

it, and, during the early summer he received a raise in his wages.

While Tim felt the injustice of the action taken by the railway company, he never complained. It wasn't his nature to find fault.

'It may be providential, dear,' and Mrs. Hammond thought painfully of the one trial she had been forced to experience. 'You're safe, at least, where you are; there's no danger of accidents as there is around a railway.'

Going back and forth from the village, Tim was accustomed to 'cut across lots.' By taking the railway track through the notch he was able to save three-quarters of a mile, and that seemed a good deal to one who was obliged to walk it twice a day.

The notch had been cut through a ledge and bank of loose rock. On one side there had been left an immense boulder, to keep from rolling down on the track smaller stones that might otherwise be dislodged by the heavy fall and spring rains. To serve as a protection against a possible dislodgement of the big boulder itself, a heavy chain had been placed around it, the ends of which were fastened to staples, securely fixed by drilling to the solid ledge on either side.

'T'would make a bad piece of business, often thought Tim, as he passed through the notch, 'if that should happen to break away and come tearing down on the track. If it turned a little to the right, 't'would go crashing into the ravine, and I wouldn't give much for the sleepers and rails it went over. And a train that might come along!' Tim shuddered at the destruction of life and property that such an accident would cause.

It was the middle of November, and it had been raining for a week; not an occasional shower, but a steady downpour, accompanied by heavy winds.

'It doesn't seem safe, not to have some one stationed here.' Tim was going through the notch during the rainy period to his work, and he stopped just in front of the massive boulder. The rain must have loosened a good many of those smaller fellows up above on the side, and, if they should get started that chain would snap like a tow string—there'd be a regular avalanche. 'T'would be different if there wasn't the curve, so the engineer could see more'n a couple of rods ahead.

Tim was late starting home that evening. He had waited longer than usual in the village, hoping the rain would slacken somewhat, for, if anything, it had rained all the afternoon harder than at any other time during the week.

'Don't believe it's going to stop; might's well be moving. And Tim buttoned his coat more closely about his throat.

It was dark as he approached the notch. 'I'd like to see how the boulder's standing it, but don't suppose I can distinguish much, dark and rainy as it is to-night.'

Before he was opposite the big boulder and just as he was speaking, he tripped and fell—the rails had been bent.

'It's—it's—the boulder!' scrambling to his feet. 'It's gone!'

Ahead of him, the track had been torn up, roadbed, sleepers and rails having been carried into the ravine below! At his feet opened a great gully, to which Tim had carefully felt his way along.

'No knowing how deep it is. Wish I had a lantern. I wonder if it's anywhere's near time for a train?'

Feeling in his pocket he found a match—'twas the only one he had. Striking it, he looked at the watch that had been his father's.

The express was due in just ten minutes. What could he do? He seemed powerless. And there were scores of lives aboard the 'Sunset Special.' There wasn't time to get a message sent to hold the train at Falmouth; it had already left that station, and was thundering on through the storm and darkness to its destruction.

'If I only had a light to signal the engineer, but I've—nothing!' Tim's voice was pathetic with helplessness.

He ran back beyond the curve. He listened—yes, that was the whistle. He could distinguish it through the driving storm above the roar of the wind.

At the sound of the whistle Tim was seized as though by a sudden inspiration.

'I—I—might be able. I'd be surer if it didn't blow so.'

Just ahead beside the track was a pyramid of loose stones. Bounding across the rail he

caught up one—it seemed to the determined boy about the right weight. Rushing along the track, he balanced it calculatingly in his right hand. He could see the headlight of the engine now!

'It's—the only—chance!' breathlessly. Tim hurriedly took his position on a slight elevation at the left of the track—he could throw better from that side—and waited.

'If I shouldn't hit—but I must!' And there was courage born of resolution in that whisper. The train was only twenty yards away. When almost opposite—now! The rock went whizzing towards the headlight—there was a crash of broken glass—it had hit—the light went out!

The engineer instantly applied the air brake; there was a grinding of the great wheels as though maddened at such a liberty being taken with them, and slowly the heavy train came to a stop.

'Haven't I seen you before?' Tim was in the president's private car, for it was attached to the 'Sunset Special' that night. He had been conducted there by the president of the road himself.

'I think you saw me once at Rangely—'twas before I was discharged—while you were waiting for the "Elmore."'

'Discharged! I remember; on account of inexperience. I remember, too, a letter that was later handed me from the station agent there, indignantly declaring that, instead of discharge, you should have received a promotion. I've a better one to offer you now, my boy—and he grasped Tim's hand warmly—'than I could have given you then—if you'll accept it.'

Little self-denials, little honesties, little passing words of sympathy, little nameless acts of kindness, little silent victories over favorite temptation—these are the silent threads of gold which, when woven together, gleam out so brightly in the pattern of life that God approves.—Canon Farrar.

## Through a Microscope.

(Helen B. Schoonhoven, in the 'Tribune.')

'Come in, old man!'

