

DON'T FORGET TO PRAY.

BY J. WARD CHILDS.

"It's hard to have you leave us, John,
They all are gone but you;
We're getting old and feeble, and
Our journey'll soon be through,
But since it is God's pleasure, John,
To guide you on your way
Accept, my boy, this precious book,
And don't forget to pray.

"This book has been a treasure, John,
To father and to me;
As it has been to millions, and
To millions more will be.
In sickness, pain, and sorrow, John,
"Twill shed a cheering ray;
Then let it be your constant guide,
And don't forget to pray.

"This world is full of wickedness,
Of luring snares, and sin;
And thousands, madly pressing on,
Are daily falling in.
But if you would escape them, John,
And keep the narrow way,
Oh, make God's Word your counsellor,
And don't forget to pray.

"With yearning hearts we'll pray, dear
John,
For your eternal weal,
As round the family altar we
At morn and evening kneel.
In spirit you may join us, John,
Though many miles away,
If in your heart this Word you hide,
And don't forget to pray.

"Good-by! God bless and keep you, John,
Shall be our daily prayer;
And if we meet no more below,
God grant we may up there.
And we have this assurance, John,
To cheer us, that we may,
If we the Bible make our guide,
And don't forget to pray."
—N. Y. Oberver.

A DASH FOR LIFE.

THE STORY OF A TERRIBLE RIDE.

By F. M. Holmes, author of "Faith's Father,"
"Saeed as by Fire," etc.

At the time of which I speak, Arton, was the terminus of a long branch of the main line of one of our principal railways. It was a dear, old-fashioned country town, with many irregular streets branching off from the long and unevenly built main thoroughfare.

Through those hot, summer holiday afternoons, nothing was so delightful to my brother and myself as to wander down to the terminus, and watch the luggage vans being loaded and unloaded with the goods which had come to the station for and from the numerous villages around.

And more delicate, still, were we, when in course of time, we began to make friends with the engine drivers and their mates, and from them learned details about their mighty machines. One of them was kind enough to beckon us to come to him when he saw us on the platform, and then, helter-skelter, we would run across the rails and climb on to his engine, to remain there and watch his doings, and ask questions, until his hour of rest was over, and he had to take the return train back to London.

And often it was necessary that the engine should perform certain duties, such as shunting, or pumping water for its own consumption, and one little trip it always took was a short journey to the "turn-table," where its head was slewed round again Londonwards, or rather towards Bingham, which was the place where the branch line, of which Arton was the terminus, joined the main road of rails. We usually were invited by our friendly driver to accompany him on these trips, and so often did we go, and so keen was the interest we took in his doings that we became perfectly familiar with the ordinary method of working that glorious machine—a locomotive engine.

Well, things went on in this way for some time, until one memorable day, when on being beckoned by John Freeth (our most friendly passenger-engine driver), and gaily climbing upon his machine, we found to our dismay that he was the worse for liquor, so far gone, indeed, that it was his stoker who was entirely managing the locomotive, and at the same time preventing him from committing acts of drunken folly which

would have been disastrous indeed in their results.

As soon as we saw the state he was in, we drew back and were about to jump off, but at that moment Freeth pulled the lever which opened the valve to the cylinders, and the engine steamed off. Moreover, he saw our intention, and being anxious (like most people when in his lamentable state) to act as though he was not intoxicated, he began to question us why we wanted to run away, and to threaten us if we should attempt to do so. He had to go to Medlar's siding he said, which was a good five miles off, and that would be a fine run for us, so stop we must unless we could give a good reason for going.

And the fireman found the opportunity to whisper to my brother—"Take no notice of his queerness, if you do he'll be mad. I'll take care of you; I can manage him." So with hearts full of vague fear, off we went.

At any other time we should have been delighted beyond measure. The ride to Medlar's siding was a glorious one, and I cannot describe the sense of exhilaration which thrills your nerves as you rush through the air on an unattached engine—going so easily and so lightly, and yet so rapidly, that you are obliged to hold on to the sides to preserve your balance, whilst the air whistles past, and you "tingle" with delight to the very finger-tips.

We had to go first to the "turn-table." This was only a run of a few minutes back on the main line, then a "shunt" off to a siding which led to the engine-house. We remained on the engine whilst Freeth and his mate descended and worked the wheels which screwed the table round, on which the "Jupiter" (this was the engine's name) was standing. We noticed as we waited that Freeth was too far gone to work properly, and that the burden of the labor was borne by Hinton, his stoker. Thereupon we jumped off and helped him to turn the handle, and I remember to this day how hard it turned, and that we made the remark, "it wanted oil."

