

GABE HARRIS.

The wooden tanks on all the leases in the Hartford region had been full for many days, and every time a well flowed "off a head" the petroleum was wasted. It ran over the tank's brim, saturated the dry leaves and formed pools on the hill sides in the depressions behind the trees and stumps.

The spring had been early; by the last week of April the snow was all gone from the recesses of the deep forest. There had been but little rain, and the warm sun had dried the rotting timber in the woods. The leaves strewn the ground were crisp and combustible as paper. They were scattered hither and thither by the frequent breezes blowing strong from the Great Lakes, and they found lodgement only where they fell into loose petroleum and became soaked. Never were there conditions more favorable for a terribly disastrous forest fire.

Everybody was careful of fire. Men, who, in silent silence, or with angry denunciation of the Pipe Line Company, watched their oil run to waste, forbore smoking in the woods for fear a spark from a pipe would light the conflagration they all dreaded. Drilling was stopped; fires were drawn from the boilers at pumping wells.

The producers had held mass meetings and denounced the action of the company; they had even attempted violence. To all complaints the company seemed indifferent; to protect their property they had called upon the sheriff of the county and his posse, which consisted mainly of men in their employ.

From all the meetings Gabe Harris had been absent. In the attack upon the pump station he had taken no part; but every day he had gone to the office of the "Lines" and asked to have his oil "run." Having made the request and received an answer, he handed the superintendent an estimate amount of petroleum that had run to waste on his lease the previous day. The reply he received was the same that all applicants were met with.

"We have no room, but are increasing our tankage daily, and hope to relieve you soon. However, if you wish to sell your oil for immediate shipment, we will run it at once."

"Immediate shipment" oil brought twenty cents a barrel less than the market price for crude petroleum, and many of the producers, pressed by their creditors or needing money to buy the necessities of life, were forced to accept the company's terms. But Gabe though his credit was nearly exhausted, would not thus yield to monopoly. Rather than sell his oil for immediate shipment he would let his creditors have his property, and support his family by working on the streets of Hartford. His home he could retain, for the little portable house with its furniture was paid for, and he had no debt to pay ground rent, as on the leases the surface of the ground had no value, save where the derricks and their engine houses and tanks were located.

Perhaps he would not have been so courageous had he not been of the opinion that his course was right. Her nature, though affectionate and gentle, was independent and self-reliant. Poverty had no terrors for her. She had endured it, had suffered many privations in practicing a rigid economy in order to save the wages Gabe had earned as a driller, so that some day they might have a lease of their own. They had secured one; on it had put down three wells, and were meeting with regularity and promise the notes given for machinery and tanks, when the "shut down" came, and their oil joined to that of other producers on the hill-side—forever lost. She was glad Gabe had not become violent and made threats as his neighbors had done, because she thought must be a display of weakness, and she would have regretted her marriage had she at last found herself the wife of a weak man. She knew she could rely upon his silent determination to win in his conflict with the lines without an appeal to dynamite, which remedy for their abuses was daily threatened by the producers.

Meantime Gabe formed a plan. He resolved to run his oil himself, first gauging his tanks in the presence of witnesses to ascertain the amount they contained; then he would turn the stopcock, and set a donkey engine to work pumping the petroleum into the main line. When his tanks were empty, he would demand of the "Lines" a storage certificate for the amount of the oil run.

On a clear, warm morning in May he kissed his wife good-bye for the day, and set out on horseback for Hartford to make a final demand on the company to run his oil.

Looking back over his shoulder he saw the flames running up the side of the hill, the blazing leaves blown by the wind apparently in a hot race to spread the conflagration, to carry destruction far and wide. At a glance he saw the direction of the fire toward his own home and lease—to ward his wife and children, whom he had left but a half hour before.

At the telegraph station of the "Lines," he drew rein and yelled to the operator: "Tell Hartford we want men with picks and shovels, and we want them quick. Wire the railroad company for a special train."

The operator, who had already reported an iron tank on fire, promptly sent Gabe's message. Before it reached Hartford, Gabe was on his way at full speed on his horse. He rode to within a hundred yards of the burning tank and hitched his horse to a tree on the windward side of the fire. Then snatching a shovel from one woman and a pickaxe from another, he ran to a bend of the creek and began the construction of a dam.

Two old men and some boys came to help him, while the women brought picks and shovels and laid them on the bank of the creek in readiness for use by the husbands and fathers, who, to men were attending a mass meeting of the producers in Hartford.

The blazing oil heated the tank, the flames roaring and struggling to maintain a perpendicular against the wind, growing in force and height steadily.

Gabe was working with wonderful energy making a sluice for the escape of the water, at the same time directing his assistants how to build a dam, which was to be constructed of stone laid one on the other and banked with dirt. The old men, whose strength was unequal to the efforts they put forth in the excitement, leaned on their shovels presently, and took an observation of the progress of the fire, and reckoned on the probability of the small force being able to complete the dam before the overflow would come.

