

LEGKAM, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1915.

FROM DAY TO DAY

BY WALT RING.

WILLIAM F. ALLEN.

Some of the best work of the world is so quietly done that many do not notice it, and so thoroughly done that the next generation looks on it as coeval with the pyramids, or if it be in the Western Hemisphere as dating from the first voyage of Columbus.

There was not much said about the death of William F. Allen. Here in South Jersey there are a few who remember that he laid out the town of Wenonah, but anything that took place before the Centennial is semi-ancient to those who can barely remember the Spanish war. It is possible that in his own neighborhood there were persons who simply knew Mr. Allen as a railroad man who had been with the old Camden and Amboy.

However there must be a great many in New Jersey who have traveled on the railroads of 1840 or earlier. When George B. McClellan was Governor of this State, when Secretary Garrison was a boy, when Abraham Browning was in his prime, when William J. Sewell was a prominent railroad manager there were perhaps more than fifty time standards on the railroads of the United States. Necessarily this meant confusion in myriad, inconvenience to thousands, sometimes it entailed serious loss. One of the most useful men in securing the adoption of a uniform system was William F. Allen, and for a number of years it was customary to speak of "the Allen standard."

Now boys and girls take it for granted that the country always had a time standard, and that railroads were built in accordance with it. Thousands have never heard that we used to have a postage rate system, varying with distance, involving ten, fifteen or twenty-five cents—yet President Taylor hoped for a five-cent rate as a progressive ideal. His words are "I confidently believe that a change may safely be made reducing all single-letter postage to the uniform rate of 5 cents, regardless of distance without thereby imposing any greater tax on the Treasury than would constitute a very moderate compensation for this public service, and if therefore respectfully recommend such a reduction." The reason President Taylor felt warranted in urging such a reform was that a four years experiment under rates lower than those preceding 1845 had worked well.

At this moment there may be cash boys and even lads in commercial schools who never heard of the old State bank currency with notes that might pass for \$100 in Chicago, \$65 in Pittsburgh, possibly \$50 in Philadelphia. The war for the Union and the growth of the great West drove the "red dog" money out of the public mind, when in 1832 the issue entered into a Presidential campaign it was new even surprising to many young voters. Now the postage question, even the three-cent stamps of Grant's day,—the State bank notes, and the standard time system are unknown to multitudes of school children.

Nor is this surprising. Figures are not picturesque,—implements or vehicles may be. The probabilities are that every girl in every American high school has seen a spinning wheel or a picture of one, that every boy has some idea of the stage coach and the canal boat. But if modern invention lowers prices, or a better financial system is introduced the world soon takes it for granted, and the next generation supposes that what now is was of old.

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SAVING STRING.

Sixty, fifty even forty years ago there were many children who read "The Parents' Assistant," and one of the best stories in that good old-fashioned book is "Waste Not, Want Not."

Two boys, cousins, like each other tolerably well, but the extravagant/fellow laughs at Ben for saving money and small articles that may be of use. Ben is generous enough, but he never wastes anything. Instead of cutting a piece of cord, he unfastens the knots, unwraps the bundle, and puts the string in his pocket, while his cousin laughs at him for taking so much trouble.

Needless to say there is a moral. The boys go to an archery meeting, each has three shots—Ben's cousin meets with divers mishaps owing to his thoughtlessness. Ben shoots, and comes respectably near the mark, a second shot and the string breaks, he draws out the string in his pocket, and wins the prize. It is all told with Miss Edgeworth's good feeling and good sense.

When the United States government expressly warns postmasters to save string in order to use it a second time the old story of "Waste Not, Want Not" revives in the memory of persons who have not read it since they were ten years old.

William F. Allen

Clipped By:



bob_thomas_wk
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