

THE MOUNTAIN LIMITED.

A Thrilling Tale of Railroadings.

BY ERWIN L. COOLIDGE.

CHAPTER XI—Continued.

The pallor of death had set in, and his moments were numbered.

He spoke with difficulty as he addressed our hero, to whom he was an utter stranger, as Hal knelt at his side.

"Has the justice come?" asked Booth.

Hal looked at him in surprise.

He thought he had been summoned by mistake.

"Yes," spoke up a man from the group gathered around, "What can I do for you?"

"Swear me. Everybody here bear witness."

The justice administered an oath to the dying man, and with a pencil and notebook, prepared to take down his last words.

"Lawrence Llewellyn Alstead," said Booth slowly to our hero. "I sent for you to tell you who and what you are, and how to recover your fortune and place in the world, of which you have all your life been robbed."

Hal Harrod's heart leaped joyfully.

"Was he after all to learn his parentage and origin?"

His name then, was Lawrence Llewellyn Alstead.

"Eighteen years ago," continued Booth, "I was a telegraph operator for a stock broker and banker in St. Louis. He was enormously wealthy, married, two sons, twins, Lawrence Llewellyn and Hero Raymond."

"Hero Raymond my brother!" cried Hal.

"Yes, Alstead caught me tampering with the stock returns for private ends and nearly killed me, and then kicked me into the street."

"One Jim Shackford and a man named Peterson, were in the scheme with me, and I at once went to them."

"Alstead was a big owner in the Missouri Midland Railroad on which John Harrod was a runner."

"I knew Harrod, and made use of him as you will learn."

"I swore I'd have revenge on Alstead, and in a week the chance came. An excursion to Hot Springs was started. An open switch threw the train into a river. Forty people were killed. Among them Senator Alstead. His wife and two sons were there, but they did not die. From the wreck they were rescued. Mrs. Alstead, formerly a Miss Raymond, and one boy were found by people who cared for them. She was badly hurt, and to this day is an invalid."

"The other boy fell into my hands, and at first I intended to murder him. But the fact that my hand, together with Jim Shackford's and Peterson's, had already sent forty people to their death, deterred me. I bribed John Harrod to take the kid, and he did so, telling me the world he had found him in the roundhouse at St. Louis."

"Jim Shackford was a schemer. He plotted to possess Senator Alstead's fortune, and set to work."

"By an unlucky mischance information of a big fortune on an express train in Kansas reached my ears. I told Jim Shackford."

"We wrecked the train and robbed it. That money gave Shackford the power to get Alstead's possessions."

"I left him. Peterson stuck to him. I was mad with the desire for blood. I wrecked a train in the Ohio Valley. The report reached Shackford and Peterson that I was killed there."

"For years I disappeared. Finally down in my luck, I returned to St. Louis and inquired for my old acquaintances."

"Everybody had come east. Harrod was dead. The boy was a runner on the Eastern Central Railroad, the other boy a reporter for the *Daily Earth* newspaper."

He paused from sheer exhaustion.

"Where were Shackford and Peterson?" asked Hal Harrod.

For answer, Booth raised his hand, the index finger pointed to a silent form on the hard earth ten feet distant.

"There is Peterson," he said. "Shackford is the President of the Athens & Northern Railroad."

A cry of horror escaped from the group surrounding the dying man.

Joe Grace stood at Hal Harrod's elbow. The Boy Runner whispered in his ear a few words, and Joe hurried to the telegraph office.

A message was sent to President Wellington.

"Arrest Webb of the Athens & Northern."

There was a prisoner behind prison bars that night in Athens.

But we are digressing.

Booth rallied, and in a slower, weaker voice continued:

"I looked them all up. Saw Peterson, made a deal with him and Shackford. They had work to do. They were not quite so blood-thirsty as formerly, but were anxious to ruin the Eastern Central Railroad. I thirsted for the death of the

rest of the Alstead family. Peterson was in Lyons, and tried to bribe Lawrence Alstead to have the Mountain Limited late. If on time, I was to stop him at Little River Bridge. A switch was there. Here was a chance to destroy him. I opened the switch as his train came on at a mile a minute. By some strange turn of fate, Hero Raymond Alstead appeared to save him. I shot him down. He lives.

"A second attempt was to be made last night. All was arranged. Shackford and Peterson were in the game. I cut the wires from Lyons and beyond Lakeport, and then sent a false message to the operator at Lakeport."

"Mountain Limited fifty minutes late!"

"The scheme worked, and a local train went in ahead of them. You all know about that. I waited at Lakeport to hear the news of the expected wreck. None came. The wire ticked the information that the Limited was on time at Athens. Mad with failure, I went to the cottage where Mrs. Alstead lived. Entering boldly I met her face to face. She did not know me. I struck her down at my feet. A servant confronted me. A knife did my work, and I fled."

