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Published every day except Sunday at 4 p. m. Subscription price, in advance, $10.00 per year, $5.00 six months, $2.00 per week, payable or delivered by carrier.

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HEROES.

We hear it said that great men tread on clouds
The cod of this dull earth, and that the poet
Embroils th' heroic dead, whose deeds will
[illegible]
When our poor mortality is dust. Look down
We not upon the skeleton—they are bare
The bones of the fight, still we hold fast
Treasures old, our hearts are warriors still
By the mere mold of time? Yet this "degenerate age" has its great men.
As great as those Glorious Greeks of old
Nor less, whether, with Leonidas, we stand
We are alone in valorous death and bold—
And as we wrong a brave age when we say
That "heroes do not tread the earth now."
—Martin Darlin in New Orleans Times-Democrat.

JOE PAID THE INTEREST.

The clock in the kitchen had just struck 8, but still little Joe Petersham, who usually dropped asleep as soon as his head touched the pillow, lay with wide open eyes staring into the darkness in his little bedroom just off the kitchen, where Mr. and Mrs. Petersham were sitting talking. Joe's ears were wide open too, for he felt a great interest in the subject which was being discussed.

"It's no use, Mary," he heard his father say in a low voice. "The place has got to go. Morrison says we must either pay the money or he will foreclose. He won't wait any longer. We might just as well talk of flying as of raising $100 in two weeks, and if this strike keeps on we will have to use the little we have get saved up." And Mr. Petersham brought his hand down upon the table so heavily that the dishes rattled.

"It is hard to think of our pretty little place being taken from us," said Mrs. Petersham, with a sob, "but I suppose it must come to that, for I don't know where the money can be raised."

"It can't be raised, and that's an end of it," said Mr. Petersham, getting up and walking back and forth across the room. "We must just grin and bear it, and there'll be worse than this to bear if our side doesn't win. There's not a cent coming in this month. I'm sure I don't hold with them who try to work the trains. They've no right to do that, but it comes pretty tough to a man to see his family sending clothes and food and not a cent in the house. It's not much wonder that some of them get desperate and go too far," and then Joe heard his father tramp heavily up the stairs, his thick boots making a great clatter. Presently his mother blew out the light, and with a weary sigh she also went up to bed, and Joe was left alone with his thoughts.

Six weeks ago his father, a brakeman on the Central railroad, had come home one day with his dinner basket unopened to tell his wife that a strike had been ordered, and that he would not go back to work until the Central came to terms.

Week after week had gone by and still the strikers were not gaining ground and some of them were beginning to be desperate. The Central had found men to fill the vacancies and the Pinkerton men were on hand to prevent their being interfered with. One day Joe and two or three other boys had walked up the track all the way to the city to see the tiny bonfire homes put up at intervals along the track as a shelter for those who guarded that section of the road.

At first everything seemed bright and the strikers felt confident of success, but of late, with their money gone and no more coming in, they did not feel as hopeful, and even ten-year-old Joe felt oppressed by the general gloom. Not tonight a worse trouble weighs upon him. He could understand enough of his father's conversation to know that unless a hundred dollars could be raised at once their comfortable home and garden would be taken from them. He wondered if they would take Topknot too, his pretty little black rooster, that jumped upon the fence in front of his window every morning and woke him up at just the right time, and as he thought of this he could hardly swallow for the great lump in his throat, and he rubbed his eyes hard with a corner of the sheet. A hundred dollars! What a pile that would be! If he could only think of some way to earn it, but he never earned more than a dime at a single dollar, let alone a hundred of them, and poor little Joe lay there puzzling his brain over the matter until he dropped asleep.

"Rat-a-tat-tat." "Rat-a-tat-tat," and Joe woke suddenly out of a sound sleep to hear some one tapping briskly at the outside door. A moment after his father opened the upper window and called out loudly, "Who's there?" and then Joe heard old Mrs. Jenkins, their nearest neighbor, say, "Jim is growin' worse, an' I wonder over to see if you or Joe would go for the doctor."

"Don't you worry yourself, Mrs. Jenkins," was Mr. Petersham's reply. "My shoemaker is that bad this damp weather that I don't dare to go out myself, but it won't hurt a boy like Joe. He can go down in no time and ride back with the doctor." Mrs. Jenkins murmured her thanks and hurried off, while Joe, in response to his father's call, tumbled out of bed and into his clothes with all haste. It was about three miles to the village by the road, but by going down the railroad it was only a little over two miles. Joe was a brave boy, but the prospect of a two mile walk down the track in the pitchy darkness did not look at all enchanting to a sleepy little fellow, and it was not without some grumbling that he started out. He went down through the garden and out the back gate, and then, climbing down the steep bank, he found himself upon the track, down which he started on a trick walk, whistling cheerily.

Everything was so still about him that he soon ceased to whistle, and he stood and heard but the shrill chirp of the crickets and now and then the baying of a dog somewhere in the distance. Not a star was to be seen, and the trees and bushes loomed up grim and black on either side of him. He fastened up his jacket closely, for the damp night air was chilly, and trudged on.

He had gone about a mile when, as the road makes a slight bend, he saw something on the track just ahead. It looked big and black, and he could not make out what it was, so he prudently halted and stared forward into the darkness with all his might.

Presently the object moved, and then he saw that there were three men bending over something. He was almost afraid to move lest they should hear him, but he was also afraid to stay where he was, so he crept softly up the low bank and lay flat down under the bushes.

The men were talking, but in such low tones that he could not hear what they are saying. What could they be about? They seemed to be lifting up something heavy, and to be placing it upon the rails, but this was all he could see. Joe knew enough about the trains to know that the down express train would soon be along. He grew with the thought that perhaps it was a man's body that they were putting on the track.

