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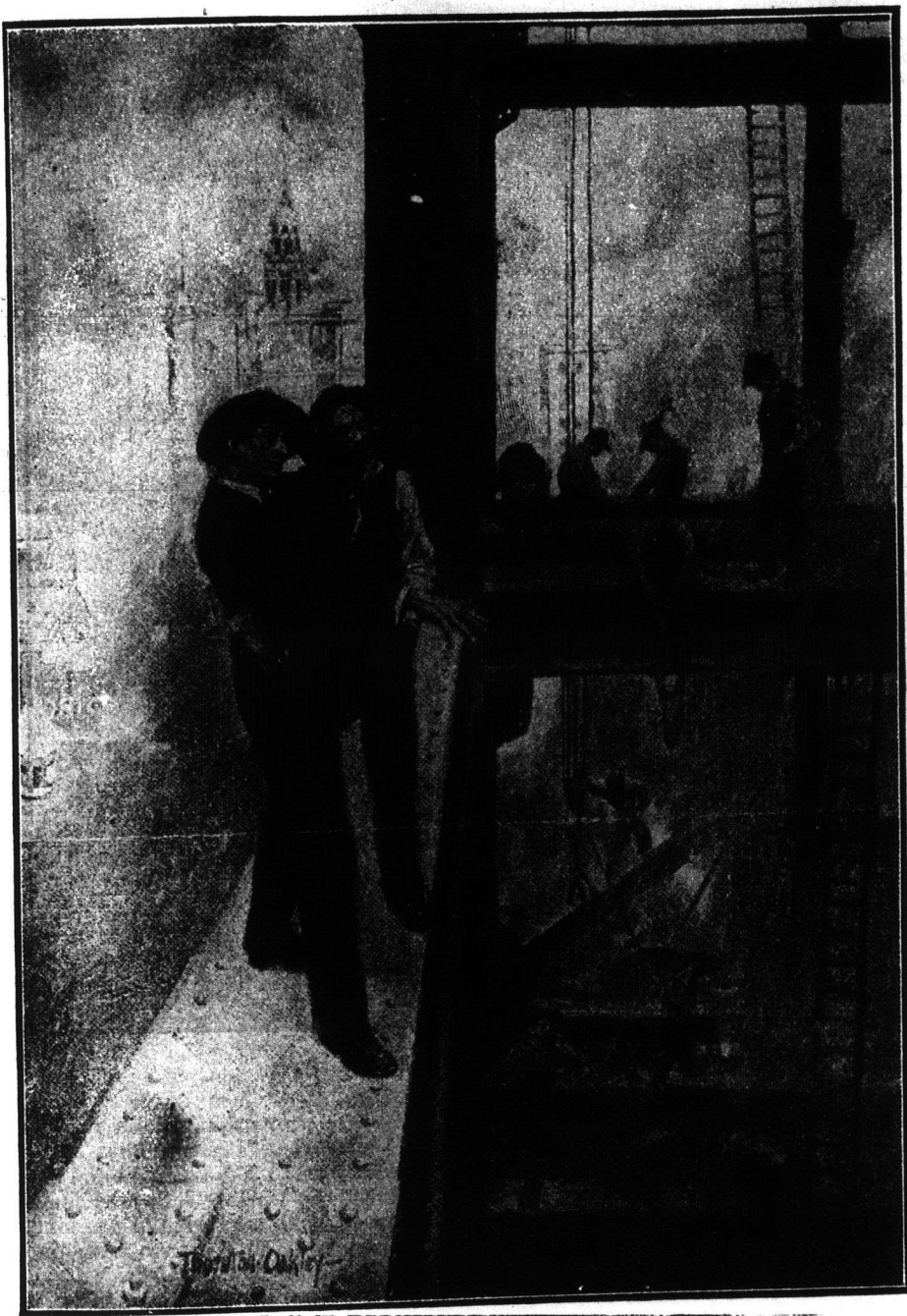
approaching party upon discovering their intention to cross the bridge. This would bring them so close that he would be recognized unless he were quick in getting away when the bolt was placed. He had not counted on this; he thought he would have finished his task and slipped away long before the visitors would cross, but the delay owing to the tide variation had brought them near his post earlier than he had expected. Soon they came so close that while he watched the signalman he could also, out of the corner of his eye, see Frank and Miss Holden. They stopped and Frank called back to those behind that a certain bolt must drop into place before they could proceed. Dan heard him say to the girl by his side: "That workman has something to do before I can say that this is a success. I hope he has a steady eye and hand, for a nice point in the operation depends on him."

Dan's bent head and soft hat concealed his face, and he was glad of it,

rope, steadily, quickly, and the great bolt slipped noiselessly into the well-oiled eyes; the bridge trembled, steadied, and then settled as true and firm on its piers as if it were an arching rock. There was a mad whistling by tugs and locomotives, cheers by the crowds, and the party back of Frank clapped their hands and cried, "Conroy! Bravo, Conroy!"

Frank smiling lifted his hat, then gave his hand to Miss Holden to help her over an open space. Dan, the words "Bravo, Conroy!" ringing in his ears above all the din, slowly straightened up and tried to move away, but for the first time in his life that he could remember he felt faint, and his knees trembled. Miss Holden was first to notice his plight, and exclaimed, "See, Frank, that poor man who fastened the bridge is suffering!"

Dan turned his back and staggered a few paces, but Frank sprang to his side, caught him, and then for the first time saw his face.



Yet there was Frank giving his orders!

for this unexpected occurrence, and the strain of his burden, were twisting his face into unlovely snarls. The suspense was affecting others; the visitors, the spectators on land and water, were silent, and, as they watched the slow movements of the mighty mass of steel, every action of a workman caused a start of nervousness. The signalman's hand rose; when it fell Dan must quickly, steadily, lower the bolt. His head began to swim a little with the excitement and the physical strain, and he prayed that his eyes might not fill, and obscure his sight. He saw nothing now but the raised hand, though he heard, mistily, the girl saying, "How exciting it is, Frank. But I know everything will be perfect, because you did it all."

"I'm only the boss," Frank answered, laughing, but a little nervously, as it sounded to Dan. "Everything now depended on the workmen."

Dan saw the signalman's hand wave, then fall, and with it he lowered the

"Father!"

"Go on, my boy. Go on, and no one will know me," whispered Dan huskily.

The young man flushed scarlet. His father's face was covered with grease and sweat, and drawn with strain and excitement. "Pass along," the old man pleaded; I couldn't help coming to see you as a boss, but I didn't think you would see me. Go on!"

Frank turned to Miss Holden, stretched out his hand to her, and as she stepped to his side, said, "Mary, this is my father—my dear old dad."

The girl started, but not from embarrassment, and without a shadow of hesitation bent forward toward Dan, gathered up his cramped, moist, blackened hands in hers, supple, untried, white gloved, saying, "I would have known him, Frank, for no one but your father could have just such eyes."

Instinctive chivalry prompted Dan's reply: "I saw you looking into my boy's eyes a bit ago, and I pray to God

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