"Did you kill my mother?" yelled Hal, fiercely.

"I don't know," came Booth's reply.

"The justice spoke up quickly."

"No," he said, "nobody was killed. The papers this morning tell the story. Mrs. Alstead was only stunned, the servant badly wounded."

"Go on," said Hal, in a strange voice.

"I went across the lake to Minnetta. Took a freight train there and came to Mountain Junction. Down the road a couple of miles I tapped the telegraph wire and sent for Peterson—he came—and he shot me. I stabbed him. He is dead—I will die soon. That's all."

An hour later Booth was dead.

* * * * *

"Joe, I don't like the way the *Hesperus* acts."

The Boy Runner spoke.

"No, I don't either," was the fireman's reply.

They had left Lyons on the return trip and were rushing along toward Lincoln. The old locomotive was wheezing and plunging in a most erratic manner.

Hal Harrod was uneasy.

He knew that she was not safe, but he did not fear that she would break down immediately.

On and on they went.

Lincoln was passed and then Circuit Junction.

Worse and worse the engine wheezed and plunged.

Under a full head of steam she was barely making her time.

"Better ease her, Hal," said Joe, warningly. It was the first time he had ever offered the Boy Runner a suggestion.

"Yes," said Hal, "I will."

They were in the yard at Athens.

Too late!

There was a fearful ripping sound, a tremendous report, and a shriek as of a rocket piercing the clouds.

The boiler of the *Hesperus* had exploded.

Over the place where she should have been the Mountain Limited rolled on, into the depot on time to the last.

What of Hal Harrod and Joe Grace?

Senseless, bleeding and scalded, almost beyond human semblance, they lay a hundred feet from where the fragments of the old *Hesperus* strewed the earth.

CHAPTER XII.

NO MORE RED LIGHTS OF DANGER.

Why dwell upon the pathetic details of long months of pain and suffering?

Tender care and nursing by Doctor Grosblach and his hospital attendants, assisted by the loving hands of Maud Wellington, brought Hal Harrod, the Boy Runner, as we must still call him for old acquaintance sake, back from the jaws of death.

Four months elapsed, and the strong constitution of the young hero triumphed and he once more stood the semblance of his former self.

But the marks of his awful experience yet vividly remained.

It would take years to efface them.

Poor Joe Grace, his fellow sufferer, was not yet on his feet, but it was but a question of time when he would be well once more.

Their escape from death had been providential.

When able to return to work, Joe Grace is to run *Old Big-wheel* at the head of the Mountain Limited.

Hal Harrod will not go into the cab again.

Four months have brought about many important events.

The Eastern Central Railroad is now a great railroad system.

The arrest of Jim Shackford, and his

subsequent confession and death in the Athens jail, was the death blow to the Athens & Northern.

All his property was rightfully that of Lawrence and Hero Alstead.

They came into their own.

And in passing we must not forget that the *Daily Earth's* benefit for the hero of Little River Bridge had reached the proportion of a fair sized fortune, \$20,000.

The downfall of the Athens & Northern gave the Eastern Central full sway.

Hal and Hero's stock was voted upon, and the road was leased to the latter company.

The Mountain Limited was run through to North Falls, via Graybrook.

The Northern Flyer was a memory of the past.

No northern traffic went over the iron of the Mountain River Railroad.

Colonel James Wilson Newburn, was in a fair way to be squeezed out of business.

He weakened, and the Eastern Central leased his twenty-four miles of road.

Then the North Falls & Summit Railway was given a big bonus, and entered the fold of the Eastern Central.

A big strike in coal was made at Quarryville, and in the mountains north, and an extension of that track was begun, to connect with the main line at Summit.

Mrs. Alstead rejoiced at the recovery of her own health and that of her sons, and her motherly heart was made doubly happy by the finding of the son lost to her so many years.

What more is there to tell?

Hal's marriage?

Oh yes, he married Maud, and yes, in deed, Hero wedded Grace at the same time.

That was fifteen years ago.

To-day Hal is the general manager of the Eastern Central system, and President Wellington still retains his office.

Joe Grace is master mechanic of the road.

Hero Raymond Alstead stuck to journalism, and to-day is sole proprietor of the *Daily Earth* with "its largest circulation in America."

A few of our old friends of the days of the Mountain Limited, now a vestibule, gold-mounted flyer from ocean to ocean, without change, are yet in harness, and never tire of telling of the days when their general manager was called the Boy Runner, and of the last run of the *Hesperus*.

THE END.

Kingston Confirmation.

