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A LOCOMOTIVE HERO.



WELL, BOYS, IF you wish it, I'll tell you the story. When I was a youth of eighteen, and lived with my parents, I had a boyish ambition to become an engineer, although I had been educated for better pursuits. During my college vacation, I constantly lounged about the station, making friends with the officials, and especially with an engineer named Silas Markley. I became much attached to this man, although he was forty years of age, and by no means a sociable fellow.

He was my ideal of a brave, skillful, thoroughbred engineer, and I looked up to him as something of a hero. He was not a married man, but lived alone with his old mother, and I think they both took quite a fancy to me in their quiet, unobtrusive way.

When this Markley's freeman left him, I induced him to let me take his place during the remainder of my vacation. He hesitated some time before he consented to humor my boyish whim; but he finally yielded, and I was in great elation.

The first was that, in my idleness and the overworked state of my brain, I craved for the excitement, and besides, I had such longing dreams of the fiery ride through the hills, mounted literally on the iron horse, so I became an expert fireman, and liked it exceedingly. For the excitement more than compensated for the rough work I was required to do.

But there came a time when I got my fill of excitement. One day, Markley, one day, came to the station with a parcel to give her a good deal of happiness. It was her son's birthday, and she wanted to go down to Philadelphia in the train without letting him know anything about it, and there purchase a present for him. She took me into her confidence and asked me to assist her. I arranged the preliminaries, got her into the train without being noticed by Markley, who, of course, was busy with his engine.

The old lady was in high glee over the bit of innocent deception she was practicing on her son. She enjoined me again not to tell him, and then I left her and took my place.

It was a midsummer day, and the weather was delightful.

The train was one which stopped at the principal stations on the route. On this occasion, as there were no specials on the line, it was run by telegraph—that is, the engineer had simply to obey the instructions which he receives at each station, so that he is put as a machine in the hands of one controller, who directs all trains from a central point, and thus has the whole line under his eye. If the engineer does not obey to the least little his orders, it is destruction to the whole.

Well, we started without mishap, and up to time, and easily reached the first station in the time allotted to us. As we stopped there, a boy ran alongside with the telegram, which he handed to the engineer. The next moment I heard a smothered exclamation from Markley.

"Go back," he said to the boy; "tell Williams to have the message repeated; there's a mistake."

The boy dashed off; in a few minutes he came flying back.

"Had it repeated," he panted, "Williams is stopping at you; says there's no mistake, and you'd best get on."

He thrust the second message up as he spoke.

Markley read it, and stood hesitating for half a minute.

There was dismay and utter perplexity in the expression of his face as he looked at the telegram and the hour train behind him. His lips moved as if he were calculating chances, and his eyes suddenly quailed as he saw death at the end of the calculation. I was watching him with considerable curiosity. I ventured to ask him what was the matter, and what he was going to do.

"I'm going to obey," he said, curtly. The engine gave a long shriek of horror that made me start as if it were Markley's own voice. The next instant we slipped out of the station and dashed through low-lying farms at a speed which seemed dangerous to me.

"Put in more coal," said Markley. I shoveled in more, but took time. "We are going very fast, Markley."



MARKLEY READ IT.

He did not answer. His eyes were fixed on the steam-gauge, his lips close shut.

"More coal," he said.

I threw it in. The fields and houses began to fly past half-seen. We were nearing Dufrene, the next station. Markley's eyes went from the gauge to the face of the time-piece, and back. He moved like an automaton. There was little more meaning in his face.

"More!" he said, without turning his eye.

I took up the shovel—hesitated.

"Markley, do you know you are going at the rate of sixty miles an hour?"

"Coal!"

I was alarmed at the stern, cold rigidity of the man. His pallor was becoming frightful. I threw in the coal. At least we must stop at Dufrene. That was the next halt. The little town was ag-

portlers and two handsome young men in evening clothes. For an hour she had lounged with intereasing languor in the ball room from which she had just escaped. For the last time she had repeatedly put up her hand to draw aside the curtain and reveal herself, but each time had hesitated and been lost. All because of a single remark which had reached her ears a moment after she hurried away from the club and light and scurried in here, as voices faintly reached her in order that she might escape more attention and undue notice.

She had wanted not to think but to remember; not to reproach herself or another but to go over in a dream the old days which she thought dead, but which at the sight of a well-remembered face had sent a ghost from their grave to haunt her.

At first she had doubted her eyes. Had it really been he whom she had seen? Or was it only a remarkable likeness. Perhaps, she thought, with an emotion in which the congratulatory almost drowned all pain, it was not even the latter, but that she had forgotten. Her dreams and memories could not have been all happy ones, for on the huge, fragrant blossom in which her nose was buried a drop gleamed in the moonlight. It could hardly have been dew, unless the splendor of the moonlight, pitying the poor plant blooming so sweetly under a roof where heaven's drops could not reach it, had brought one, swiftly and silently, and laid it there in remembrance.

But a voice, raised somewhat, as in argument, broke suddenly upon her reveries and left no room for doubt.

"Mistaken? Oh, no, Grayson; I could not forget so soon. It is but two years. She is not changed at all. I should know her among a thousand."

"Why did you not seek her out? Perhaps she has not found it so easy to forget as she declared it would be. You might have been the happiest man in the world at this moment if you only had pocketed your pride long enough to go to her and demand an explanation."

"Stop right there. I shall never exchange one word with her again. If she came to me to-morrow helpless, I would assist her as I might the veriest stranger—and leave her like one when I had performed what service I could."

