

TALES OF THE OLD TIMES

By Arnold Pollak

When The Train Stalled

Our train was stalled at Brenbaum, Texas, for some reason, and walking forward to the baggage car, to ascertain the cause, I noticed our conductor haggling with a man for a lot of fresh fish. I asked that conductor how long we would remain, and received the reply: "About two hours or more, or when I can get this bird to come to my terms." While I doubted he would hold the train for a fish trade, being used to more prompt service in the North where but a few days previously the train was held but half an hour to watch a couple of brakemen having a fight, I therefore took my samples to a wholesale grocer across the road, figuring to create a new cigar jobber. I had just gotten thry the preliminary spiel and opened my sample case, when I heard the toot and noticed the train starting.

Hurriedly closing my case, I ran faster than I can now, but the train had put on unaccustomed speed. My friend, Oscar Goldsmith, a fellow traveller from New York, and now living at Huntsville, Ala., seeing my plight and figuring the train too fast for my legs, just pulled the rope. That train, strange as it may appear, had civilized rules, and it just stopped as I was climbing up the steps. My friend the rope puller had disappeared, making room for the irate conductor, who came rushing up, with a spike in his hands, inquiring who had stopped the train. I told him it was I as I had seen some more fresh fish in the creek and thought he might want to stop and do a little fancy casting. That ended the argument, and the train jogged on at its usual rate of at least six miles an hour.

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