W. C. Bennett, of Kingston says Dodd's Kidney Pills will do all that is claimed for them.

Kingston, July 17—Mr. W. C. Bennett, of Barriefield, just over the hill from the Limestone City, confirms what the Canadian press has been asserting recently that Dodd's Kidney Pill, cure to stay cured.

To a Toronto enquirer Mr. Bennett wrote back as follows:

Kingston, May 24th, 1899

Dear Sir—Your letter referring to Dodd's Kidney Pills received and in reply would say that I have used them to great advantage. Dodd's Kidney Pills do all that is claimed for them.

Yours truly,

W. C. Bennett.

GALLOWAY NOTES.

JULY 17.—The weather has been very wet for the past month, and crops are looking well.

Mr. and Mrs. John Parkhill visited friends in Mill Branch last week.

Jonathan and his best girl took a pleasant drive round the shore to Buctouche, Sunday.

We are going to lose one of our fair young ladies. Moncton will be the winner.

The young men around here are expecting a big time when George and Mamie gets the knot tied.

Bobbie is still carrying on the butchering trade.

Mr. William Parkhill is preparing to shingle his house.

Miss Abbie Bell is visiting friends in Little River, Buctouche.

DICKIE.

"Every well man bath his ill day." When "a bit off" or when seriously ill you should take Hood's Sarsaparilla and get well.

A RIVAL FOR NEBUCHADNEZZAR

William Edwards, a miner, hailing from New York, is in Rossland, B. C., hospital, a living example of the astounding fact that a man can eat grass as an excruciating diet for eight or ten days and live to tell the tale.

Edwards was employed to do some work on Sophie Mountain, a very wild part of British Columbia. He camped on the mountain with two companions. His companions left him alone one day and Edwards thought he would clamber up the mountain side for a short distance. He could not find his way back to camp and for 18 days grass, roots and weeds made up his diet. When found he was almost dead.

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A Good Medicine — "We have taken Hood's Sarsaparilla in our family as a spring medicine and used Hood's Pills for biliousness and found both medicines very effective. For impure blood we know Hood's Sarsaparilla is a good medicine." R. S. PELTON, publisher Bee, Atwood, Ont.

Hood's Sarsaparilla
Never Disappoints

Hood's Pills cure liver ills; the non-drugging and only cathartic to take with Hood's Sarsaparilla.

THE DECLINE OF GOOD MANNERS IN MODERN SOCIETY

A fashionable gathering of society women at the Women's Institute, London, had a lively and humorous discussion on the customs of modern society. Lady Arnold lamented the decline of good manners in society. She said it was not at all uncommon to hear a well born young lady address a gentleman as "old fellow." She attributed the many rough ways now prevalent to the bicycle craze. Servants, too, she said, were not as those of older generations. She deprecated showy colors, as now worn, and said the luxury and extravagance of modern dinners were appalling. After bemoaning cigarette smoking and life in flats, she spoke of silver weddings with attendant presents, and said: "Why one should want to be paid for being married twenty-five years I don't know." Centennaries and memorial services all came under Lady Arnold's ban.

Mrs. Siethorpe referred to cigarette smoking and thought it a great pity that women should add to the already too great volume of tobacco smoke. She also denounced the fashionable handshake, which, she said, meant nothing, and was affected and often insincere. Mrs. Archibald Little said that the last speaker evidently had not dwelt much in the Far East, where, for obvious reasons, they dispensed with much hand-shaking. As to memorial services, she said, perhaps Lady Arnold in denouncing them, would rather have the fashion of the Far East, where they held funerals before people died.

Mrs. Wynford Phillips said manners, as a rule, were the result of individuality, not of a class. One often, she said, found good manners among the so-called lower classes. As to the manners of the good old times—well, distance, she thought, perhaps, lent enchantment. Mrs. Phillips also referred to Lady Arnold's denunciation of separate visiting cards for young ladies. She held that having individualities of their own, they ought to have visiting cards of their own, and not merely be merged into their mother's personality.

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HAD A LIVELY TIME.

The man who sought to carry off a red hot stove which did not belong to him, sinks into insignificance when compared with a Missouri man who tried to steal a beehive when all its inhabitants were at home. It was in Independence and in the middle of the night, when a whole neighborhood was awakened by a series of blood curdling screams which came from the backyard of a prominent citizen. Nothing short of murder could have caused them, and every man within hearing distance grabbed his gun and started out to rescue the victim. All they could find was a broken hive, a quantity of honey on the ground, several thousand angry bees buzzing around and on one side of the pickets of the fence a piece of a man's coat-tail.

Children Cry for CASTORIA.

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ESTABLISHED 1889.

The Review,

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Published every Thursday at \$1.00 per year in advance; \$1.50 if not paid within three months.

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