

"I've a mind to try it myself," said he. "It makes one strong and able to have wind for mountain climbing."

He took a little crumb between his fingers, put it in his mouth, and swallowed it.

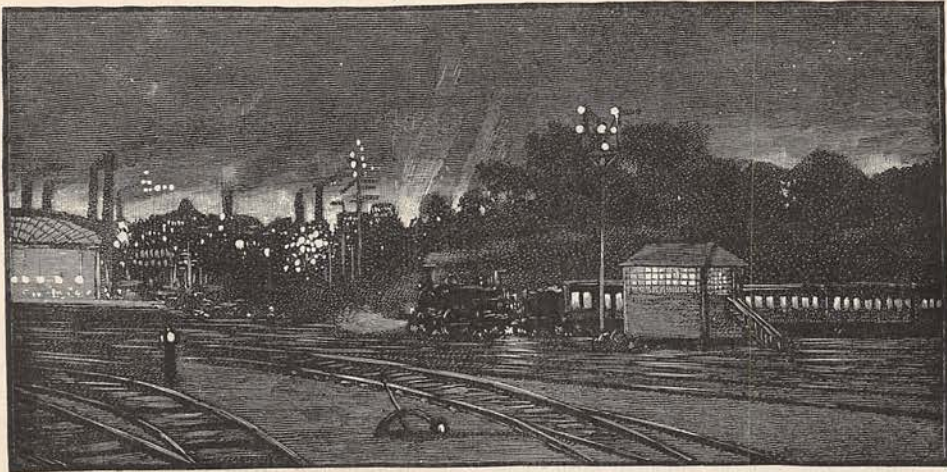
Next morning he saw the groom again.

"Look at me," said the fellow, stretching himself and showing his muscular arms; "I feel as if I had taken a draught of strong fiery wine. To-morrow I will take another crumb. I look forward to it."

Years passed, and the two did not meet. At length one day they encountered each other once more.

"Well," said our informant, "do you still nibble sugar?"

"Nibble! I eat now daily as much as a pea in size." He looked hale, young, fresh. "Ah!" he continued, "it is all right with me; but my Josephine—the girl I wanted to marry—she's dead with it. Women grow old faster than men, and so are not as patient and leisurely in increasing their doses. She took a grain too much, just before a fête, where we were to have met, and it cost her her life. I am very sorry for her, heartily sorry; but—there are more fishes in the sea than are brought up by the net."



"CERTAINLY A STRANGE SCENE" (p. 153).

### ALL NIGHT AT A JUNCTION.



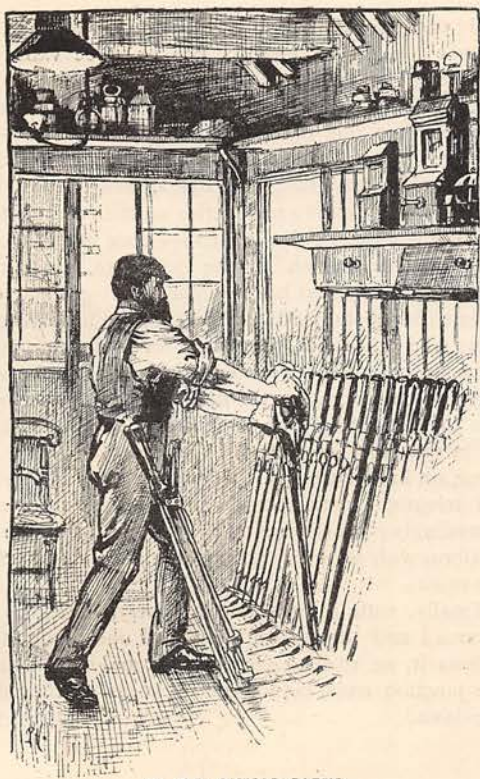
AN OFFICE-CLEANER.

