

# FOR EVERY BOY AND GIRL

## The "Gazette's" Boy

BY HENRY HOLCOMB BENNETT

THE bell of the telephone in the office of the Fairfield "Daily Gazette" rang furiously. "Phone, Mr. McIntyre," called the boy who answered it, and the city editor, pushing back his chair, arose from his desk with an uncompromising exclamation concerning people who interrupted him at the busiest time of the day.

Fairfield was a town of sixteen thousand people, and it supported, or allowed to exist, three daily papers, all issued in the afternoon, and each one the rival of the other two. If a "Gazette" reporter walked rapidly down the street, a representative of the "Herald" ran after him, and a "News" reporter, on a bicycle, chased the other two. If the "Gazette" came out with a half-column on a fire, the "Herald" doubled it, while the "News" ran a double-column display, with alleged pictures of the building, "before and after taking" fire. To get a "beat" or "scoop" on the other sheets was the absorbing desire of every man and boy on each of the three papers. To achieve this no effort was too great; and no one, from the proprietor to pressman, was more anxious to "work a scoop" than was Jimmy Burns, now doing a month's trial on the "Gazette."

"Did you ever hear such luck?" almost shouted the city editor, as he hung up the telephone receiver with a vicious jerk and came back to his desk, giving a kick to a waste-basket which scattered its contents on the already littered floor. "Here's a big wreck on the C. & N.," he went on, "and no one to send after it. Big smash out at the cut; freight and passenger—a head-end collision. They've telegraphed back for surgeons. The wrecking train goes in fifteen minutes—and no one to send!"

"Where's Burke, and Thompson, and Stevens?" asked the advertising man, who stood near the desk, with an unkindly grin at the wrathful helplessness of the city editor.

"How do I know? Skirmishing around uptown somewhere. The sheet's full, more than 'up' now, and so they're taking it easy. Great Scott! Did you ever hear such luck? Big smash—two hours to press time—no town near there—and no one to send!" McIntyre pounded the desk with his fist.

"Send me, Mr. McIntyre. Let me go."

The city editor turned in astonishment. There, at his elbow, stood Jimmy, his steady gray eyes sparkling with excitement and his face aglow.

"Send you! What do you know about handling a big thing? A kid of eighteen! Your line's church socials. This is a bad wreck!"

"Yes, I know," said Jimmy; "but the other fellows are not here, and I am. And father used to be on the road, sir. I know it from one end to the other, and every man on it, almost. I'm better than nobody."

"That's so," assented McIntyre. "Your father was an engineer, wasn't he? Guess you'll have to go. You'll have to run, too, or you'll not catch the wrecking train; and that's the only way to get to the wreck in time. Sure you know what to get?"

McIntyre began telling him what facts to ascertain while Jimmy hurriedly got into his coat, snatched up a pad of paper, and ran for the door, with the city editor's admonitions following him as he went downstairs in three jumps. He broke into a keen run as soon as he was on the street.

The wrecking train was soon whirling along toward the scene of the disaster. The exhaust of the engine sounded like the roll of a heavy drum, and the red-hot clinders from the stack flew in a stream far behind the train. In one corner of the caboose, which was the rear car, a group of surgeons sat, with instrument cases and rolls of bandages on the long seat beside them. The division superintendent, a telegraph operator and half a dozen other railway men stood near the rear door. In the group also were the reporters—Perkins, of the "Herald," Bailey, of the "News," two of the best newspaper men in town—listening intently to the talk of the railway employes and now and then asking a keenly intelligent question.

Jimmy looked at them, and wondered what chance he stood of beating those experienced men. Just none at all, he concluded; but his eyes snapped as he determined that they should not get more accurate information than he, even if they did handle it better. The men at the office could rewrite his matter if they pleased, but he would be the one who got the story. And if he got it—well, if he got it to the satisfaction of the city editor, it meant that he would have a permanent place on the staff, and his mother would not have to work so hard at the sewing.

Jimmy knew the telegraph operator, and drew him to one side.

"What are the train numbers?" he asked, and the operator told him. He gave Jimmy also the engine numbers, the names of the train crews and what the running orders had been; and was going on to tell him other items he knew when the group by the rear door broke up, and Bailey, seating himself on the opposite side of the caboose, called to Jimmy.

"Hello, there, youngster," he said, with a grin, "when did the editor of the 'Gazette' begin sending out children to look after these things?"

Perkins, of the "Herald," who sat beside him, laughed, as did several of the other men.

"Yes, Jimmy," chimed in Perkins, "how does it come that you are doing this wreck? Did you think it was an afternoon tea?"

"No," said Jimmy; "we knew what it was, well enough; but Mr. McIntyre said that any boy on the 'Gazette' could beat the 'News' and 'Herald'; so I came."

There was a general laugh at the expense of Perkins and Bailey, in which they joined; but for the rest of the ride the two men let Jimmy alone.