"Why, Gabe, how can you work so hard in this heat with your coat on?" one of them remarked querulously, as he wiped his brow with a soiled handkerchief. "Didn't think of that," said Gabe, and in a moment he was at work again without coat or vest to impede him. "Does go easier," he said cheerily, as he strengthened the side of the sluice with a large stone. "Now if you old fellows ain't played out you can shovel some dirt behind that rock."

"I ain't played out," one of the old men said, "but I'm thinkin' you'd better git fast as your horse can carry you, or you won't save much from that little house of yours up to Summit."

One of the boys stopped in his digging, his breath growing short, and looked at the conflagration sweeping up the mountain side. "Gabe, had you better stop and tell your wife the fire's comin'?" he said.

"No; you stay here and dig. Mr. Harris knows as much about the fire comin' her way as we do. She's got eyes."

Yet, with all his cheerful manner and the courage in his voice, Gabe did not dare to look up from his work, for fear the sight of the tempest of flames that was rushing to the destruction of his home would overcome his resolution to save Kendall if possible.

"Beg don't you think you'd better go Gabe?" the old man quered. Charity begins to home, you know."

"Stop pesterin' me and work, or get out of the road!"

The old man, offended, shoveled in a desultory way.

"Spoonfuls don't count; 'tain't the little grains of sand we want here, but shovelfuls," and suiting action to word, Gabe dumped a pile of sand against the stone he had just put in place. The old man, feeling that he was useless, threw down his shovel and walked away; the other one joined him, and together they went to chat with the women who were standing in the highway, alternately gazing at the fire and noting the progress of the dam.

"Is the dam done?" asked one woman eagerly of the old men.

"Done? It will never be done, for the overflow will come first."

"Better get out your things," said the other old man.

This suggestion stampeded the women. They scattered, each to her home, the children crying after their mothers, who were hastening to save keepsakes and small valuables. Here and there a frantic woman carried a baby, but was heedless of its cries.

Meanwhile Gabe was cheering the boys, some of whom were beginning to flag— one, then another of them, pausing to draw a shirt sleeve over his perspiring forehead.

"Here, Dick, you carry stones awhile. You help him, Bill. And you two fellows there with picks, take shovels. We'll beat that fire, or we ain't men."

Thus encouraged, the boys worked with increased vigor, and Gabe saw with growing hope that the dam was assuming proportions which would offer effective resistance to considerable of a "boil over," as the overflow was sometimes called.

Once again the boy who had wanted to ride to Gabe's home with news of the approaching fire recurred to the subject.

"'Tain't too late yet, Gabe. Hadn't I better go?"

"You can go if you want to, Dick, but only to not to my house. We need all hands here."

The boy shamefully renewed his exertions, and the others, in dogged imitation of Gabe's unflagging zeal, worked with their heads down, bestowing all their attention to obeying his orders.

There was silence among them except when Gabe spoke; but amid the roaring of the fire in the tank they could hear the shrill voices of the women screaming to each other, and presently there came to their ears the welcome screech of one of the little narrow-gauge engines. Buoyed by a reprieve of the whistle, the little band seemed to redouble their efforts. Soon again the locomotive shrieked, nearer to them, and there was silence until the rattle of the train and the clatter of the boys looked up; but Gabe did not pause in the particular task he was engaged upon—packing the sand between some stones. The train ran up to a point opposite the tanks, and before it was at a standstill men carrying picks and shovels had leaped from the platforms and were running to the dam, shouting to the workers to make way for new men.

Then Gabe paused. He looked up the valley, but could not see his home for the dense smoke that was blowing over the summit. He was jostled aside by the new comers who came to the work like a company charging a battery. Gabe felt that he would not be needed now. He could no longer restrain his heart. It called on him louder, more urgently than it had done when there was time for him to get to his house before the conflagration had reached it, and he obeyed.

In the tumult he was not missed, and no one heard the clatter of his horse's hoofs over the stony road. Bending low over the pommel of his saddle he dashed into the smoke. He could not see, but he trusted his horse, now mad with fright. Presently, he said: "Thank God!" the lessening of the heat on his chest, then a breath of cool air, told him that which he had not observed—the wind had veered and had carried the fire off in another direction, west of his house, and he was safe. He knew, too, from faith in his wife, that she had conducted the children to a place of safety. Soon he was out of the blinding smoke, and the horse slackened the pace of his own accord. Then he dismounted and climbed the side of the mountain where he soon found his family on a point of rocks.

"I saw it all," said his wife; "but I did not know it was you working there all the time till I saw the horse start up the valley. Then I knew." And she kissed him.

"But the overflow! Did it come?"

"Yes. Just after I lost sight of you in the smoke."

"And the dam?"

"It held. See, Kendall is safe; and there would not have been time to save it after the train came."

And in the look of pride and love she gave him Gabe found his reward.

A DEAD LETTER OFFICE.

Cousin Ruth was playing waltzes for the young people. Near her stood John Graham, one of her old beaux. He had lately come home after an absence of twenty years.