Boy's father was writing hard in his study, but at the sound of the knock on the other side of the closed door he laid down his pen. That knock meant that Boy was thirsting for his father's society. So 'Come in, old man!' brought Boy bursting into the room with, 'Say, dad, are you awful busy?' The Boy, I am sorry to say, when he was in a hurry sometimes forgot his grammar.

'Yes, I am very busy, but I'm going to get out my microscope and look at some things, and maybe you would like to take a peek at them.'

It was always an event when the bright polished microscope came out from under its glass case. Boy got the piano stool and screwed it high for his particular perch, from which he could look down into a world where tiny things suddenly became as big as cats and dogs.

'Say, Boy, did you ever suppose that a fly or a flea or a mosquito was very interesting, or that there was anything to learn about any of them?'

'They're just measly little bugs, aren't they, dad?'

'Yes, but being just measly bugs doesn't keep them from being interesting, and I am going to show you how they look under our microscope. Here's a mosquito. Did you ever imagine when you slapped one that he had so many funny things about his body?'

'Oh, say, dad, what a queer mouth this fellow's got! What's that long, bristly hair hanging out there and those spiky hairs alongside of it?' inquired Boy, as he looked into the tube.

'That long, bristly hair, as you call it, is the sucking tube of the mosquito. He runs it into your skin and sucks up your blood through the slit he makes. If he comes to any hard place that won't cut through he has two lancets that he keeps in a sheath, and he brings them out when necessary. In the same way he sucks up the nectar of plants, water-melon juice, drinks water and even beer! Those long, feathery hairs you see are the ears of the mosquito. How would you like to have your ears out on long stalks like that?'

I have been calling this insect "he," but really this is a lady mosquito. The gentlemen of the family never bite and rarely go out for food. They prefer the women of the family to do all the work and all the eating. They don't come up to our idea of true men, do they, Boy?'

'Now I'm going to show you this chap—excuse me—this lady when she was a baby. She lives in the water and is called a wriggler. You remember we saw a lot of these baby mosquitoes on an old rain barrel last summer. They have to hibernate, but they get it through their tails; a funny way to breathe, isn't it? So now, when people want to destroy the crop of mosquitoes they kill off the wrigglers by putting kerosene oil on the surface of the water where they are living. This oil stops up the wriggler's tail so it can't breathe. Now I am going to show you what the wriggler looks like when she is half grown and is just between being a baby and a full fledged mosquito. Now, you see, she has come out of the wriggler stage and made herself a little raft to sit upon, and on this raft she comes to the surface of the water and sails around until her wings unfold and away she goes, a full fledged, winged insect, armed with her lances and sucking tube, ready for adventure, like the knights of old.'

'Say, who'd ever think, dad, there was so much to know about a little biting buzzer like a mosquito?'

'Now, Boy, I want you to look at the flea and tell me what he looks like to you.'

'Whew! Just like a pig! But what are all those bristles sticking out of him?'

'Isn't it a good thing he isn't any bigger than he is, with a body like that and those sharp, cutting jaws of his? He is so little and so active and so smart that it is almost impossible to catch him or kill him after he is full grown. He can be killed when he is a baby quite easily, for he hatches from an egg and is very frail. Then he lives in a cocoon in a crack in the floor or in the soft threads of the carpet. But after he gets his growth he is well able to take care of himself and lives a happy, care free life, biting cats and dogs and people whenever he is hungry. I think he is the most disagreeable, detestable little pest in the whole list of insects.'

'Well, I never thought he looked like that. What next, dad?'

'Now, for our friend the fly,' said father, putting a new slide under the tube.

'Say, I thought a fly's body was smooth; but this fellow is all hairs, on his legs and all.'

'Sure enough, Boy, and that is why he is dangerous. He walks in all kinds of dirt, and then he walks on our food and leaves a trail of filth behind him wherever he goes. Flies are in some ways more dangerous than fleas or mosquitoes, for they are so numerous, so hard to keep out, to catch or to kill. They live on all kinds of decaying food and bring along with them into our homes on their hairy bodies whatever dirt they have been trailing over. Men of science are working to have people do all they can to destroy this dangerous little insect.'

The boy was looking very intently down the tube and thinking how many hundreds of flies had crawled over him in the summer, outdoors and in, Father said:

'Now, run along, Boy; time's up and I must go back to my writing. Next time I'll show you some of the things that eat up these chaps and help to make their lives a burden.'

Boy clattered downstairs and went back to his play, thinking how funny it would be if all the small bugs should suddenly become as big as cats and dogs and come walking toward him.

I have known what the enjoyments and advantages of this life are, and what the more refined pleasures which learning and intellectual power can bestow; and, with all the experience that more than threescore years can give, I now, on the eve of my departure, declare (and earnestly pray that you may hereafter live and act upon the conviction) that health is a great blessing; competence obtained by honorable industry a great blessing; and a great blessing it is to have kind, loving and faithful friends and relatives; but the greatest of all blessings, as it is the noblest of all privileges, is to be a Christian.—Coleridge.