Well, the engine was turned, and then Freeth, telling Hinton to "take her to the pumps," walked, or rather reeled off by himself towards the town, and as he did so we could see he took a black bottle from his pocket and applied it to his lips. A frown settled on Hinton's face as he noticed this—a frown and a look of apprehension, but he said nothing.

Two or three strokes of the piston brought us to the engine house, and another stroke placed us on the wheels of the pump. Then the valve to the cylinders was again slightly opened, and the engine left to its work, whilst Hinton cleaned and oiled the various joints and bearings.

But perhaps I had better just explain that the "wheels" referred to were let into the floor of the engine room, that their tops formed part of the rails on which the engine stood; if, therefore, those wheels were unlocked so that they could revolve, and the driving wheels of the engine were so accurately placed as to rest solely upon them, it will easily be seen that although the valve to the cylinders was opened to its fullest extent the engine would not travel an inch, the driving wheels not "gripping" the line, would only sent the wheels on which they rested flying round in an opposite direction. This was what was done, and the lower wheels worked a force-pump which filled the immense tank at the top of the engine house. The wants of the various engines, which visited the terminus were large, and nearly every day the large tank was emptied.

I have described this rather minutely, as it will then be seen that this operation was rather a delicate one, everything depended on the two wheels exactly meeting; and it was a great dereliction of duty on Freeth's part to have left Hinton to manage it alone, although he was quite capable of doing so. However, we were able to help him.

We noticed that a new engine was standing in the shed getting up steam. She was an immense and very powerful engine, fitly named the "Giant" and had not been in Arton before—that is, we had not seen her, and we spent some time in examining her—she had two pairs of driving wheels, and so could not "pump" as we were doing, or our engine would not have had to perform this duty on this occasion.

Hinton was annoyed at this, for time was short, and he had much to do. But the

tank had been quite empty, and we could not get off to Medlar's siding for the trucks waiting there until it was filled. Twice he quickened the rate of speed, until the wheels seemed to fly round, and it would be dangerous to go faster, but it appeared of little use. The din was now deafening—it seemed almost to split one's head. In this way, five and thirty minutes of precious time was spent, and yet we had to go to the siding five miles off, and mess about, as Hinton phrased it, with shunting a lot of trucks, and he would never be able to clean and oil all the machinery properly.

At last, however, the joyful news came that the tank was full. I brought that information myself, for I had climbed the iron ladder to look in several times. At the words Hinton uttered an exclamation of joy, threw his oil cans into their box, and jumping on the engine shut off steam and stopped the driving wheel; my brother and I locked the pump-wheels and quickly climbed up beside the stoker. Hinton opened the valve, and we were off for Medlar's siding.

It was a splendid run! Hinton dashed along to make up for lost time, and the wind whistled gaily past us, whilst our spirits rose higher and our pulses beat excitedly.

But it was soon over. The siding was reached, and in quick time Hinton jumped off and hooked on the trucks; the engine was reversed and back we went to Arton dragging after us a long line of empty wagons.

Of course we did not return as rapidly as we had come, still we went along pretty quickly until we arrived near the engine-house, and came to the point at which the trucks were to be shunted off from the main line. Hinton looked out, but there was no porter to see to the points at the engine-house; we heard loud voices in the engine-house, and judged from the sounds that Freeth had returned and was engaged in a hot altercation with the man who should have attended to the points for us.

Muttering angrily to himself, Hinton jumped up and pulled the lever whilst we opened the valve (naturally proud of being allowed to do so) and slowly steamed along, dragging the trucks to their proper siding. When they had all cleared the points, Hinton shouted; we shut off steam and screwed the brake down hard. We then uncoupled the engine and slowly moved off, whilst he shunted us to another siding, whence we could reach the main line again.

This we did, and then waited for him to climb up. As he was running towards us we heard a loud cry, and the porter who should have helped us ran from the engine house, and entreated Hinton to assist him in restraining Freeth.

Hinton stopped, undecided what to do. At that moment my brother screamed, "Look out, Harry! here's that old 'Giant' coming!"

I looked, and never shall I forget the wild throbs of terror which thrilled me as I saw, scarce any distance off, that immense engine, blowing off full steam and rushing towards us, with Freeth, mad drunk, at the lever, and pulling it open wider still.

