

"Who is he?" said the proprietor, in a dazed manner.

"It's Jerry, sir. Jerry the hobbin'-boy," said a man, stepping forward. "An orphan, sir, an' strivin' to care for his sick sister."

"Jerry! Is it Jerry?" cried Mr. Watterson, turning quickly. "Then he shall not go," and he waived his hand, and shouted toward the window: "Go back! Go back!"

But already it was too late, for, with a little cry, the boy dropped from his perch and hung swinging above the roaring, grinding ice, the rope which supported him sliding slowly downward along the chain toward the centre of the dam. The breathless crowd, the terror-stricken proprietor could only watch and wait now.

Slowly and unevenly the looped rope from which Jerry was suspended slipped, link by link, down the sagging chain; slowly his feet neared the great mass of ragged ice beneath. At length, when he was directly over the centre of the dam, and just above the long beam which held the jam, allowing the rope to slide quickly through his hands, he dropped lightly upon the timber he had come to cut.

At the sight the sympathetic crowd broke into a wild cheer, both men and women; but Jerry wasted no time listening. A moment, half a moment lost might mean destruction to the mills, and before the echo of the shouting had ceased he was plying his ax with vigorous strokes, that rang sharp and clear above the sound of crumbling ice and gathering waters.

It was not a long task. The strain upon the timber already was enormous, and ere the lad had dealt half a score of blows an ominous crackling sound warned him that his errand was accomplished and that he must be gone.

Dropping the ax, he turned, seized the dangling rope, and began to climb toward the chain above, when, with a shock like the report of cannon, the beam gave way, and in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, the air was filled with a horrible roaring, as the imprisoned waters burst the bonds which had confined them, and in one impetuous, boiling flood rushed over the dam, tossing the great cakes of ice that had formed the barrier high on the frothing waves—so high that they hid from sight the form of poor Jerry—and there went up from all the people a single cry: "The boy is lost!"

But the jam was broken! The mills were saved!

* * * * *
And Jerry was saved too! Bruised and stunned and bleeding, hanging half-insensible above the black waters that swept with swift curve toward the fall, when the ice that had buffeted him had passed away, the watchers saw that the boy still lived: and, quicker than it can be told, a boat was procured and manned, a long line made fast to it, and, dropping down the stream until they were close to him, tender hands were upraised, loving voices called, and with a long, sobbing cry the little hero loosed his grasp upon the rope which held him and dropped fainting into the waiting arms below.

* * * * *
To-day the great mills still stand by the river's brink, and the rumble of their machinery is heard all day long, as of yore; but it does not reach the ears of the "hobbin'-boy," nor yet those of Sister Nellie. For the one is at college and the other at school, both

foster children of that most pleasant of old bachelors, the proprietor himself; and it is only at vacation time now, when his days are brightened by the presence of both his loved ones, that Mr. Watterson's memory turns back to that spring-time, long gone by, when his son Jerry, in simple soulful gratitude, risked his life to save the mills.—*The Independent.*

UNDER A FLY-WHEEL.

BY HENRY CLEMENS PEARSON.



It was ten o'clock in the morning. Every one in the factory was at work. The clicking and rattling of the lighter machinery, the groan of heavily-laden shafts, and the oily thud of hundreds of cogs mingled in busy din. The huge engine sighed as, with its brawny arm of polished steel, it impelled the main shaft to turn the wheels of the factory.

Tom worked by the door near the engine-room. He could, therefore, easily see the engine and all its surroundings. The interest of its rapid, ceaseless motion partly reconciled him to the fact that, while most boys of thirteen were enjoying full liberty outside, he was shut up within doors.

This morning, more than usually, he had been watching the forbidden splendors of the engine-room, for the engineer allowed no one in his sanctum. The great machine fascinated Tom with its easy grace of movement. His eyes dwelt long on the neat finish of the hexagonal bolt heads that gleamed about the cylinder. He tried to tell from his position how full the glass oil-cups were, as they flashed to and fro on the polished arm; and then his eyes rested on the fly-wheel that revolved so gracefully in its narrow prison. Only one-half of the wheel could be seen at once, the other half being below the floor, almost filling a narrow, rock-lined cavity called the "pit."

As Tom watched the whirling spokes, it seemed to him as if the mass of iron stood still, so swift was its motion. He remembered that once the engineer, seeing his interest in the machinery, had invited him in, and that he had stood leaning over the frail wooden guard, his face so close to the fly-wheel that the wind from its surface blew back his hair, while he looked down in the pit with wonder and dread. He remembered asking the engineer if he supposed any one could climb down there while the engine was in motion. The answer had come: "There isn't a man in the factory that has nerve enough, even if there were room"—the space between the wheel and the wall being hardly a foot and a half in width.

The boy's eyes next wandered from the object of his thoughts, and rested on the bright brass domes of the force-pumps that occupied a brick "settle" on one side of the room; and then up on the maze of pipes that crossed and recrossed above the toiling machinery.

Suddenly glancing down he saw a little child standing beneath the guard, close to the great fly-wheel.

The engineer was nowhere in sight, and little May was his only child. Tom's heart gave a great leap. In an

instant he had scrambled down from his perch and was in the engine-room.

