

WITH DEATH AT HIS HEELS

Thrilling Ride of a Farmer Boy
to Warn People of an
Advancing Flood.

In the gray of a September morning, 1874, Collins Graves, a New England farmer's boy, started, with a gun on his shoulder, for a woodcock thicket. He passed by the dam which held in check the waters of the reservoir belonging to a manufacturing concern. He saw that the water was beginning to trickle over the top of the earth-work and that the water was rising so rapidly that the ordinary sluiceways did not carry it away as they should. He reasoned exactly as did the hero of Reade's tale. He knew that the dam must go, and he knew also something of the horror which would follow its breaking. Graves warned the people near at hand, and then mounting a powerful horse he dashed down the valley to rouse the inhabitants. He had gone at top speed less than a quarter of a mile when the dam broke. From that time on the flood followed him with "death on the first of its hissing waves." He gained on the waters, though at every door he stopped and shrieked a warning. Men, women and children rushed forth and sought safety on the shelving hills. Graves kept on. Like the people in the English story, many who heard the cry of the messenger at dawn laughed and said, "It's an old story—the dam has been breaking for years," and then turned back to bed. The sleep of 145 of these knowing ones was a long one. They went to their deaths in the seething waters.

Graves reached the little village of Haydenville, with its single street. He screamed his message to the few who, sleepy eyed, stood at their gates. They realized its import and roused the sleepers. Graves' horse had never faltered in its gait from the moment of his mounting. It fell dead before the Haydenville street was passed, crushing its rider's leg. Another horse was at hand. On to it the messenger climbed and sped on, with the roar of the water in his ears. On, on, on, he went, and the miles passed swiftly under the stride of his steed. Behind him the valley was a roaring torrent, while on the hills on either side, looking down on the destruction of their homes, were those whom he had saved. Others, all unconscious, were ahead, and the race went on.

And this is the cry he flung to the wind: "To the hills for your lives! The flood is behind." The last warning was given. The valley widened, and opening beyond



HE SCREAMED HIS MESSAGE.
were farreaching meadows unpeopled.

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There the pent up waters ~~rose~~ ^{perse} and lose their crushing force. Graves turned his horse aside and rode up the hillside to safety, while the flood tore behind. He had saved a thousand lives, so the people said, but when they came to him to thank him Collins Graves' reason had gone under the awful strain. Time and rest, the healers, restored him. He refused reward, but it came to him afterward in the tribute of the poet John Boyle O'Reilly, who wrote the pulse quickening verses of "The Ride of Collins Graves."

Such Stuff as Dreams Are Made Of.

The materials of dreams may be enumerated as memories of waking sensations, memories of waking thoughts and new sensations received in sleep, whether from without or within. Dr. Gregory mentions of himself that having on one occasion gone to bed with a bottle of hot water at his feet he dreamed of walking up the crater of Mount Etna and feeling the ground warm under him. He had at an early period of his life visited Mount Vesuvius and actually felt a strong sensation of warmth in his feet when walking up the side of the crater, and he had more recently read Brydnone's description of Mount Etna.

On another occasion, having thrown off the bedclothes in his sleep, he dreamed of spending a winter at Hudson's bay and of suffering distress from the intense frost. He had been reading a few days before a very particular account of the state of the colonies during winter.

He Hadn't Lost a Burglar.

"John," she said, suddenly shaking him, "there is a burglar in the house."

"Are you sure?" he asked.

"Positive," she replied. "Don't you hear him?"

He got up and began to dress hastily, but quietly.

"What are you going to do, John?" she inquired.

"I am going to sneak out the back way and get a policeman," he answered.

"But if you go right down stairs now," she said, "you'll find him in the dining room."

"Oh, I'll find him, will I?" he retorted sarcastically. "Well, now you just look me over carefully."

"Yes, John; what of it?"

"Do I look like a man who has lost a burglar anywhere?"

"No; of course not, but—"

"Do I have the reputation of being an impertinent fellow who is always interfering with other people's business? Do I in any way resemble the lost and found department of a daily newspaper?"

"No."

"Then why should I get tangled up with other people's property?"

"You're afraid, John."

"Afraid nothing!" he retorted indignantly. "I am looking at it from an ethical point of view. This burglar undoubtedly has been lost by the police, and if I took charge of him they might think I was trying to steal him and make a lot of trouble for me. Besides, I'm no searching party. You women don't understand the ethics of business at all."

Testing the Schoolmaster.

In the town records of the city of Boston there is a curious passage which records how a schoolmaster was examined and what happened. The manner in which the visit of inspection is recorded makes one incline to the view that the unlucky schoolmaster may not have had fair play, although if he was really inefficient he may be said to have been judged by his peers.

In the record for the 22d of May, 1722, it is set forth that:

"Coll Pen Townsend, Jeremiah Allen Esqr., & John Edwards together with the Select men, Vissitted the wrighting School at the Southerly End of Boston on Thirsday the 24th april 1722. and Examined the Scholars under mr Ames Angers tuition as to their proficiency in Reading writing Scyphering & the masters ability of teaching & instructing youth his rules & methods therefore And are of Opinion That it will be no Service to the Town to Continue, mr anger in that Employ."

Whereupon it was voted that the said Mr. Ames Anger should not continue master of the "Said South school."

It is true that nothing is said of the methods of spelling inculcated at the "wrighting School," and it is also possible that a clerk rather than the committee was responsible for the errors of the record, but there is certainly something absurd in the passage as it stands.

The Wrong Instrument.

Irate Father—Here I've paid you no telling how much money to teach my daughter music, and she can't play any better than she did before. Whose fault is that?

Professor Van Note—Ze fault is ze instrument. I haf von instrument in my shop vich she learn to play soon.

Irate Father—Huh! Is it like this?

Professor Van Note—It looks like zis piano, but it goes mit a handle.—London Telegraph.

Expert Assistance.

"Jane," said he to his wife, "Mr. Mopus wrote me today in a way I don't like. I want to give him a talking to he'll remember while he lives. So you just dictate, and I'll write."—Philadelphia Times.

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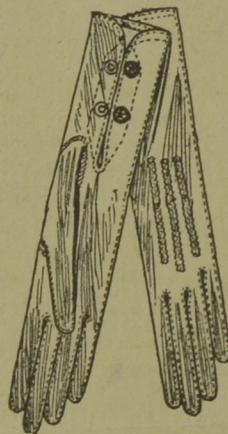
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