"Dash for it!" cried my brother; "open the throttle" (valve), and whilst he sent the brake handle spinning round, leaving the wheels free, I gradually opened the valve so as to give the drivers "grip" and we were off!

I shouted loudly to Hinton to open the points of another siding, so that we could get off the main line, and my brother screamed to Giles, the porter, to switch off the "Giant," but to no purpose. She came on so fast that neither of the men could cross the line; before we knew it, we had passed the last "points," and were travelling at a tremendous pace on the main line to Bingham, with that steaming, snorting terrible "Giant" following us faster and still faster.

To stop was instant destruction. All our hope was to dash ahead so fast that if the "Giant" overtook us the shock (especially as our buffers were remarkably strong) would be much reduced.

We saw this at once, and without pausing to think, banked up the fires, opened the valve to its widest, and sped along at a frightful speed! Excitement! I never knew what it was before, and I don't wish to experience it again. Look when we would behind us, there was that terrible "Giant," worked by that insane man, still following us closely.

Why did we not jump off when first we saw it coming. There was no time. Our only chance seemed to be to keep moving and to be switched off. Hinton and others said afterwards we could not have done otherwise than what we did. Moreover, we expected that Freeth would stop at the first station, as he was accustomed to, and discovering his mistake would go back. But no such thing. We dashed through the station at a frightful pace, and then our hearts began to fail us indeed. What was to be done. There seemed to be no help for us. We must still dash for life, before that steaming snorting "Giant," driven by that madman Freeth. "The road is open to Bingham," said my brother, thoughtfully, "because they expect the train this engine ought to have behind it; so far we are safe, if we can but keep ahead. What's the pressure now, Harry? Can we keep up this rate much longer?"

We read off the figures on the gauge, and I will remember the pressure of steam in the boiler was 150 pounds, and rising. We piled on more coal, and again looked behind us. The "Giant" was coming on as fast as ever, but the distance between us, though small, had not lessened.

Happily it was a luggage engine; so far, we had the advantage, for ours, being built for passenger traffic, was lighter, and capable of going at a higher rate of speed. The "Giant" was more powerful, and intended for dragging heavy weights rather than for rapidity of motion.

So we swept on! It was a terrible ride, the memory of which will never pass from me. Danger before us, terrible danger, certain destruction if we stopped; no hope but to dash on—on—on—whither we dare not ask ourselves.

Again we heaped coal on the fire, and again we anxiously consulted the gauge. At present we were all right—we had a good head of steam, quite sufficient to keep up our present pace. This done, we opened the steam-whistle, and tied it down; and now, with shrieking whistle, we plunged on through the darkening twilight! Our hope was that the officials at Arton had telegraphed the news along the line, and that some help might be coming. But we shuddered as we asked ourselves what help could be rendered us! To be switched off to a siding would be but to court the terrible death from which we are now flying, for how could they switch us off, and not that terrible thing behind! Still vaguely hoping that something might be done, we kept the whistle open and waited. "It will at least serve to warn them we are coming, and tell them to clear the road," said my brother, grimly.

But now a new danger presented itself! We were rapidly approaching Bingham, and consulting our watches, to our dismay we found that an express train would be due at that station at the time that we, unlesstopped, would dash through it! Could nothing be done to make that madman stop! We looked behind for the hundredth time. No! rapidly and pertinaciously as ever the engine was steaming on.

"We must get to Bingham before that express," said my brother decidedly. "We're going quicker than she will. Then we shall have a hundred miles or more of clear line, for it'll be open—expecting her. If we are behind it and get there while it's waiting, there'll be a terrible smash. What's the time Harry?"

I told him. Then came a look on his features I had never seen before. No more was he a boy. He had suddenly become a man, in spirit at least; his brows were knit and his lips were firm, as though he contemplated a mighty purpose.

"We'll clear the junction before the express, and then with an open hundred miles of line before us I'll stop this madman somehow, if I die for it!"

He threw off his coat, piled more coal on the furnace, and took his watch in his hand. His face grew more anxious. We were perilously near the junction—and if we were not through in five minutes a frightful collision must ensue.

I eagerly looked to the next turn in the road. When I saw that turning we could see the other line on which the express would run. Both lines joined at the junction.

It was a sharp curve, and terribly dangerous to round it at the frightful pace we were then going, but my brother would not slacken speed. Indeed, how could he, with