theory, he with a shoulderfull of wood, stepped to the other gang-plank on which Mr. Baker was descending; the shock of the collision carried the wood and the two gentlemen into the water floundering, in which element Forkey unburdened his soul to his very profane companion. The excitement extended to the firemen, and from them to the engineers; in the natural course of progression it reached the mates, the pilot, the clerk; finally it was noticed that the captain himself, whenever the roustabouts were busy forward, stared curiously at the Parson and his pet.

The Wabash river was finally reached, and found to be more than bankful; the boat might have sailed safely over the bottom-lands wherever the timber was cut away. A wicked thought struck Captain Bates and made him gleeful; he hurried up to the pilot-house.

"Ben," said he to the pilot on duty, "the river is way up."

"Rather," said the pilot, as he put the boat's head toward the western shore to avoid the current of a swoollen creek coming in on the other side.

"Don't you b'leeve she could run the dam at Mount Zion, and dodge paying lock-charges?" asked the Captain, offering the freedom of his tobacco-plug to the pilot.

"Shouldn't wonder," replied the pilot, after scanning closely the trees on both banks of the river.

"'Twould have to be done by daylight, wouldn't it?" asked the Captain; "it's hardly a safe risk to try it after dark."

"Not *any*," said the pilot, with considerable emphasis. "If there's ever a time when a man wants to see the water in front of him, it's when he's runnin' a dam. We won't get to Mount Zion till about midnight, an' there's no moon."

"Whose watch 'll it be first thing in the morning?" asked the Captain.

"Mine," said the pilot.

"I'll give you an extra twenty to do it, Ben," said the Captain.

"Done!" said the pilot.

"Hooray!" shouted Captain Bates, spinning on his heel and rubbing his hands joyously. "We'll tie up at Mount Zion and keep up an infernal whistlin' all night so the lock-keeper 'll be afraid to go to bed; then in the morning we'll shoot right along under his nose. Great Cæsar! *won't* he jump and swear?"

The pilot showed his teeth in grim approval of the Captain's wicked mirth.

From midnight until daybreak the gentle Helen lay at Mount Zion, shrieking and howling through her whistles in a manner which tormented the inhabitants of the town as badly as they did the lock-keeper. Toward daybreak, however, both engineers came on duty, all the roustabouts were awakened, both mates and the Captaln were on deck, and the two pilots lounged over the wheel. As soon as it became fairly light the lines were east off, and the gallant little boat started on her daring trip. Several miles up the stream the locality of the dam was indicated by a great white mill on one side of the stream, and the lock on the other. As the boat moved slowly against the rapid current and decreased distance, a dark, troubled line extending across the mill showed that, despite the depth of water on the dam, there was yet a perceptible fall; the same fact was also indicated by a steady, sullen roar.

"All forward!" shouted the Captain. "Got to keep her head down all we can, and there's no *freight* to do it with. *Everybody* forward—cooks, greasers, everybody!"

The roustabouts crowded to the jack-staff.

"Looks nasty, Ben," suggested the pilot off duty to his associate.

"Yes," replied the sententious Benjamin.

"Must be a fall of nigh onto three feet—don't you think it's dangerous?" continued the other pilot.

"Nary time," replied Ben, with a face sufficiently white to give his words the lie. "There's nothin' to do but get her head straight and hold her to it. We'll go across as easy as fallin' off a log. It's time to give me a hand, now."

"Trim boat!" shouted Captain Bates. The two mates carefully disposed the men and the coils of rope forward, until the captain shouted:

"There! she sits like a duck!"

By this time the dam was but a hundred yards in front, and though it was only a wall of water about two feet in height, most of the roustabouts forward looked as if they would rather be somewhere else, if possible, while the coloured cook and waiters seemed to grow ashy in visage.

A moment more, and the boat was within twenty-five yards of the black, roaring wall.

"Now—hold her to it!" growled Ben, between his teeth.

"Steady!" shouted the Captain.

The boat staggered up—she seemed barely to creep—she trembled so violently that her bell rang. Suddenly her head sheered the least bit from her proper course, which lay at an exact right angle with the line of the dam. The effect was seemingly out of proportion with the cause; instead of the water being divided by the prow, and fol-