose of affording the men opportunity to make suggestions and exchange ideas on track maintenance and conditions.

The above picture was taken at the

last meeting and shows reading from right to left, top row: J. F. Lambert, roadmaster; T. W. Neely, Charles Keith, W. J. Phillips, section foremen; W. F. Copeland, roadmaster's clerk; J. F. Miller, J. O. Burklow and H. Behr, section foremen.

Second row: Section foremen, A. A. Miller, D. F. Winters, J. L. Virgin, E. A. Barnett, O. B. Davis, and L. L. Pritchett.



Steel Car Gang, Kansas City, Mo.