

THE MOUNTAIN LIMITED.

A Thrilling Tale of Railroadings.

BY ERWIN L. COOLIDGE.

CHAPTER VIII—Continued.

Maud Wellington thought nothing of the fact that the fireman stepped through his window, and went forward a few steps along the running board in the inky darkness of the night.

Hal Harrod was never more alert in his life.

Seated like a queen on her throne, Maud Wellington saw the giant monster cleave the blackness ahead of them, mile after mile.

She could not see fifty feet ahead of them.

She wondered how far Hal Harrod's sight pierced beyond the first glare of the headlight.

They were passing now through a city. It was Lakeport.

They thundered across a bridge, and she heard the roar of angry water.

It was Little River Bridge.

This was where Hero Raymond saved the train.

On and on they thundered.

How the Mountain Limited was flying! This was railroading in earnest.

But—and she asked herself these questions:

"Did not such awful speed tempt fate?"

"Did it not invite destruction?"

"Was the management of the Eastern Central Railroad justified in risking the lives of its passengers by such a fearful speed?"

"If an accident should happen, would not all its officers be nominally guilty of murder?"

"Would not her father?"

She shuddered.

"What if there should be an accident?"

As she peered into the blackness ahead

two big red eyes stared into her own.

Hal Harrod groaned aloud, as he cried:

"Joe, it's all up!"

Joe Grace pulled the whistle.

Toot!

Down Brakes!

Hal Harrod, as on a previous occasion, reversed full over.

But the Mountain Limited still sped on.

The track was blocked, not half a train length ahead.

A train at Lake Bend Watering Station on the main track.

A freight train was on either side.

The wires were down from Leons!

CHAPTER IX.

"YOU ARE A HERO, I LOVE YOU."

"All right, Sam! Set off at Lincoln! The Mountain Limited is fifty minutes!"

Walter Perrin, conductor of the Lyons Accommodation, was the speaker addressing the engineer.

Sam Watson was the runner of the accommodation due at Lakeport at 6:20 p. m., according to the time table of the Eastern Central Railroad.

At this station it was customary for the train to set off for the Limited to pass.

"What's that?" shouted Sam as he received the signal to start.

"Orders to go ahead. The Limited fifty late," came Perrin's uneasy reply, as he again swung his lantern and shouted.

"All aboard!"

"Hold on!" cried Watson, swinging from the footboard of his engine with a word of warning to his fireman. "Let's understand this better. It's not like the Limited to be late now-a-days. Two months ago it was different."

"Well that's order," said Perrin. "Go ahead and lay on at Lincoln."

"Let's see the orders," persisted Sam Watson. "Perhaps there is some mistake."

"All right, Sam," said Perrin, and together the two men went to the telegraph room in the Lakeport station.

"Limited fifty late?" asked Sam.

"Yes," said the operator. "Northern connections failed." He was sitting back in his chair calmly smoking a cigar.

All the instruments before him were silent.

"Ask Mountain Junction what the real trouble is," said Sam Watson, quickly.

"Wires all down since six o'clock," was the astounding reply. "Last message I got said the Limited was fifty late."

"Looks like mischief!" was Sam Watson's unsatisfied reply.

"Oh it's all right," said the operator. "Wires often act that way."

"Come on, Sam," cried Perrin, "6:22: Now we'll lay off at Lincoln."

"Well, as you say," said Watson, with a shake of his head, "But I don't like it. It's better to be safe than sorry. Let's wait ten minutes anyhow. The Mountain Limited will be here then if she is all right."

"No, get a move on and rush ahead for Lincoln," said Perrin.

Sam Watson made no further protest but climbed into the cab of his engine.

But Sam Watson was not satisfied.

"All aboard!" and the accommodation moved away from Lakeport.

Lake Bend was the next stop, six miles distant.

* * * * *

Five minutes after the Lyons Accommodation train left Lakeport the telegraph operator sat bolt upright in his chair.

The wires were working again.

Tick tick-ety-ty-tick.

The messages were flying fast.

Mountain Junction was calling Athens. A message for President Wellington.

"All well. Hal Harrod."

Lyons was calling Lakeport.

Tick-k-ty k-ty-k.

"What?"

Merciful God!

The wires clicked four words and the pallor of death crossed the face of the Lakeport telegraph operator.

"Mountain Limited On Time!"

He glanced at the clock at his side.

She was even now due at Lakeport!

The accommodation was just gone!

Horror?

He grasped his lantern and sprang to the door of the station.

He would stop the Limited!

Too late!

As he reached the doorway the lightning express thundered by to its doom.

The telegraph operator fell prone on the station platform.

* * * * *

Sam Watson was ill at ease.

He never had felt so much disturbed and fearful in all his years of railroading as he did when in direct disobedience to his own judgment he followed his conductor's orders and pulled the accommodation out of Lakeport.

To be sure the telegraph had announced the Mountain Limited fifty minutes late.

Well as Sam Watson knew Hal Harrod the Boy Runner he knew that if this was really the case it would be impossible for the Limited to reach Athens that night on time.

