

THE FAREWELL.

Not going abroad? What, tomorrow? And to stay, goodness knows, for how long? Really, Jack, I would never that dry sorrow had done over you, sir, a writing.

HOW BEN SAVED NO. 60

WANTED—Bright boy to deliver messages and take care of office, small wages, but privilege of learning telegraphy is desired. Apply in person after 8 a. m. on Saturday to Mrs. Harkness, Manager W. C. Tel. Co., Kennelsville.

Such was the advertisement which appeared in the local columns of the Kennelsville Weekly Intelligence, and greeted the quick eye of Bennie Grant as he read his mother's copy of the paper on his way home from the postoffice.

"I don't know whether I'm a bright boy or not," he said to himself, "but it strikes me that I can deliver messages in Kennelsville for small wages pretty nearly as well as anyone."

He thought the matter over very carefully. Vacation had just begun, and the idea had just begun to dawn upon him that it was high time he began to do something to aid his mother in her brave struggle to provide for her little family. Bennie was only 14, but there were two sisters younger than he, and one sturdy little 6-year-old brother. Five years before, when the sturdy little 6-year-old was but a mite of a baby, Richard Grant, Bennie's father, suddenly disappeared. There were no suspicions of foul play, and there was no mystery about it at all. Clever, hard-working, genial "Dick" Grant had fallen into evil ways. From a good husband and father, who provided plentifully for his family, from a man whom ever one respected, he

There wasn't any particular reason why Bennie should have risen the next morning at half-past 4, for the notice in the paper said distinctly "after 8 a. m." But he did. Perhaps you may have been stimulated to early rising by some such important event yourself some time. It was a rather excited little boy that bade his mother good-bye an hour previous to "8 a. m." on Saturday, and that hour of waiting until it should be time to present himself was the longest one in Bennie's history. He felt rather nervous, also, as he thought of facing Mrs. Harkness, whom he had always looked upon as a very mysterious lady, holding, as she seemed to, the lightning in her grasp. He walked by the door several times before he mustered up courage to go in, after the hands of the town clock pointed to 8:30, and



IT WAS EXCITING WORK.

when he did he found six other lads about his own age waiting to interview the lady manager.

One by one they were called into the mysterious office behind the rail, and talked to. Bennie's turn came last of all. Whether Mrs. Harkness was pleased by his manner, or whether it was because he came last and the others had tired her out, Bennie never knew. But after a very few questions he was engaged at a weekly salary of \$2.50 and the privilege of learning telegraphy during odd moments. Never was there a more marked exception to the proverbial slowness of the class, and never was there a student of the art more apt than the youth that this little tale is all about.

The "learning telegraphy" part of Mrs. Harkness's bargain had been found by former business boys to be more or less of a delusion and a snare, but for once at least she took an actual interest in a "student." In less than two months, under her careful guidance, Bennie had transmitted his first message, and it wasn't long after that, being left alone for a time in the office, that he answered the repeated calls of "Kn," and actually received a message all alone. "Breaking" only three times. It was exciting work, though. From that time his progress was rapid. Mrs. Harkness found that she was able to go away quite frequently for several hours and leave Bennie in sole charge, and he obtained quite a reputation up and down the line as the youngest operator on the circuit. It is easy to believe that Mrs. Grant was proud of her son. But when school opened again in the autumn it took a long time for Bennie to convince her that it was much better for him to keep on contributing to the support of the family his family he had come to call it, and rather his education in actual service, than it was to waste time over books. He finally did convince her, however, much to the delight of Mrs. Harkness.

One afternoon while Bennie—they called him "Ben" on the wire—was finishing up the regular evening's gist of messages, Mrs. Harkness, who was working on another wire, came over to his table and laid this message before him:

Dispatcher's Office, Rochester, 6 P. M. Mrs. Harkness, Mgr. Ben. A number of our regular operators are sick and my regular men are all on duty. I need a man at Folville to-night. Can you "Ba." go? If so, write me quick and send him up on train No. 11. This message will pass him.

Dispatcher, C. & T. R. R.

"Do you suppose that I can do it?" queried Bennie, anxiously.

"Why, of course you can, dear," answered Mrs. Harkness, smiling proudly upon her clever pupil.