WE travel so much now-a-days that there are few who have not had occasion at times to pass some hours at a railway station. Trains do not "fit" in; steamships are delayed, and belated passengers arriving at ports find that after a few hours' travel there is detention and delay. It is a common experience—I have known it in the three kingdoms, and in Sweden, Denmark, and

Germany, not to mention smaller countries. And the rule is that these junction-stations are bleak,

and uninteresting, so that it is a problem how to pass the time. But there are occasions when a stay at some great junction in the night-time is needful, and this is the case before us. Let us explore, with or without leave, what there is to see; and first we will wander a few hundred yards from the station, and look out for the whereabouts of railway officials who are the sweet little cherubs sitting up aloft to care for travelling Jack and Jill.

Let us enter the signal-cabin. It is nearly square in form; it is well lit day and night, the sides being nearly all window, and abundant gas-jets flaring forth. On a shelf are lamps with coloured "spectacles;" there are three chairs, and little furniture beyond. There is on one side of the cabin a long row of levers, coloured red, white, and black, and a brass plate attached to each one, which bears a distinctive word or words: "Station to Junc.," "Main dist. off," "Clear for main in," and other similar inscriptions. There are two painted gongs, and there are some magnetic instruments, with a telegraphic index. A "Bell Signal Code" indicates in part the use: a given



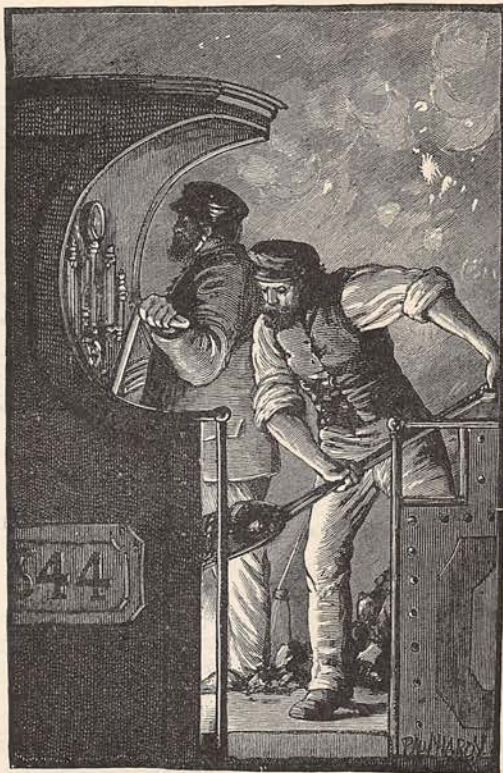
IN THE SIGNAL-CABIN.

number of rings indicates a "down passenger" train has left the station; another number that an "up ordinary" is signalled from another signal-cabin lower down the line, and so on. A boom of the gong, a ring of the bell, tells the signalman what train is coming; he pulls the appropriate lever, and the signals are shown which point a clear line for the train. When the levers are at rest, the signal-arms and "spectacles" which cover the signal-lights are raised, and the path is barred, but the approach of an engine causes the lowering of the arm and the "spectacle," unless there be some obstacle which causes the signalman to refuse passage.

Now let us look out at what is certainly a strange scene. Just before and behind us, along the line, a glance around shows stars and lights, ranged in rows high up—squares, diamonds, and triangles formed by stars of red, of white, and of bluish-green; further off are the long lines of globe lights at the station, and now and then as we watch a green light is transformed into white, a white one into red, as the levers work. Trees are in gloomy masses, but every passing breeze shakes them, and alters slightly the outline. A huge glow of light arises from some great manufactory, and there are red-lighted windows of houses, which colour the scene. The gong rings out, the bell tinkles, and there pass by the trains of many kinds, showing gleams of light, pencils of flame, and now and then coruscations of sparks. Now an express dashes along—a long streak of light, or rather one in which momentary gleams of

light intervene, and in their brilliancy the forms of passengers reading, reposing, dozing, are seen; then there is the rumble of a heavy train of coal-waggons, the only light spot in which is a fierce gleam that falls on the face and breast of the stoker, as he throws a shovelful of coals into the grate; and now there is the well-laden "excursionist" dashing home in the night, songs and jollity breaking in upon the quiet "box." These are the sights, little varied, which in day and night the signalmen look on, as they pursue their laborious and useful calling.