Hal Harrod had done a seeming impossibility when he put the *Hesperus* over the road night after night at a minute clip, but he never could make up fifty minutes of lost time.

Perhaps ten, but not more.

Under these circumstances Lincoln could easily be reached and the accommodation would be well out of harm's way on a side track when the Mountain Limited thundered by.

But in Sam Watson's head there still remained a vivid recollection of the fiendish attempt to wreck the Limited at Lakeport a month before.

Not a clew or sign of a clew had been found to aid in discovering that mysterious enemy.

What if the report of the Limited's tardiness on this occasion was the devilish work of the same fiends?

The wires were down to Lyons.

That gave color to the supposition.

If that was so, however, this second attempt on the Boy Runner's train was even more diabolical than the first.

This time the wreck of not only the Mountain Limited, but the Lyons Accommodation, was intended.

"It's the work of some devils from hell!" cried Sam Watson, "Somebody who delights in the most atrocious murder or somebody who intends to ruin the Eastern Central Railroad. Pile in the coal, Josh. Heap her fuel!" He was talking aloud, and shouted his last words in a fierce tone of command to his fireman. "By the Gods of War, if the Limited is behind us we will not be run down standing still."

Lake Bend watering station was just ahead and as Sam Watson's engine swung around the S curve, just as the station was reached the old engineer looked back along the course he had come.

He threw the throttle wide open as if his life depended on it.

And it did.

Not his alone, but hundreds of others in the passenger cars of his train and in the ten coaches of the Mountain Limited, not a hundred yards in his rear.

Hal Harrod's train was on time and rushing upon the little Accommodation train at the rate of a mile a minute.

Sam Watson heard the whistle for brakes just as he pulled his throttle wide open.

His engine obeyed the order to "git!"

and spurred ahead like a meteor.

The Accommodation made no stop at Lake Bend just then.

Sam Watson rushed ahead, hoping to run out of the way of the Mountain Limited at his heels.

* * * * *

"Safe!" cried Hal Harrod. "Thank God!"

He had seen the red lights on the rear car of the Lyons Accommodation just as he flashed around the S curve at Lake Bend watering station, and while he determined to stop his train if it was in his power to do so, he gave it up for lost.

Over went the reverse lever, without the customary shutting off of steam.

Ask any locomotive engineer what that means!

It's always neck or nothing.

The train hands, active and alert, had rushed to the brakes at the sound of the whistle and they crowded them hard down.

The expected crash did not come.

The red lights jumped ahead and a thousand feet separated them from the Limited.

Then the Mountain Limited came to a full stop.

The Boy Runner uttered a cry of thanksgiving.

"Saved!"

The red lights were now stationary.

Maud Wellington, on her seat in the engine, had seen the red lights, not knowing what they meant.

Then she saw Hal Harrod's instantaneous throw of the reverse lever, and the simultaneous shriek of the whistle was heard.

Then came Hal's words to his fireman.

"Joe, we are lost!"

The girl knew that they were in the midst of an awful danger.

She thought not of herself nor of the hundreds of passengers in the cars behind her.

She thought only of Hal Harrod.

Her eyes were fixed on his face.

But for his words she would have thought he was anywhere but facing death.

She knew that he believed that there was no hope.

Like lightning his hands went from screw to screw in his engine.

His form was erect.

He looked noble and grand.

He was a hero.

Not a muscle in his face changed.

In the tenth of a second she saw everything.

Ah! a smile.

"Saved!"

It was not for himself he was thankful.

Hal Harrod's noble soul gave thanks for the delivery from death of his passengers, and the fair girl whose bright eyes looked into his, whose arms were about his neck and whose sweet lips were pressed to his own as she whispered, "You are a hero, Hal, I love you."

CHAPTER X.

"WHEN ROGUES FALL OUT—"

President Webb of the Athens & Northern Railroad had received an unwelcome guest.

Booth had come back from the dead to annoy him.

That Booth was a source of annoyance was a self evident fact.

That was easily seen on the occasion when Peterson informed President Webb that he was on deck again.

But it was more than evident when Booth forced his way into the private office of the president of the Athens & Northern Railroad.

"How are you, Webb? Let's see the paper."

Nothing could have been more familiar or nonchalant, considering the place he was in, whom he was addressing, and the events of the preceding night.

Could it be possible that this was the same man who had so nearly sent the Mountain Limited to destruction at Little River Bridge?

There was no doubt of it.

A single glance at the man told what he was.

Coarse and brutal, wild-eyed and barbarous.

To wreck a train would be child's play to him.

A hundred times a murderer, he boldly walked the streets of the great city of Athens and other metropolitan centres and defied the law.

Discovery he feared not.

He did not believe in the saying that "murder will out."

Booth was heartless, soulless.

What his end would be it was not difficult to predict.

But when was the rope to be woven? He faced President Webb with a leer.

His face expressed satisfaction and delight at the evident annoyance he caused the railroad magnate.

Webb glanced at him in dismay.