As he passed the door way he was just in time to see the child toddle toward and fall into the pit. With an awful shudder he waited to see the monster-wheel spurn the baby-girl from its cruel sides; but no such sight came.

He dashed forward and looked into the pit. She sat on the hard, rocky bottom, sobbing softly to herself. The fall had not harmed her, yet she was still in great danger. Any attempt to move from her position would give the relentless wheel another chance.

Tom slipped out of his brown "jumper," tore off his light shoes, and stood inside the guard. One eager look in the direction of the wooden door through which the engineer would come, and then he began the descent. The great mass of iron whirled dizzily close to his eyes; the inclined plane down which he was slowly sliding was covered deep with dust mingled with oil; the thick, oily, damp air, fanned by the heavy breeze from the wheel, almost took his breath away. When the curve of the wheel was nearest it almost brushed his clothes. With his back pressed tight against the rocks he slid down till his feet touched the bottom. And now the worst part of the ordeal came—the ponderous wheel sweeping in giddy curves above him, so affected his nerves that his strength began to fail. There was one space where the wheel curved away from a corner, so he dropped on his knees there and for an instant shut his aching eyes.

The child was in the other corner of the pit, sitting in an open space similar to that in which Tom knelt. As he looked past the terrible barrier she made a movement as if to stand up. That brought back Tom's fleeing senses. If she should stand up the wheel would strike her. Lying perfectly flat upon the bottom of the pit he began slowly and cautiously to make his way beneath the mass of flying iron. He could feel the awful wind raise his hair as he crept along. Nearer and nearer he came to the child and nearer to the curve of the wheel. As he passed beneath it an incautious movement and a sudden burn on his shoulder showed that he had touched it.

The little one had not seen him at all yet, as she had been sitting and rubbing her eyes, but she looked up now and seeing the pale face streaked with oil and dust coming toward her, she covered her face again with her little hands, and sobbed louder than ever. Tom crept on till he came so near to the child that he could lay hold of her dress; then he stopped. A strange dizzy blurr kept throwing a veil over his eyes, and he tried in vain to overcome a longing for sleep. He could feel the ceaseless whirl of the great wheel and it almost made him wild. Curious vagaries and half-delirious fancies danced through his head. With an effort he threw them off, and, raising his head from the rocky couch, called for help.

Instantly a dozen mocking voices from the sides of the pit flung back the cry into his very ears. But the wheel caught the cry and whirled it away up into the engine-room in distorted echoes. He called again, and the sounds seemed less terrible. The little girl tried to get up but he held to her white dress and soothed her the best he could.

A moment later he distinctly heard footsteps in the engine-room then he

felt that some one was looking into the pit, and then the clattering of the piston in the empty cylinder showed that the engine was soon to stop.

Less swiftly, and at last slowly and more slowly whirled Tom's massive partner, fainter and fainter came the clatter of the piston, until both ceased, and the engineer with great beads of perspiration on his white forehead, swung himself down between the harmless spokes of the fly-wheel and got down close to the two prisoners.

"Is she hurt, Tom?" he gasped.

"No, sir," said Tom, faintly. "If you'd only stop the fly-wheel I'd lift her out!"

"It is stopped, my lad—it's your dizzy head that deceives you. Let me take my little May."

The engineer reached down and lifted his darling from the dust, and, holding her fast on one arm, climbed out.

Tom lay still. He did not seem to care since the little one was safe and the fly-wheel was stopped. He felt a fearful weariness stealing over him. He would like to sleep a year.

The engineer was by his side a moment later asking if he was hurt.

"No, sir, I think not—only a little tired," said Tom, and slowly and wearily his eyes closed.

Without another word the strong man lifted him up from the rocky floor and its foul air, and climbing again by the spokes of the fly-wheel, bore the boy out of his dungeon. The air from the open window soon cleared the drowsiness from his eyes and he was able to tell the whole story. The engineer grasped his hand, but he could not speak, and there were tears in his eyes.

Many were the words of praise from the sturdy workmen that crowded in from the "steel works" to see why the engine had stopped. Tom was the hero of the day.

When the superintendent heard of it he sent for a hack and had Tom taken home in style with a comfortable little present in his pocket, and the permission to be out until he should feel all right. It took about a week to clear the dizzy feeling entirely away, and at the end of that time he was working at his machine just as if he had never been under a fly-wheel.—*St. Nicholas.*

SWEET SUMMER IS GONE.

THERE'S a purple tint on the wood-land leaves,
And the winds are up all day.
There's a rustling heard in the yellow sheaves,
And it seems to sadly say,
"Sweet summer's gone astray!"

In the wrinkled brook no roses peep,
And the bees no longer stray,
And the butterflies have gone to sleep,
And the locust trills all day—
Sweet summer's gone away!

On the browning fields the spider spins,
Where the lambs no longer play;
And the cricket now his chirp begins,
And the quail is whistling gay—
Sweet summer's gone away!

There are loving arms for baby dear,
Though the skies are chill and gray,
And a cosy home-nest all the year,
And sweet kisses every day—
Though summer's gone away.

A CHRISTIAN is like a locomotive—a fire must be kindled in the heart of the thing before it will go.—*M. W. Jacobs.*