

He passed his hand over his eyes to shut out the sight and tried to think. What could be done? The line was down to the west and there was no way to hold No. 54 at C—. As he looked helplessly about the office he caught sight of his wheel. It was ten miles to town by way of the loop in the track; only half that distance straight down the mountain by the pike. Could he do it?

He carried the wheel quickly down to the road and threw himself upon it. For four miles he rode recklessly. The road was so rough that in many places he could scarcely keep the saddle and the constant vibration and jar tried his back and arms; still he did not slacken his speed. In another half mile the valley would be reached, but the steepest and roughest part of the grade lay in that half mile. He rounded a curve with his eyes on the ground and did not see that a little distance ahead, the pole in a toll-gate was down. When he did look up it was only thirty feet away. Instinctively he thrust his foot in the fork and pressed till the tire screeched; but he was already too close. In a second the pole was but a few feet away and his speed had not noticeably decreased. He jumped, threw the wheel to one side, and crouched down to slide under the gate, but a stone caught his foot and threw him headlong against a fence.

For a minute he lay on the ground, stunned, his clothes torn, and his head bleeding. His approach and accident were seen by the woman in charge of the gate and she hurried out with a basin of water. This revived him and after a minute he sat up. The thought of the terrible danger of the train brought back his resolution and he staggered across the road to where his wheel lay, practically unhurt, and with some difficulty remounted. His head swam; there was a sharp pain in his heart, and his breath came hard, but still he determined to go the remaining half mile.

The last passenger had boarded No. 54, at C—. The engineer was waiting for the conductor's signal to pull out, when a man came riding down the road and fell into the