John was looking at Ruth with apparent concern, counting the lines that began to mark her pale face and noting the streaks of gray that ran through her hair. It had been so dark and thick the last time he had seen it! Then he gazed thoughtfully at the merry young dancers, and at last, feeling that he ought to say something, asked:

"Who is that graceful, yellow-haired girl?"

"That is Grace Deering, Cousin Tom's daughter," Ruth replied. Her hearer exclaimed wonderingly:

"Tom Deering's daughter! I remember him so well." After a pause he added: "I thought you and he would have been married long ago."

Cousin Ruth smiled, shook her head, and played on without speaking.

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One says:—"I would not be without your Wine of Rennet in the house for double its price. I can make a delicious dessert for my husband, which he enjoys after dinner, and which I believe has at the same time cured his dyspepsia."

Another says:—"Nothing makes one's dinner pass off more pleasantly than to have nice little fishes which are easily digested. Eagar's Wine of Rennet has enabled my cook to put three extra dishes on the table with which I puzzle my friends."

Another says:—"I am a hearty eater, but as my work is mostly mental, and as I find it impossible to take muscular exercise, I naturally suffer distress after a heavy dinner; but since Mrs. ... has been giving me a dish made from your Wine of Rennet over which she puts sometimes one, sometimes another sauce, I do not suffer at all, and I am almost inclined to give your Rennet the credit for it, and I must say for it that it is simply gorgeous as a dessert."

Another says:—"I have used your Wine of Rennet for my children and find it to be the only preparation which will keep them in health. I have also sent it to friends in Baltimore, and they say that it enables their children to digest their food, and save them from those summer stomach troubles so prevalent and fatal in that climate."

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Fabrics are Finer, Shades are Livelier, Shapes are more Becoming

than ever before, and all things considered this fall bids fair to be the most stylish season of the year. Our line of extra Business or ordinary Dress Suits, are away above the average, both as regards material and finish. Don't forget the address.

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Connections made at Eastport with steamer for St. Andrews, Calais and St. Stephen. Freight received daily up to 6 p.m.

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THE above Steamer will make three trips a week during the season, leaving HARTFORD MONDAY, WEDNESDAY and SATURDAY mornings, at 7 a.m., local time, for Digby and Annapolis, on the same days, at 9 o'clock in the afternoon, stopping at the usual landings.

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Sailings for September.

From the Company's Pier, Head's Point, St. John, every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at 7 a.m., local time, for Digby and Annapolis.

Returning will sail from Annapolis every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday upon arrival of the "FLYING DUTCHMAN" from Halifax, due at 12.15.

Passengers by this favorite route are due at Halifax at 6.30 P. M. HOWARD D. TROOP, President.

RAILWAYS.

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Canadian North West.

Leaving Stations on C. P. R. St. John to McAdam J.C., and St. Stephen, inclusive, on

Sept. 27th and Oct. 4th,

and from other points on line in N. B. on the previous day.

Tickets will be good for return passage until November 6th and 13th, 1892.

For rates of fare and other particulars enquire of nearest Railway Ticket Agent. Colonel Sleeping Cars will be provided for Boston every Tuesday, D. MCNICOLL, C. E. McPHERSON, Gen'l Pass. Agent, Ass't Gen'l Pass. Agt., MONTREAL. ST. JOHN, N. B.

WESTERN COUNTIES R.Y.

Summer Arrangement.

On and after Monday, 27th June, 1892, trains will run daily (Sundays excepted) as follows:

LEAVE YARMOUTH—Express daily at 8.10 a.m. arrive at Annapolis at 11.0 a.m.; Passenger and Freight Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 1.45 p.m.; arrive at Yarmouth at 5.30 p.m.

LEAVE ANNAPOLIS—Express daily at 1.00 p.m.; Passenger and Freight Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 5.30 a.m., arrive at Yarmouth at 11.0 a.m.

LEAVE WYEMOUTH—Passenger and Freight Friday at 8.15 a.m., arrive at Yarmouth at 11.0 a.m.

CONNECTIONS—At Annapolis with trains of the Yarmouth and Boston for Boston every Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings; and from Boston every Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday mornings. With Stage daily (Sunday excepted) to and from Barrington, Shelburne and Liverpool.

Through tickets may be obtained at 129 Hollis St., Halifax, and the principal Stations on the Windsor and Annapolis Railway, at J. J. BARNWELL, 87 1/2 Yarmouth, N. B. General Superintendent.

Intercolonial Railway.

After June 27, Trains leave St. John, Standard Time, for Halifax and Campbellton, 7.00; for Pictou at 11.0 a.m.; for Halifax, 11.30; for Summers, 12.30; for Quebec and Montreal, 12.35.

Will arrive at St. John from Summers, 6.30; from Quebec and Montreal (excepted Monday), 1.45; from Pictou at 4.45; from Halifax, 12.30; from Montreal, 8.45.

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