"But I never was in a railroad telegraph office in my life."

"No matter. Keep your wits about you and you won't have any trouble. No. 11 is due at 8:30. You have thirty minutes. Now get trot home and have your mother put you up a good lunch. Good night and good luck to you," and Mrs. Harkness turned to her work again. So the dispatcher received a message which relieved him considerably and Bennie sped on his way.

It was after 9 when he stepped from No. 11 upon the platform at Folville. The old station agent breathed a sigh of relief when Bennie handed him the dispatcher's message, though he looked rather askance at the diminutive figure of our young friend.

"My night man has been sick a week," he said, "and I've worked night and day for forty-eight hours now. I couldn't keep awake another twelve hours if trains all had to stop running."

"Can I handle the work all right, do you think?" queried anxious "Ben."

"Oh, yes, I guess so. It's almost all plain telegraphing. You may have to hold No. 60. If you do, here are the telegrams and the red lanterns" and with a few simple directions the weary agent went away to bed. In spite of everything, however, Bennie was most horribly nervous and anxious. Folville station was a lonely place. The village was several miles away, there were no dwellings within a half mile and, altogether it was anything but a cheerful place in which to spend the night.

Bennie tried to interest himself in the time-tables and in listening to the routine work on the wire, which was all new and novel to him. No. 60, he learned, was the limited express, which was scheduled to pass at 1:30 without stopping. No. 13, a through freight, was carded to meet No. 60 one station further down the line. There was the possibility that No. 60 might be late enough so that the freight could make Folville the meeting point.

He transmitted several messages left by the agent and received several of the usual style of long, verbose railroad messages in good shape. Occasionally a freight train would rattle by, but none stopped, and he was beginning to think the duties of a night railroad telegraph operator a "snap" as he expressed it to himself, when he was somewhat startled to receive this order:

Dispatcher's Office, 1:25 A. M. Operator Ft.—Hold No. 60 until No. 13 arrives. 12 A. R. L.

Bennie repeated the order to the dispatcher, prefixed by the numeral "13," which means, or rather would mean, "I understand to," which is the response to "13." "Repeat how you understand."

He had been noticing by the reports on the wire that No. 60 had lost time ever since it left Rochester, and though 13 was also very late the dispatcher evidently deemed it possible for the freight to make Folville without delaying the limited a great deal.

"Hurry to Folville regardless of No. 60," was the order he heard given to No. 13, at a station some distance up the line.

For the first time the sense of his great responsibility came over him with full force, and the thought of what might happen if he should be negligent filled his mind with terror. The night had come on dark, wet, and dismal. A drizzling rain fell drearily and incessantly, and the switch lights by the side of the track shone blurred and dimly through the mist, throwing a faint reflection upon the wet rails. It was a sort of night which every old railroad man hates cordially. It was before the day of automatic semaphore signals, and Bennie was just getting ready to start down the track with his red lantern and his top does when a slight noise caused him to turn around suddenly, and he was startled



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to discover two men standing quietly in the office. Their appearance was not reassuring. Both wore heavy beards, evidently false, long overcoats and slouch hats, and they were drenched by the rain. For several minutes Bennie could not speak. Then he asked the men in as steady a voice as he could command, what they wanted.

"Will you kindly tell us what orders you have for the limited to-night?" queried one of the men.

Bennie pointed silently to the order book. Both men bent eagerly forward to read it.

"Well, if that ain't great, exclaimed one of them, slapping the other on the back. 'Just the thing. It'll save us a heap of trouble.'"

"Where is 60 now, my young friend?" asked the man who had spoken first.

"At Millport," answered Bennie.

"And 13?"

"At Auberly."

"That's good, Jim. They'll meet on one of those curves west of the station. I guess we're relieved of considerable responsibility. All we have to do is just to sit down and wait."

"That's right. Sit down, young feller."

"But I must go and be ready to flag No. 60."

"Oh, never mind 60. She'll get along all right. No. 13'll stop her."

"But don't you see I'm responsible," cried Bennie, almost frantically, as he tried to push by the men and was thrown violently back.