She heard a match struck, and the odor of a cigarette crept out between the edges of the curtain. She longed to be at liberty. She yearned for freedom, but, most of all, she wished for the moral courage to step out, laughingly excuse herself and walk away. She wondered what effect such a course would have on the two men. Probably her old friend would look thunder-struck at first. Then she imagined she heard the faint contempt in his tone as he nodded to his friend and said: "Eavesdropping, it seems."

She wondered what effect it would have on his friend, and then, a wonder grew in her mind as to what this friend might be like.

Then in the darkness inside the curtain another match was struck, and the stranger's voice remarked:

"Only 11.15. You hardly dare venture out again unless you want to meet her face to face. I wonder where her party are stopping? Take my advice and—"

The curtain swept aside like a whirlwind. A slight figure with wild eyes and bare shoulders, clad in resplendent dancing gown, stood before them. No thought now of the contempt with which they might think of her. Only a startled cry:

"Fifteen minutes past eleven! Oh-h-h-h! The boat will be gone!"

As swiftly as Cinderella fled from the palace of the prince on the stroke of the magic hour, so rapidly Millicent rushed down the steps of the hotel and away beneath the trees of the surrounding garden to the water's edge. Slowly, majestically, in the moonlight a great steamer was putting out to sea. The moonlight sparkled on the waves in her wake. On shore a girl stood wringing her hands or stretching them supplicatingly toward the departing vessel.

"Oh, what shall I do? What shall I do?" she wailed upon the air. "The boat is gone; papa and mamma must be asleep and never missed me."

The two men who had followed her looked at one another helplessly. Then Grayson spoke. It was to place himself entirely at her disposal.

She secretly realized herself how much she encouraged Mr. Grayson in her efforts to ignore her older friend, nor how great execution some of her glances at the latter did. But on the day previous to the arrival of the next homeward bound vessel, Grayson took his friend into the garden of the hotel and said, savagely:

"Say, see here. You can't play dog-in-the-manger any longer. If you declare yourself out of the race for Miss Millicent's hand, I'm going to try my luck. My fate must be decided before to-morrow morning."

Jack looked meditatively at his friend, then he said:

"I think I'll go talk to her now."

"Some one overheard his conversation with Millicent for they told me she answered him."

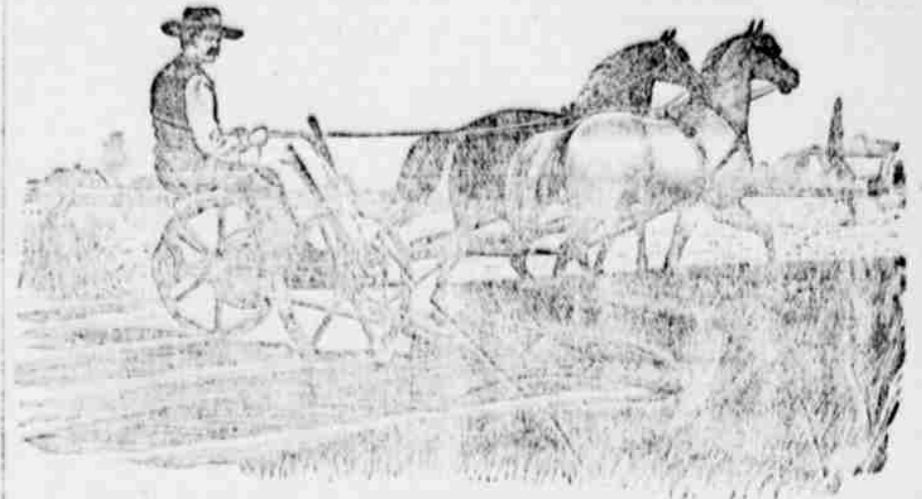
"Mr. Narcourt, I called upon you for assistance in my difficulty as the merest acquaintance might. Immediately on my arrival in England I shall see that my full indebtedness to you is discharged."

The ship next day carried away two passengers who were early on board. A bridal couple, as other passengers smilingly remarked.

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Indian Commerce.

The Indian manufactures were confined to the making of canoes, the building of lodges, the weaving of baskets and coarse fabrics, and the making of rude weapons and images.

Royal Families.

Of the twenty-seven royal families of Europe two-thirds are of German origin.

Children Cry for Pitcher's Castoria.

Are Watling Lists Too Long? Mrs. De Fashion (average society lady) making her round of calls owing to average society friends—Is Mrs. Wiggins Van Mortlande at home. Servant—No, madame, she's— Mrs. De Fashion—Please hand her my card when she returns. Servant—She won't return, madame. She was buried a month ago.—New York Weekly.

Some Hope.

Editor—Yes, there is a vacancy on our staff. What experience have you had?

Applicant—I was once editor of a college weekly.

"Humph! Did you give satisfaction?"

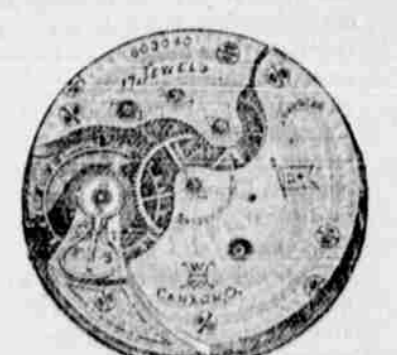
"No, I was kicked out."

"Take that desk there."—New York Weekly.

Maine Man's Manta.

A man in Thomastown, Me., has a hobby of collecting callendars, and he has some from China, Japan, Cuba and Alaska.

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