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On the Big Grade

By EUGENE JONES.

CHAPTER V.

Minutes full of thundering sound and motion lengthening like hours of weary waiting. Shirley's glance never left the gauges. Hendersonville, a white blur, flickered about us for an instant, was gone, lost in our exhaust smoke. At Hillsborough the girl spoke.

"Will we make it?" she asked.

I nodded, praying for the truth of that nod.

Now ahead lay Spartanburg. I recognized the outlines of the water tank. Beyond that was the beginning of the grade which dropped off easily at one-and-one-half per cent., gradually increasing further down to four. If we were to be of any use we must catch up with the runaway in the next ten miles. No engineerman on any road would attempt a sixty-mile freight on the level rails itself!

Here pulsing, roaring, moments more shrieking curves; Shirley's tense face, the frozen of white light—I shall never forget it! Three minutes before, three short minutes! My eyes searched the unreeling track, seeking the hope of a locomotive. But there was nothing. Ninety-nine was doing her best, every plate a-quiver, hardly touching the rails. Two minutes.... One!.... It was useless. I grabbed for the air—

Then suddenly, out of the night, leaped another shape, growing rapidly. Shirley saw it too.

"Here, take the throttle!" she exclaimed.

In an instant our speed, perhaps for the last time, I was a delicate trick—bringing two locomotives together at a seventy-mile speed. The least error in judgement meant utter and instantaneous destruction, yet the girl could never make the jump from one engine to the other. Right, she! I thanked God I had taught her how to handle a train.

She took the throttle as I brushed past her with a word of encouragement and, clinging to the hand rail, I made my way out along the boiler, through the flight zone, the shriek of whistle probably the Limited. I recognized from the rush of wind. I hesitated more than once, gauging my self close to the hot plates and away from the cold of flowing darkness reaching for me—darkness from which death should I make a misstep. The clamor from the stack deadened me, the roar of the drivers made my head whirl; yet somehow I crept down beneath the smokebox on the forward truck, where, clutching, I might cling to the coupling shaft, until the pit seemed to leap toward me.

Behind me was Shirley, and in her hands rested the fate of seven-o-seven and the Limited. The lights of the runaway under were nearer now. I drew a long, choking breath full of cinders and edged forward. There was a second when my chances of reaching that coupling seemed nil as I swung out from the boiler, one arm around the guard rail, the other groping for the supporting rod of the smokebox. Realities slipped away, phantom shadows reached for me, were gone, revealing nothing, leaving shrieking echoes—my hands found the coupling, and I crouched down.

Slowly, ever so slowly, the gap between the two engines closed to eight feet, six—four. Now was the time! In that gap spun dizzy rails. The rear end of seven-o-seven's tender rocked frightfully. Somewhere ahead the Limited again whistled an unintentional warning....I jumped.

For a brief instant my hands found only air. I was falling! I clawed for a hold, missed; caught the rung of the iron ladder on the runaway's tender and dragged myself to safety. On top of the coal, rolling loosely with the motion of the engine, lay a body. But I crawled across it, slid down between the chains and into the cab. In the distance glimmered to red stars—the tail lights of the Limited. Ninety-nine had already dropped several hundred feet behind. As quickly as I could reach the throttle I shut off steam and applied the brakes. The mass of metal under me shuddered, trembled, yet it seemed doubtful whether or not such tremendous momentum might be overcome in time. Nearer and nearer rushed the last car of the Limited—as if it were actually moving backward. I shut my eyes...

Number seven-o-seven came to a full stop fifty feet from the flagman who had been sent out from the train ahead!

He caught me as I stumbled down the ladder.

"God in heaven!" he muttered.

"Yes," I managed with a sickly grin. "I reckon He is, else that runaway would have gotten you."

After a moment I heard him asking: "Who's driving the other 'motive?" My voice sounded like a croak:

"Shirley Winston."

He merely stared. Then, at length: "Frank O'Kelley, you're clean, stark mad!"

It took me a little while to gather my wits together, but I remember hazily the river of curious passengers which streamed from the Limited, and flowed about the two engines, craning necks, asking ridiculous questions and getting no answers at all beyond a curt order from the conductor to "Clear out and give us a chance!"

Some of the crew climbed aboard the runaway and brought down the body of Jim Duval—the same body I had stumbled over on the tender. His face was haggard in the lantern light, and a bloody spot on the back of his head told its own story, but he woke up almost as soon as he touched the ground.