Oh, if they would only go before the express came, and he did, in answer to his wish, they did finally start up the hill and were soon out of sight. He dared not move for some time lest they should return, but at last he summoned up courage, and scrambling down the bank crept along to see what it was that the men had left.

It was not the body of a man lying there, but some railroad ties which had been fastened upright in a cable guard, with large stones wedged securely about them. Then he knew that these men had planned to wreck the express.

He tried desperately with his puny strength to move the timbers, but they were fast as firmly that he could not stir them in the least, and he gave it up in despair. He looked around him fearfully, for the men might come back again for aught he knew, but he could not bear to leave the express to its fate, and tried to think of some way by which he could give warning.

If he only had a lantern to swing back and forth across the track! But of course that was impossible, and he tried to think of some other signal. As his perplexity he thrust his hands deep down into his pockets, at the bottom of one of them he felt some matches which were left from a boyish, and in a minute he decided he would set a fire in the middle of the track, up by the curve, where the engineer would see it and stop the train in time. But he soon found this was not easy to do. There was great difficulty in finding any materials, but after groping about for a while in the darkness he managed to get a few little sticks together, and lighting a piece of paper which he found in his pocket he tried to start his fire. But to his dismay the sticks were as damp they would not burn, and after using all his matches but two in vain attempts he gave it up.

He put his ear down to the rails and listened intently. Yes, the train was coming, but it was some distance off yet. Oh, if he could only find something dry enough to burn! Now on the damp night air came the low rumble of the approaching cars. In another moment they will be in sight, and on the impulse of the moment he unbuttoned his jacket, and hastily striking a match applied it to the lining.

It burned briskly a second and went out, and then more carefully he lighted the last one and the coat began to blaze; and not a moment too soon, either, for he could see the headlight as the express came thundering along.

Springing upon the track he waved his blazing signal frantically back and forth to attract the engineer's attention. There he stood, right in the path of the locomotive as it rushed furiously toward him with its great fiery eye glowing fiercely through the darkness, and his little arms kept on mechanically swinging his jacket, in his excitement never feeling the flames as they swept over his little hands.

But he has been seen, and brakes were applied, and the wheels reversed, and the engine brought to a standstill just as it was almost upon him, and then the little fellow sank down, overcome by excitement, and then, a moment later, they found him curled up in a heap on the ground. Carefully the firemen lifted him in his strong arms, while the engineer and one or two others ran forward and discovered the obstruction. The passengers, aroused by the commotion, began to make their appearance, and soon he was surrounded by a crowd, and found he had become a hero.

The big firemen still held him in his arms as Joe answered the questions which were showered upon him, while a physician who was among the passengers bound up the poor little burnt hands.

Joe's hearers shuddered as they thought of their narrow escape, and when they heard it was his jacket that furnished the signal some men pulled off his coat and dropping it lit it in haste, "To pay for Joe's coat," and passed it around to the others. Pocketbooks were taken out, and bills and silver rained down the hat until it almost took Joe's breath as he realized that it was all for him.

Soon the train is ready to go on and they all get aboard, and he is taken on to the next station, where they stopped to let him off. The doctor's house was close by, and as they saw Joe run up the steep and ring the bell, the train moves off amid cheers and the waving of hats.

Joe was a happy boy when, an hour later, he rushed into the house, and stumbling into his father's room, threw a small but heavy package upon the bed.

"Father! father! wake up!" he cried excitedly. "I've earned the money for Mr. Morrison and now we can keep the house. Do wake up!"

It did not take long to get a light, and when the money was counted there was as Joe had said enough for the interest and more too.

Joe was a proud boy when he saw his father the next morning start out to Mr. Morrison's with the $100 in his pocket. Joe often came out into the yard to play with his pet, Topknot, and then he thinks how glad he is that Widow Jenkins wanted him to go for the doctor that night.—Lewiston Journal.

Victims of Rattlesnake Bites.

Either the reptiles of Florida are more deadly than those of Arizona, or else surgeons and medicines have a good deal to do with human self preservation. A resident of Key West, Fla., while hunting the other day, was bitten by a rattlesnake and died in four minutes. It is believed that fright contributed to his quick taking off. In contrast with this is the case of Joe Chaves, a plucky ten-year-old of Gila City, A. T. Recently he was bitten by a rattler. He never whimpered while he took around the wound was cut away. The finger was seized near the hand and the arm near the shoulder, and the child made to drink considerable brandy. He was put on the train and sent to Yuma, where the doctor applied such remedies as the case demanded. Although an hour and forty minutes had elapsed from the time the bite was bitten, the case yielded promptly and the boy is well. The snake was four feet six inches in length.

"Who Was Shot Last Week?"

In 1851 Mokelumne Hill was one of the worst camps in California. "Who was shot last week?" was the first question asked by the miners when they came in from the river or surrounding diggings on Saturday nights or Sundays to gamble or get supplies. It was very seldom that the answer was, "No one."

Men would rare up and down the thoroughfares in single file, as here play the game of "follow the leader," each imitating the actions of the foremost. Selecting some particular letter to a sign they would rise in turn, regardless of everything but the accuracy of the aim. Then they would quietly cover it as though they were boys playing a game of marbles, while every shot was likely to kill or wound some unfortunate person.—Jas. C. H. Gillespie in Century.

Twice Blessed.

Briggs—Well, I must call upon my tailor.
Griggs—You are fortunate.
Briggs—How so?
Griggs—My tailor usually calls upon me.—Chicago Tribune.

In 1821 was taken the first complete record of the population of the United Kingdom. The population was then 21,372,197. In 1831 it was 24,193,465; in 1841, 27,057,923; 1851, 27,743,942; 1861, 29,321,288; 1871, 31,845,279; 1881,

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