A strange contrast to this is the station platform even of a great town in the early hours of the morning. The platforms are deserted; the lights are dim; the bookstalls are shut; and in the waiting-rooms there are few persons to be seen, whilst an occasional porter or two crosses the path now and then, and disappears in the bright light which some opening door throws on the gloomy path. An office-cleaner pursues her useful career, and comes with a brush; an attendant carries coals to "mend the fires" in the waiting-room, and as you watch you find that fingers were the predecessors of tongs, and they do the duty of handling the Wallsend. The one hard sofa in the waiting-room is occupied by a sleeper; another dozes before the fire; and after the weary would-be passenger has waited long, and extracted all the mental pabulum obtainable from a card showing how communication was kept up between the Great Western and the wilds of Wales last year, an adjournment to the open platform will result. A few paces up and



THE STOKER.

down, the reading of the huge advertisements of the Atlantic liners, and there is an outburst of light, as an express comes puffing in. Porters have sprung suddenly up, the refreshment rooms are open, and steaming coffee is prepared, whilst a score of passengers rush out in headgear and habiliments that give more or less indication of attempts to sleep, and betray the degree of the accustomedness to travel. There is the bustle of the coming train—the rough rattle of the luggage-barrows, the “crack” of the air-brake as some carriage is detached, and finally the command which, in the chilly night air, is sharp and decisive—“Take your seats.” Then with a slamming of doors, a shrill whistling, and a few slow, preliminary puffs, the dark locomotive creeps away, increasing its pace as it goes. The train has left work for some of the few attendants at the station: there are hampers of fish, crates of yeast, and a multitude of small parcels to be examined, sorted, and carried away; there are mailbags and parcels to be seen to, and it is a little time before the platform resumes its quiet—if quiet there is possible, when shunting and rumbling seem so frequent, and when the “goods,” the “mineral,” and the “passenger” seem almost to alternate.

Look out! Steaming through the station goes one of the few newspaper trains, and as it goes there are thrown out fifty or sixty little bundles of papers,

and one or two of heavy appearance; and off sweeps the engine and its two or three vans with steadying carriages.

Then from one of the sidings a “parly” is slowly shunted into one of the docks, and “Lamps”—as Charles Dickens called that functionary—rolls along his wooden tray of globe lights, and throws here one and there one to his abettor on the carriage-tops, whilst a few hasty rubs at carriage-door handles complete the preparation for the departure, but not till after another express has brought its freight and contributed its quota, by dilatoriness, to the impatience of those who wait for it. Butchers for a distant market drive up, and chaff the porters with an easy assurance, begot of custom, about the delay; a weary woman or two look doubtfully on, and finally shut themselves up in one cold compartment to sleep, if sleep will come, on hard cushions. Knowing travellers look to the telegraph notice-board and dispose themselves accordingly; whilst one or two persistently pace the platform with a steady tramp and a gait bespeaking the sailor.

Finally, with a rush and a scurry, in comes the express; and though we know well our branch train follows it, we rush to secure seats, and our night at the junction ends, before the darkness is chased by the dawn.

J. W. S.

## In Doubt.

Words by G. WEATHERLY.

Music by J. M. BENTLEY.

VOICE.

*p*

1. I love my love,..... I know, full well, By  
 2. I love my love..... with all my heart, And

PIANO.

*p*

Ped. \*

Ped. \*

*cres.*

signs ..... that all, that all..... may see; But, some - how, this I  
 love,..... and love to have.... it so; Yet dare I not my

*cres.*