

"The Paymaster's Car" From *The American Railway*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1889.

Perception of the Italian railroad worker-

The Paymaster's car, which is virtually a moving bank or cashier's office, and arranged conveniently for the payment of money to the men as they pass through, is generally run "special," upon notice in advance to all foremen or heads of departments, either by telegraph or, as on some roads, by the display of special signal flags, which are carried on the front end of the locomotive of some regular train the day before the car is run over any division. In this way all men employed along the line of the road, whether at or between stations, are notified of the Paymaster's coming, and it does not usually require any other inducement than this to bring them all out. There is nothing that will prompt them to jump higher and run faster than the whistle of the pay-train as it comes around the curve to the station. Men have been known to forget their names, and do other foolish things under the excitement of drawing their month's pay. The fellow who said he could not write all his name when requested by the Paymaster to sign the pay-roll, but offered to write as much of it as he could, after some deliberation made a cross on the sheet with all the care and nicety he could muster. Others who could not write have been very slow to admit it, and have pleaded haste as an excuse for not doing so. So far as Italians are concerned (and what railroad service is now complete without its gang of Italian laborers?), they are usually designated by numbers, and in some cases their foremen have thought it well to name them after prominent statesmen or other public men, or possibly some of the head officials of the company. To run across twenty-five or thirty Daniel Websters on the same road is not surprising, and the President of the company himself is liable to have a half-dozen namesakes throughout the different divisions of his road. A cage of jabbering monkeys is not a more amusing spectacle than some gangs of Italian laborers receiving their month's pay.

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