"Well, now, I don't know about that," remarked one of the men who seemed to be the leader in the doubtful enterprise, as he took a chair and turned it back directly in the door which led from the office into the waiting-room. The other man staid around and leaned positively against the door leading into the baggage-room, the only other exit. "I don't know about that. Now, if you should haul pen to be stricken down

by heart disease, or suddenly fall and hurt the back of your head severely, you wouldn't feel that you were mortally responsible, would you?"

Bennie made no reply.

"Of course you wouldn't—of course you wouldn't; and in case you don't sit right down on that chair and keep perfectly still something very much resembling in general effect what I've just hinted at will happen to you."

Bennie sank back against the whole scheme flashed through his mind in a moment. These men had contemplated wrecking the express for plunder; but if the holding order was not carried out the same effect would be secured and he would be responsible. No. 60 and No. 13 would probably meet just beyond the curve, and the thought of the terrible collision which must ensue made him sick with horror. What could he do to save the train? Involuntarily his hand stole towards the telegraph key upon the table.

"I would much prefer that you refrain from manipulating the instruments," remarked the man in the



THERE WAS JUST TIME ENOUGH.

doorway in his extremely polite but meaning way.

"Else he may get an attack of that 'ere heart disease you spoke about—eh, pard?" added the man in the baggage-room door.

Poor Ben was almost wild, but the men in the doorways sat smoking calmly.

"I'm sorry for you, young man," said the waiting-room man, with a trace of genuine pity in his voice; "honestly I am, but don't you see it isn't your fault. You won't be blamed at all. We'll take all of the blame—won't we, James?"

"Well, I rather guess so, and considering of something else, too, if that express car has got the stuff we're lookin' for in her."

"Well said, James, well said. But upon my soul, young man, I'm sorry for you."

"You'd better be sorry for yourselves and what you've got to answer for," cried Ben, frantic with the horror of the moment, "and while you're about it you might be sorry for the husbands and wives and children and mothers you're going to murder for a little money—but may be you don't call it murder."

"Why, no, we don't that's so," said the importunate man in the doorway. "Bless me, if you didn't look and talk then just about as my wife used to when she was trying to explain to me how bad I was. It won't be murder, my boy, it won't be murder. Let me see, it will be an accident caused by the unavoidable negligence of a telegraph operator, who was prevented from performing his duty by an unforeseen engagement which it was impossible for him to break—not being strong enough. Don't that draw it milder for you, my son?"

"To this heartlessness Ben could not reply. He heard No. 60 reported as leaving the next station below, and No. 12 had left Millport some minutes before.

In ten minutes they must certainly come together. He must make one more appeal.

"Think of how tough it'll be for me," he said with pathetic eagerness. "They'll say that I was asleep, and that it's all you could expect from a son of Dick Grant. It'll just break my mother's heart, that's what it will."

Bennie buried his head in his arms and fairly writhed in agony, otherwise he might have seen the sudden start which the robber in the doorway gave.

"I guess, Jim, you'd better be getting up towards the curve. I'll take care of this boy, and be with you when it's time," was what the man in the doorway said. The other man hurried away without a word.

Hardly had he disappeared in the darkness when Bennie beheld a strange change in the man who remained.

He leaned excitedly forward and gazed long and intently into the lad's face. Then suddenly he clasped him close in his arms for a single moment, and putting his lips close down to Bennie's ear he said huskily:

"There won't be any murder done to-night, boy. You tell your mother that Dick Grant has been bad, pretty bad, but he's never been quite so tough as that yet and he never will be. And you tell her that sometime when he's made right as much of the wrong he's done as he can he'll come back and help her to be proud of their boy. Now, you get out and flag that train. You've got just time enough."

In another moment he, too, had disappeared in the darkness.

PEOPLE finally become thoughtfully tired of accepting the will for the deed.

IVORY SOAP - IT FLOATS - IS NOT LOST IN THE TUB. THE PROCTER & GAMBLE CO., CHICAGO.

GRIGGS & AXTELL, DEALERS IN Buggies, Carriages, WAGONS, Hardware, Farm Implements, Stoves and Tinware, 208 WEST SIXTH AVENUE.

NORTH TOPEKA. Items of Interest from the North Side of the river. Hank Gilman of the fire department is taking his annual vacation. Charles Gillespie went to Ellis last night on a short business trip. Hale & Evans have put in a complete outfit of new shelving and counters. The real estate agencies report a rapid filling up of the vacant dwellings recently.