"I'm all right," he mattered. "Let me alone.... Where's Pritchard?"

Then my senses returned sufficiently for me to hurry back to old ninety-nine and the girl who had handled the throttle during those last reeling seconds of the race. They were lifting her from the cab as I got there.

"Fainted," announced a flagman shortly. "Should think she would! Some nerve, I'll say!"

"Nothing serious—" he began when Jim Duval catapulted into the centre of the group. For an instant he didn't see who it was; then:

"Shirley, dearest!" His voice held an agony of fear.

He knelt beside her, smoothing back her hair, taking her chilled little hands in his.

"Speak to me, dear. Please, please," he whispered.

She opened her eyes, closed them again, but a smile remained. With the help of the conductor Jim carried her to one of the Pullmans. And that was the last I saw of either of them that night.

Only the next morning, when I was summoned to Bowlson's office, did I learn precisely what occurred. As I entered, Jim Duval stepped forward.

"O'Kelley," he began, "there's some things you can't put into words. You understand how I feel, don't you? Every moment of my life—"

"There, there!" I interrupted, giving him a powerful clap on the back. "Miss Shirley deserves the credit; take it out on her. Be good to her, young man, or you'll have to reckon with me!"

"Fate, coincidence, accident—whatever you've a mind to call it—is a funny thing, Jim. All Shirley's life she's been hankering after railroading; that's why the engineermen on this division taught her to handle a train. Who ever heard of a girl like her before! Who ever heard of a girl knowing enough about an oil burner to fire it as good as a man on a night run at an eighty-mile speed! Then the way she brought old ninety-nine up to that runaway!—four feet I jumped, no more. A trick for the movies! A matter of cold nerve and—pluck. (I was going to say "love" but thought better of it.) If it hadn't been for Shirley Winston you'd be dead right now, with the Limited ditched on the big grade. Shirley learned your engine had run away. When she couldn't find a fireman for me, she took his place without letting me know. Thank her; don't thank me. Bless her; don't bless me....I was just a doddering old fool ready to take a risk because my time was up anyway. By the by, how is she this morning?"

"All right. She's suffering from nerve strain, nothing more."

Here Bowlson, in his swivel chair and chewing on his cigar, butted in.

"Well," he snapped, "how about telling O'Kelley what happened to seven-o-seven? There's just a possibility he might be interested, you know."

Jim turned to me with a grin.

"My fault," he said. "I didn't realize you had not heard. There isn't really much to tell. You and Mr. Bowlson were right in being afraid of Pritchard. He tried to kill me and wreck the Limited....When I started down to pick up seventeen I didn't pay much attention to who was firing for me. Supposed, of course, he was my regular partner. Directly we passed Biltmore he jumped on me with a wrench. Before he laid me out I saw it was Pritchard. That's all I remember—his face above me and—sparks!"

Bowlson leaned forward.

"Perhaps I can supply the rest. Your regular fireman was found in the yards, knocked out. Pritchard did that first. But when he toppled you over and turned your engine into a runaway he made one mistake: he jumped at the wrong instant—hit a milepost, as near as I can learn. Crew of a freight running extra picked up his dead body this morning. Served him right!"

The superintendent hesitated, glared about fiercely, and rolled his cigar to a more acute angle.

"Now one more thing: What's this all I hear about you and Miss Shirley? Speak up! No side-stepping!"

Jim turned red. "We're going to be married," he managed, looking a little scared and blissfully happy.

"Married?" roared Bowlson. "Married without my permission?"

"No," said Duval maliciously, "with it."

When Jim and I departed we left the little fat man sitting in his swivel chair and scowling wrathfully. But deep down under his sour face, which tolerated nothing even approaching a smile, we knew he would not have had it otherwise.

(The End.)

"Old Age is a Pose."

Sir James Cantile flatly challenges a current misconception in his statement: "Old age is just a pose. A man usually grows old because he thinks it is dignified. He sits back and lets the years do what they like with him." It is not so with this sturdy septuagenarian, who rises at 4.30 and dances Highland flings. He shares the spirit of Tennyson's "Ulysses," who could not bear to sit idle amid his island crags, or of Barrie's "Peter Pan," who refused to grow up, or of him who, according to another poet, kept the immortal child tarrying all his lifetime in his heart.

