

**THE BRAKEMAN'S "NO."**

A fine young fellow was Tom Jeffreys; strong, pleasant, and good-looking. He was but eighteen years of age when he began "railroading," but he could set a brake with the best. When his clear, deep voice announced the stations, people listened and made no mistake. Old ladies caught the gleam of his pleasant eye, and let him help them on and off with grateful surprise. Mothers with more children than they could manage, tired women bundle-laden, and old men, recognized a friend and made use of him. Nor were the railroad officials blind to the young man's helpfulness and popularity, and, although Tom did not dream of it, his was one on the list of names that meant promotion.

The young brakeman's easy-going good-nature, however, was a drawback in one direction. He disliked to say "No." When the train reached Boston he always had two hours to spare. In that time some one of the boys was sure to say, "Come, Tom, let's go to the barber's." Now this sounded very innocent, but in the barber's back room was a green door which opened on a stairway leading down into a drinking-saloon. Here the men used to gather, a few at a time, to take "a little something."

Tom usually said his good-humored "No," that meant a reluctant "Yes," and ended by going. He never felt wholly at ease when taking his beer. He would not have gone for it alone. Over and over again he acknowledged to himself that it was the laughter of his chums that took his courage away, and so things went on. A year slipped by, and beer had become an almost every-day drink with him, when one afternoon he was summoned from the "barber's shop" to the office.

"Jeffreys," said the superintendent, when he entered, "I have been very much pleased with the way in which your duties have been performed in the past, and I find we need another conductor." The gentleman suddenly stopped, and then the pleasant smile was gone. "Mr. Jeffreys, your breath tells me that you have been drinking."

"Only a little beer, sir," said poor Tom, flushing crimson.

"I am very sorry," replied the superintendent, "but that will be all to-day; you may go."

The young man left the office downcast, disheartened. What he had been wishing for, what he had so nearly gained, had been lost through his own misconduct. As he

thought of it the good-natured lips took on a firmer curve. The next day one of the boys said:

"Comin' over to the barber's?"

"No," replied Tom.

"Oh! come on; what struck yer?"

"That barber has shaved me all he ever will!" was the answer.

Although Tom's "No" seemed very determined in its sound, there was yet something wanting in it. He felt it, and when after a few days the real longing for a glass of liquor made itself felt, it seemed as if the "No" would be "Yes" in spite of himself.

"No use in lockin' the barn door now," said his chum; "the hoss is stole, the 'super' knows you've taken a 'smile' now and then, and he'll never forget it. Better be young while you can." Tom still said "No," but the little negative grew weaker and weaker; the next thing it would be "Yes."

When this was almost accomplished, spurred by his danger, and remembering his early training in the right, he went into a empty car, and, kneeling on the bare floor, prayed for strength to resist. "And then," he said, "I learnt to speak a 'No' that all the men on the road couldn't turn into a 'Yes'!"—*The Interior.*

**"THE BOY IS FATHER OF THE MAN."**

When John Coleridge Patterson, who became the devoted bishop, was a lad at school, he was one of the cricket eleven. At the suppers after the matches the boys became, unhappily, accustomed to indulge in rather coarse mirth; silly, harmless jokes were circulated, and the talk sometimes became bad. Patterson at last could stand it no longer. He rose up from his place one night, and said clearly and decidedly, with boyish frankness and determination:—

"I must leave the eleven if this conversation is to go on; I will not share in it, and I cannot listen to it. If you persist in it, nothing is left me but to go."

His companions did not want to lose one of their best players, and the hurtful talk was stopped. Patterson, when he grew to be a man, showed only too well that he could be physically brave. He died heroically on one of the islands of the Pacific.