C. H. MORRISON, SCIENTIFIC OPTICIAN. Graduate of the Chicago Ophthalmic College. If you are troubled with headache, pain in the eyes, or have any difficulty in seeing or reading, call and have your eyes examined. Consultation free. Office at Jewelry Store, 505 Kansas Av. TOPEKA, KANS.

Geo. Risen will remove with his family to Ohio next week for the benefit of his health. The father and niece of A. M. Baird arrived today from Harvard, Ill., to make an extended visit. The remains of Fred Waite, who died Tuesday night, were sent to Howard, Kas., for interment. J. D. Gardner of Meriden, an employe of Chas. Wolff, has decided to remove his family to this city.

J. M. KNIGHT, UNDERTAKER. 424 and 426 Kansas Ave. and 543 North Topeka, Kansas. Phone 52. 12th and Walnut Street, Kansas City, Mo. Tel. 97 018 224. I belong to the Undertakers' Association of Topeka, Mo. My office is at 424 and 426 Kansas Ave. My office hours are from 10 a. m. to 10 p. m. My office is open all day. My office is open all day. My office is open all day.

The approaching marriage of one of the oldest hardware dealers on this side is announced in an official way. Go to Will Griffith's for the best tin galvanized iron and pump work. Monarch gasoline stoves at Henry's. Go to Henry's for roofing and spouting. A full leather extension top surrey for \$100, at Lukens Bros., North Topeka. "Our New Delight" and all Dangler stoves at H. M. Climes. For bargains in shingles see E. P. Ewart, Gordon and Kansas avenue. W. C. Sly has moved his millinery two doors south of the old stand, and is closing out summer millinery at cost—823 North Kansas avenue. Mail Carrier Charles Summers, accompanied by his family, is spending his vacation camping on the banks of the Wakarusa. W. W. Wiley, who recently surrendered his position at the Reform school will go to work for the Populist state central committee.

A CITY PARK RALLY. The Populist Women Will Have One at the City Park on the 25th. Mrs. A. F. Johnson, the famous Pennsylvania suffragist, will be in Kansas the latter part of the month, and will make four speeches in the state along the line of her route to Colorado. Mrs. Johnson and her husband were in Topeka last February as delegates to the national convention of the Alliance. She has just closed a series of speeches in Pennsylvania with Ed Diggs and is on her way to Colorado to rest a short time. The only one of her speeches so far booked in Kansas is at Topeka, and the women of the Progressive Political league are now working on a rally for her here on the 25th, Thursday. It will probably take place at the City park. There will be several other speakers present, among them possibly Mrs. A. B. Stryker of Great Bend. Dr. Arthur W. Clark of Lawrence, who is a member of the patriotic societies, visited the officers of the State Historical society at Topeka a day or two ago, and discussed with them the propriety of organizing as many as possible of the different orders in this state. The doctor is a member of the Sons of the American Revolution, Society of the Colonial Wars, Society of the War of 1812. Of these the Sons of the American Revolution is the only one which has an organization in this state.

RAMBLERS Kitchell and Marburg, AGENTS, 529 KANSAS AVE.

WIFE CANNOT SEE HOW YOU DO IT AND PAY FOR IT. Hood's Sarsaparilla is that while it purifies the blood and sends it coursing through the veins full of richness and health, it also imparts new life and vigor to every function of the body. Hood's Sarsaparilla made a new person of me. It overcomes that tired feeling so common now. Hood's Pills are purely vegetable, perfectly harmless, always reliable and beneficial. Nearly all women have good hair, though many are gray, and few are bald. Hall's Hair Restorer restores the natural color, and thickens the growth of the hair.

MY WIFE CANNOT SEE HOW YOU DO IT AND PAY FOR IT. Hood's Sarsaparilla is that while it purifies the blood and sends it coursing through the veins full of richness and health, it also imparts new life and vigor to every function of the body. Hood's Sarsaparilla made a new person of me. It overcomes that tired feeling so common now. Hood's Pills are purely vegetable, perfectly harmless, always reliable and beneficial. Nearly all women have good hair, though many are gray, and few are bald. Hall's Hair Restorer restores the natural color, and thickens the growth of the hair.

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