We do not have to look long for monumental examples of great men who, like Oliver Wendell Holmes in his poem, "The Boys," and in his personal example, defied the calendar. To me such perennially young gentleman, namely, Dr. W. W. Keen, the community that affectionately reweres him is even now preparing to do honor. He will to keep youthful in the spirit seems to be the biggest part of inhescence.

The thought of growing old is chiefly oppressive to those who never grow anything else. Most of those who process, create, achieve, are too busy to study crow's feet in the mirror or calculate percentages of lime in the tissues or acid in the blood. They are not forever in a lonely observatory on the outlook for new symptoms. They are up and doing, with a whetted appetite for fresh adventure. There is "Labrador" Cabot, of Boston, who is forever starting out on a one-man expedition among the Indians of the barrens not very far from the desolate spot where the balloon came down with Lieutenant Hinton and his comrades. It is useless to tell him that he is too old. You might as well try to persuade "Oom John" Burroughs to quit exploring swamps and forests and playing with squirrels. Nature, they say, to us, has no favorites, but she has a way of granting to the naturalists a special grace in growing "old." The life of Fabre, which began in 1828 and ended not end until 1915, might be cited, as that of Chevreul, 1786-1889. Many artists, moreover, are like St. Gaudens, and "do not count the mortal years it takes to mold memorial forms." "If I live to be 100," said the Ancient Hokusai, "perhaps I shall be able to draw a line." Such a man knows what it means to live for many years and to remain forever young because forever acquisitive, inquisitive, aspiring.

In Siam many women are employed in army workshops, in factories and on the railways and roads, where they are paid the same rates as men for equal work.

Minard's Liniment Relieves Colds, etc.

Woman's Sphere

My Flower Money.

It is high time to make plans for the fast-approaching springtime. Let me tell you how I earned money with my flower garden. Through selling flowers I earned enough money to buy my own clothes, table linen, curtains for the parlor and a sewing machine. I had the dining room, hall and stairway lined and papered. My bank account showed a balance of $300.

It was twelve miles by water from our farm to the city. A tug left the village, half a mile away, every morning and returned every evening.

Many kinds of flowers bloomed in our old-fashioned garden but few of these were suitable for sale. For one dollar I purchased nine small but healthy violet plants which I carefully planted in a protected spot. These threw out many suckers. I kept the surrounding ground well cultivated, the suckers soon took root and within two years I had large beds of fine, pale blue violets. A few violets with a spray of fern sold readily for ten cents.

Another plot of ground was plowed and planted to chrysanthemums. In August and September I removed many of the small buds so that those which bloomed were of fairly good size.

I planted my roses in rows. After the spring bloom I trimmed them back, had them plowed and kept free from weeds. As a result I always had a fine fall bloom.

From bulbs I raise double daffodils, large clusters of single jonquils and graceful, pale yellow narcissus. Friends gave me bulbs and I bought some. The beds for the bulbs were under-drained and prepared according to the instructions given in my floral magazine.

I sold dozens of bunches of white, pheasant-eyed pinks. By starting with only one package of seed within a year I had three large beds of these fragrant flowers.

My first step in selling my flowers was to secure a ticket at the Women's Exchange in the city where flowers were in great demand. One of the boathands on the mail tug agreed to take the filled baskets to the Exchange and bring back the empty ones for a specified sum for each basket. I lined large stick baskets with oilcloth to keep in the moisture, fastened uprights to each corner and over these fitted a cover of strong homespun which tied underneath the basket. These covers protected the flowers from the sun and the dust. I wrapped the stems of each bunch in yet moss, packed the bunches in close together, sprinkled them with water and tied the cover over. In this way the flowers reached the Exchange as fresh as if just picked. After awhile my flowers became so well known that people would delay purchase till they arrived.

I had my housework to do, dairying and the care of the poultry, so only a part of my time was devoted to the flower work.

It is having a system as well as willingness to work hard, that enables one to "put over" an extra piece of work such as this. First, I had this plan of turning my flower and plant friends into money, in my mind. There, I worked out the plan and by orderly methods and keeping everlastingly at it, found it was not a great hardship and most certainly included much pleasure as well as cash gain.

Care of the Hands.

A little care and a few toilet requisites will keep the hands in a presentable condition, no matter what your household tasks may be. Learn first to protect the hands. With the aid of a dish-mop and a wire dish-cloth, the hands need to be kept in the dish water but a small part of the time, while the dishes can be washed quite as well and much more quickly than when a dish-cloth only is used. White canvas gloves will afford the protection needed when working in the poultry house or about the fires. Old, loose gloves can be worn when sweeping and dusting, and a paper bag drawn over the hand before blacking the stove is also protection.

