

that had not predicted in detail exactly the course of events that had come about. Mr. Bloxam, the foreman, had told the governor that there would be no harm in having the pump handy, seeing they would go below the clay. And each of the others had—so they themselves said—spoken in the same sense, in some cases using a most inappropriate adjective to qualify the expected flood. Why, even Sleepy Joe had seen that! Sleepy Joe was this same foreman, and he lived in a wooden hutch on the job, called The Office.

But the watershed of any engine—whatever may be its donkey-power, and whatever that name implies—slops back where a closed spout changes suddenly to an open gutter, and sets up independent lakes and rivers. This one sent its overflow towards Sapps Court, the incline favouring its distribution along the gutter of the *cul-de-sac*, which lay a little lower than the main street it opened out of. Its rich, ochrous rivulets—containing no visible trace of hæmorrhage, in spite of that abuse of an adjective—were creeping slowly along the interstices of cobblestone paving that still outlived the incoming of Macadam, when Dave and Dolly Wardle ventured out of their archway to renew a survey, begun the previous day, of the fascinating excavation in the main street.

Here was an opportunity for active and useful service not to be lost. Dave immediately cast about to scrape up and collect such mud as came ready to hand, and with it began to build up an intercepting embankment to stop the foremost current, that was winding slowly, like Vesuvian lava, on the line of least resistance. Dolly followed his example, filling a garment she called her pinafore with whatever mould or *debris* was attainable, and bringing it with much gravity and some pride to help on the structure of the dyke. A fiction, rather felt than spoken, got in the air that Sapps Court and its inhabitants would be overwhelmed as by Noah's flood, except for the exertions of Dave and his sister. It appealed to some friends of the same age, also inhabitants of the Court, and with their assistance and sympathy it really seemed—in this fiction—that a catastrophe might be averted. You may imagine what a drove of little grubs those children looked in the course of half an hour. Not that any of them were particularly spruce to begin with.

However, there was the embankment holding back the dirty yellow water; and now the pump was running on steady-like, there didn't so much come slopping over to add to the deluge that threatened Sapps Court. The policeman—the only one