

Monday, April 8, 1872.

A FIGHT FOR A LOCOMOTIVE.

(CONCLUDED.)

"Look sharp, lads, and get her on the line before they come," I cried, and lent a hand to the ropes myself. At last, with a thud, she was righted, and then the screw-jacks were again applied to lift her properly on the rails. This was done without interruption. The horses were harnessed to, and she began to move merrily enough, though a rattling noise inside made it evident that some of her machinery was broken. I was beginning to hope that we might soon gain the main line, about half a mile away, when over the bank there came some twenty or thirty men and lads. The wheels were scotched before we could prevent it. They harnessed a couple of horses and half a dozen donkeys to the other end of the engine. Two tar barrels they had brought with them were set alight, and blazed furiously, affording plenty of light. I warned my men not to have recourse to violence, and in this I was seconded by the leader of the opposite side, who was, in fact, the purchaser of the engine. "It shall be a fair fight," he said. "Let us see who can pull the hardest now, and you take your chance in the law afterward."

By mutual consent we unscooped the wheels, and the tournament began. First one party gained a few yards, then the other. The animals lugged their very hardest, aided by the men. The Englishmen were the strongest, although the fewest in number, but the incline was in favor of the Welshmen, and at first it seemed as if they would triumph and drag the engine back to where the rails were broken up. No blows passed between us, and the good humor shown by every one surprised me very much. I felt that I was losing patience, and must have some hand in it, so I took up a lever, and, inserting it behind a wheel, strove to urge it onward. My friend, the commander-in-chief of the enemy, did the same, but in an opposite direction. "Who was to win?" Things must rapidly end in a free fight. Nobody's patience could stand it much longer. The sons of Glamorgan in particular were becoming excited, and one or two stones had already struck the engine, thrown by some outsider in the darkness. The mail had passed some time ago, and the luggage train was nearly due. If the struggle continued much longer the neighborhood would be aroused, and we should stand no chance. At all risks the engine must be carried away before daylight. As soon as one side gained an advantage the wheels were scotched by the other, and a dead-lock seemed inevitable. A bright idea struck me, and, abandoning my lever, I went up to the overcast side of the incline, who was working as hard as any of them, and asked him who was the best runner among the men.

"There will be none as good as you, sir, and they be all tired with this pull-hauling work."

"Well, then, I'm off to Nantyglyn station; and I'll come back with the engine of the luggage train. Do you see? Look to the points at the junction."

"Capital, sir!" exclaimed he, as I turned and dashed over the bank and into the narrow road. I had scarcely got out of the glare of the fire when I was roughly collared by somebody. As he was evidently new to the game, and there was no time for explanation, even if I wished to give any, I placed my hand over his shoulder, and my arm under his chin, and with a sudden wrench, taught me by a Welsh collier, forced his head back, and left him half insensible on the ground.

That was a run!—along a rutty, stony road, and the night was pitch dark. It was tolerable good running that covered the two miles in a quarter of an hour, and I was thoroughly puffed as I got into the station. The train had been waiting a few minutes, and, although it was exceeding my power, I took the responsibility on myself of detaching the engine, and going forward along the line. The junction was soon reached, a lantern held up showed us that all was clear, and we steamed slowly up to the engine. Both parties had drawn off their forces, and were sitting and standing in groups, a little apart, while rude chaff was freely interchanged. The freight cart long and wavering shadows around, and made the outer darkness look blacker and more impenetrable than ever. The rain still came steadily down and blood on the black flag while the wet ground was trodden ankle deep in mud. Such a yell arose, after the first astonished silence, from our opponents, answered by a ringing cheer from my men. The cattle were quickly unloosed and ridden off out of the way by three men. The ropes were quickly transferred to the big engine, and in the midst of a general melee the two locomotives moved slowly off, dragging their horses and donkeys backward. Seeing the uselessness of employing brute force against steam, they cut their ropes, and we moved triumphantly off, followed by a volley of oaths and stones. One of the latter struck me on the cheek, laying it open and knocking me back on the coals in the tender. It was as much as I could do to restrain my men from jumping off and charging.

Well, that is how I fought for and won the locomotive. I do not know, good reader, if you will want to know any more. In case you do, I may say that my salary was raised considerably. Mary decided to take the risks of a married life on a still small income, and so far, we have had no reason to repent taking such an important step. She and I, and the baby, wish you adieu.

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C. P. R. R.

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Leave going East.

4.00 p. m. San Fran 8.30 p. m. 12.20 p. m.

4.35 p. m. Sacramento 8.50 p. m. 1.00 a. m.

4.10 p. m. San Fran 8.30 p. m. 1.10 a. m.

4.35 p. m. Sacramento 8.50 p. m. 1.20 a. m.

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4.10 p. m. San Fran 8.30 p. m. 1.10 a. m.

4.35 p. m. Sacramento 8.50 p. m. 1.20 a. m