Careful drying of the hands is of great importance, especially in cold weather. Exposure to the air when the hands are but partially dry causes the skin to chap and roughen, and no amount of care will counteract carelessness on this point.

While soap and water are good cleansing agents, the stains which follow the paring of potatoes, and certain fruits, require an acid for removal; a piece of lemon, a slice of tomato, or a mixture of cornmeal and vinegar, will remove these stains. When grime has settled in the skin, rub the hands thoroughly with vaseline; rub as if using soap until the vaseline is worked into all the interstices of the skin, then wipe off with a soft cloth, which can be burned, and wash the hands with warm water and soap.

To prevent discoloration under the fingernails, or in order to remove discolorations, draw the nails over a piece of soap, so that the soap fills the space between the flesh and the nails. A soap containing sand is best for this purpose.

An excellent lotion to be applied to the hands combines equal parts of glycerine, spirits of camphor and boiled soft water. The healing effects of this lotion will be appreciated when applied to the cracks which sometimes occur on the ends of the fingers. Another good lotion calls for two parts each of boiled, soft water and vinegar, and one part of glycerine.

When a glycerine preparation is found to be too drying for the skin, use one of the greaseless or disappearing creams. A cream of this sort can be rubbed into the skin, leaving no trace on the surface, so that it can be used during the day, as well as at night before retiring. The cream is also absorbed into the roots of the nails, counteracting the brittleness which causes the nails to break, and making them soft and pliable. The nails can be kept in shape by means of a flexible nail file, rough or uneven edges being easily filed down. Frequent cutting of the nails is said to thicken them; when cutting is necessary, a pair of curved manicure scissors enables one to cut the nails with greater ease than when ordinary scissors are used. Pointed nails are not admired; the nails should be carefully rounded so they will conform with the ends of the fingers.

After filing the nails soak the finger-tips in warm, soapy water to soften the cuticle, then push this gently back with the flat end of an orange-wood stick, which can be bought for the purpose. The half-moon which appears at the base of the nails is considered a mark of beauty and, if this is to show, the cuticle must be lifted by gently running the stick (which has been previously dipped in oil) under the cuticle. The pointed end of the stick is used for cleaning under the nails. Sharply pointed instruments scratch the nails and should not be used for this purpose. A bit of absorbent cotton wrapped around the end of the stick and moistened with peroxide will remove stains from under the nails and around the edges of the nails.

The nails should then be polished, placing a little polishing powder on a buffer which is to be rubbed gently back and forth over each nail. Avoid too much friction, as it heats the nails and produces the very high polish which is not admired. Wash the hands in order to remove the polishing powder, dry them thoroughly and rub the nails of each hand with the palm of the other.

It will not be necessary to manicure the nails so thoroughly oftener than once in two weeks, but constant care in washing and drying the hands, the use of the file and orange-wood stick and the cream or lotion, are needed to keep them in good condition.

A Fuel Economy.

When the housewife needs only a small fire and but little heat, she should keep a deep, short fire in the firepot by filling most of the pot as full of ashes as she would of coal, but filling one-fourth, one-third or one-half the length of the firepot with good coal. Every time she cleans out the fire portion and puts on more coal, she will need to put on more ashes in order to keep the ashes level with the coal. In this way she can have a good, hot, deep, live fire all the time, on which she can heat a little water or do light cooking. She can also bank such a fire and keep it low just as easily as if there were a full pot of coal. When a larger fire is needed, she can push through the grate such a portion of ashes as will make the desired space, fill this space with good coal and the adjoining fire will soon spread through the new coal. This method saves more tons of coal in a year than all other methods combined.

"The Land of Pretty Soon."

I know a land where the streets are paved
With the things we meant to achieve.
It is walled with the money we meant to have saved,
And the pleasures for which we grieve.
The kind words unspoken, the promises broken,
And many a coveted boon,
Are stowed away there in that land somewhere—
The land of "Pretty Soon."

There are uncut jewels of possible fame,
Lying about in the dust;
And many a noble and lofty aim
Covered with mold and rust.
And, oh! this place, while it seems so near,
Is farther away than the moon;
Though our purpose is fair, yet we never get there—
The land of "Pretty Soon."

