

THE YOUNG RAILROADERS

"Good," whispered the foreman over his shoulder.
"But you get out first."

"All right," responded Alex, and immediately began moving backwards, feet first, as he had come.

Their escape was to be made more easy, however. At the moment from the house came a call. The man in the doorway stepped out to reply, and in an instant seeing the opportunity both Alex and the foreman were on their feet, and had darted out into the stable.

"Now for a sprint!" said the foreman.

"Or, say, suppose I hide here in the stable," suggested Alex. "They don't know of my being here. Then as soon as the way is clear I can get off in the opposite direction, and one of us would be sure to get away."

"Good idea," agreed the foreman. "All right, you —"

There came a loud cry from the barn, and instantly he was off, and Alex, darting back, crept low under a stall-box. As he did so the Italian dashed by and out, and uttered a second cry as he discovered the fleeing foreman. From the house came an answer, then a chorus of shouts that told the rest of the gang had joined in the chase.

Alex lay still until the last sound of pursuit had died away, then slipped forth, glanced sharply about, and dashed off for the woods in the direction of the river and the railroad bridge.

The adventure was not yet over, however. Alex had almost reached the shelter of the trees, and was