Annoyance hardly conveys the depth of President Webb's uneasiness.

Peterson inwardly enjoyed the situation.

"Take the paper," barked Webb, flinging the copy of the *Daily Earth* at Booth's feet. "Take it and read about your hellish work."

"Yes," laughed Booth, gleefully, "almost as good a chance last night as that Missouri job was, eh?"

Webb gasped.

"Might have been similar to the Ohio Valley affair, eh?"

Booth's words were torture to the man he addressed.

"Was this the same man he had known years ago?" asked Webb to himself. "Is this the Booth of old?"

He glared at the man in a tigerish way.

"It is," he admitted to himself. "No, this man is a moniac."

And truly Booth looked it.

His little, wild, red eyes rolled, and then fiercely he fixed them on President Webb and ground his teeth spasmodically.

Peterson looked on in wonderment.

The next instant Booth's entire appearance underwent a change.

His features relaxed and his eyes ap-

"The Thorn Comes Forth

With Point Forward."

The thorn point of disease is an ache or pain. But the blood is the feeder of the whole body. Purify it with Hood's Sarsaparilla.

Kidneys, liver and stomach will at once respond? No thorn in this point.

Severe Pains—"I had severe pains in my stomach, a form of neuralgia. My mother urged me to take Hood's Sarsaparilla and it made me well and strong. I have also given it to my baby with satisfactory results. I am glad to recommend Hood's Sarsaparilla to others." Mrs. JOHN LA PAGE, 240 Church St., Toronto, Ont.

Complete Exhaustion—"After treatment in hospital, I was weak, hardly able to walk. My blood was thin. I took Hood's Sarsaparilla until well and gained 20 lbs. It also benefited my wife." ARTHUR MILLS, Dresden, Ont.

Hood's Sarsaparilla

Never Disappoints

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

peered rational.

He stood erect and laughed loudly.

"Gave you a start, Jim," he said. "I did, didn't I?"

As before, he addressed Webb, but his voice was entirely different.

"Yes," admitted Webb, "I was really afraid of you a moment ago. What did you mean?"

"Nothing, only I heard from Pete, here that you didn't like my coming on deck after all these years, and I made up my mind that I'd give you a start. That's all. Meant no harm, you know. Just funny a little."

"Well, Booth," said Webb, "this is no time to be funny. Your work last night has almost made a mess. We want no train wrecking. I've seen all I want of that."

"It was all a mistake," said Booth. "But I covered my tracks so that I'll never be suspected."

"Are you sure?" asked Webb.

"Has the Missouri job been suspected?"

"Hush, man!" Webb was on his feet, his form trembling like a leaf.

"Why?" demanded Booth in a low voice. "There ain't no harm speaking among friends, is there?"

Webb resented himself and took a long pull from the whiskey flask.

Then he abruptly changed the conversation.

"Peterson," said he, "I have no hopes of bringing the Boy Runner over to our road."

Peterson was attentive.

"Nor me," said Peterson. "The only thing we can do is to work the public up against the Eastern Central Railroad."

"How shall we do that?" asked President Webb.

"I'll find a way," answered Peterson.

"But it will be hard work. They have the people with them now."

"Yes, but the public is very fickle and changeable," retorted Peterson.

"That's so," admitted Webb. "Two months ago we had it all our own way. Our stock was then up to 130; it's down to 65 to-day."

"What will be the final result of this affair of last night?" Peterson suddenly demanded.

"It will help the Eastern Central, of course," replied Webb in surprise.

"Not a bit of it," said Peterson. "It will at first, perhaps, but in the end it will hurt them. I have been thinking it over, and I have decided that we can make capital for the Athens & Northern out of it."

Booth had not a word to say; he listened.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Often people catch a worse cold in the summer than in the winter. Don't neglect it. Check it at once by using Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup, the best remedy for all kinds of lung and throat affections.

In a recent issue of his paper the editor of the *Pictou* standard complains that owing to an injury to his thumb he will be unable to write anything for several weeks. His subscribers will not consider this a huge calamity however. Usually a finger or two more or less does not seriously interfere with a newspaper man grinding out the golden chaff.—Amherst Press.

A special despatch from Ottawa to Le Soleil, Quebec, says that the government have unanimously decided to make a grant of one million dollars in aid of the Quebec bridge.

CURE ALL YOUR PAINS WITH

Pain-Killer.

A Medicine Chest in Itself.

Simple, Safe and Quick Cure for

CRAMPS, DIARRHOEA, COUGHS,

COLDS, RHEUMATISM,

NEURALGIA.

25 and 50 cent Bottles.

BEWARE OF IMITATIONS.

BUY ONLY THE GENUINE.

PERRY DAVIS'

RICHARD SULLIVAN & CO.

—WHOLESALE—

Wine and Spirit Merchants,

—IMPORTERS AND DEALERS IN—

TEAS, TOBACCOS and CIGARS

44 & 46 DOCK STREET ST. JOHN, N. B.

Bonded Warehouse No. 8

The Place to Purchase

is where you can buy the Best Goods and the Most for the