The road that leads to that mystic land
Is strewed with pitiful wrecks,
And the ships that have sailed for its shining strand
Bear skeletons on their decks.
Is it farther at noon than it is at dawn,
Oh let us beware of that land down
Farther at night than at noon;
there—
The land of "Pretty Soon."

Licorice Oldest Candy.

Licorice is the oldest confection in the world, unless scientists who have been studying ancient civilizaton are amiss. The black candy is made from a shrub that flourishes on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, where existed one of the oldest civilizations known to man. The plant there attains at times a height of three feet, growing in spots where its roots can reach down into the water of the historic rivers.

Minard's Liniment for Burns, etc.

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WAR FAILS TO CURE GERMANY'S CONCEIT

DECLARES NEWSPAPER CORRESPONDENT.

Briton, Long Resident in Berlin, Says Teuton Mind Still Unchanged.

Although Berlin has changed since 1914, the German mind remains unchanged. Neither the holocaust of dead nor the crash of thrones has shaken Germany out of her self-conceit, according to what G. Valentine Williams, formerly correspondent of Reuter's Agency in Berlin, tells The London Daily Mail.

"The German mind," he says, "does not seem to have altered.

"Albeit sadly puzzled to account for the utter break-down of the entire German system, in his outlook on life the German of 1920 is to most intents and purposes the German of 1913. In a world which to British eyes is strangely changed by five years of World War the mental isolation of the German is absolute. To talk to him makes you feel that the German of today is the loneliest creature on God's earth.

"Yet with heavy deliberation he is communing with himself to ascertain the causes of his defeat. But he is not examining his conscience.

"Any Berlin bookshop will show you the chaos prevailing in the German mind.

"Professor Steinach's rejuvenation experiments, Einstein's theory of light, Maynard Keynes and Norman Angell on the Versailles Peace—both books in German translations and prominently displayed—treatises on spiritualism, atheism, free love; and the Marx works of this description stand side by side with a mass of frankly pornographic literature." Here will you find reasoned explanations for the past, complicated schemes for the future, but nothing practical to deal with the problems of the present. And, above all, no contrition for Germany's crime against mankind.

The German surveyed the world from his castle of militarism. Now that it has collapsed he is left floundering in a sea of doubts and fears. The Germans with whom I have spoken expect us to hold them guiltless of the past, because, they say, they have rid Germany of her military caste.

Willing to Forgive!

"They have, it is true, expelled the bloody-minded blunderers surrounding that eminent nonentity, William the Second-rater because they failed to keep their promise to establish German world-domination. But the German people are governed by the hero instinct, and the expulsion of the Old Gang in the circumstances of military defeat and home panic in which the Hohenzollerns were sent away required weightier evidence of a change of heart than is forthcoming in Germany today if it is to be accepted as a proof of the death of German militarism.

"Talk to a Frenchman of any class, and you will, sooner or later, come upon a well-banked but fiercely smouldering Republican ardor. Talk to a German about his government and you will find, at the best, lukewarm interest; at the worst, resentful ridicule towards the German Republic.

"The average attitude is one of blank indifference. The German man in the street never thought for himself. He does not do so to-day. The question of the future is, What party will emerge from the present chaos to do his thinking for him?

"The Germans are perfectly willing to forgive us for the war. They talk glibly about this unhappy war with the air of a man making perfunctory excuse for some social lapse. In some may be detected in addition a little air of condescension in speaking of the late unpleasantness as though to draw attention to their magnanimity in accepting the war as an inevitable catastrophe, 'an act of God,' as the insurance policies say. And even to-day I find that the great majority of Germans have no idea of the abhorrence in which the very name German is held in the Anglo-Saxon countries and in France and Belgium."

A Trip of Investigation.

"I want to marry your daughter," the young man said to his beloved's father.

"Does she love you?" the old man asked.

"Yes, sir," answered the youth. "And I love her!"

"Well, that, of course, is the first necessary condition; but there are a few more questions that I should like to ask you."

"Yes, sir."

"Have you made any shopping tours with her lately?"

"No, sir."

"Ever been in a big store and asked the present price of women's hats and clothes?"

"No, sir."

"Well, young man, just take a trip of investigation. I don't know what your present income is, but after you've learn for yourself just what those clothes cost she is wearing are costing me, come back and see me again. If then you can promise to support her in the style to which she has been accustomed lately, I'll give my consent."

WINNING THE NIPIGON SHIELD