The wreck had occurred at the mouth of a deep cut through the shoulder of a hill, on a curve, so that the mail and express, dashing down the grade at fifty miles an hour, had crashed into the oncoming freight before the engineers of the two trains were really certain whether what they heard was another train or the roar of their own. The great engines had reared up like two fighting lions, and fell an inextricable tangle of bent and broken rods, shattered running gear and twisted iron. Behind, around and partly over them the cars of the freight and the coaches of the passenger were piled in terrible confusion. Under a tree near the track the injured passengers had been placed. On the arrival of the wrecking train the surgeons went to work at once to attend the wounded, while the wrecking crew attacked the tangle of iron and wood and began to clear away the shattered cars.

said Bailey, as he climbed a fence and started across a field.

Jimmy did not stay to hear what Perkins answered, but turned and ran down to where the wrecking train stood. There, by the train, lay a track velocipede, which he had noticed as it was being lifted from a flat car to get it out of the way of other things. Jimmy's eyes flashed when he saw it, and he hurried to the side of the division superintendent.

"Mr. Thompson, may I use that track tricycle?" "What do you want it for?" asked the superintendent, not turning his head to see who spoke.

"I want to get back to town."

"All right," answered the official, who was thinking more of the wreck than of the velocipede and the slim young fellow who stood beside him.

Jimmy did not wait for further explanation or permission, but ran to the velocipede. One of the wrecking crew helped him to put it on the track. Jimmy, settling himself firmly, grasped the cross handle of the lever and started on his ride.

The velocipede was a queer-looking machine, with a long seat placed over two heavy wheels, which ran on the same rail. It was worked by a lever, and was kept in equilibrium by a third wheel, which rested on the other rail, and was connected with the body of the machine by a wooden arm. The velocipede worked easily, and as Jimmy swung back and forth, lending his weight to the pulling and pushing of the lever, the wheels began to revolve rapidly, and the fences at the sides of the track glided by with increasing speed. Twelve miles to go and a little over an hour in which to do it! He chuckled as he thought of Perkins, sitting by the operator, and of Bailey, toiling over the hills, and wondered what they would think now of the "Gazette's" boy.

The track was slightly down grade, and the velocipede gathered speed as it went. At last, at the end



HE THREW A LITTLE MORE POWER INTO HIS WORK, AND THE LEVER SWUNG BACK AND FORTH MORE SWIFTLY THAN BEFORE.

In half an hour Jimmy had all the facts which he could gather concerning the wreck, and his familiarity with railway affairs stood him in good stead. He had written the story as he got it, so that there might be no delay at the office; but now the question was to return to town and get his copy to the office in time for the paper.

He hurried up the side of the cut, to where the telegraph operator was seated on a box, with his instrument on a barrel before him. With a piece of wire the operator had "tapped" the main line, and had started a temporary sending station right at the wreck. Bailey was already at the operator's side, and Perkins joined him just as Jimmy came up. Bailey was arguing with the division superintendent; but his argument was not convincing, for the superintendent turned away, saying decisively: "I can't do it, boys. We need the line ourselves. You can't send a word from here now, and I don't know when you can."

"Here's a nice go!" said Bailey. "No wiring to be done. Well, I'm going to strike over here in the country and see if I can get a horse; and it's doubtful if these 'hillites' own horses. I'll try it, anyway."

"I shall stay right here," Perkins said. "There may be a chance at this any time; and it's twelve miles to town by rail and sixteen by wagonroad. Time you get there your sheet will be out and forgotten."

"What's the difficulty about our issuing an extra?"

of a shallow cut, Jimmy caught sight of a tall spire, and knew he was only four miles from town. He knew also that he was just at the top of the steepest grade on the road, and smiled to think what fast time he could make. He threw a little more power into his work, and the lever swung back and forth more swiftly than before. The fences fairly ran away behind him, and now the telegraph poles joined in the race.

The lever swung faster and faster, and Jimmy's body swung back and forth with it. The perspiration streamed down his face, but he could not take a hand from the lever to get his handkerchief.

"Whew!" he whistled. "I'd better slack up, or I'll be worn out."

He threw his weight against a forward swing of the lever, and the handle was jerked violently from his grasp. Before he could get out of the way the returning lever struck him across the breast, driving the breath out of him and nearly throwing him from the machine. He lay back along the seat to get his breath again. The lever jerked, to any fro so swiftly that hope of grasping it and checking the speed was gone. The telegraph poles seemed to race to meet him; the ground flowed away under him like a river; the air rushed against him, and the gritty dust, whirled up from the track, stung his face; the wheels rattled over the track joints like the ticking of a watch. All that he could do was to hold on and to hope that there might be nothing on the track before him.

On and on he sped. Clinging desperately with both hands, he strove to watch the track ahead, but the rushing of the ground, the mad race of the fences, the whirl of the air, made him dizzy, and he shut his eyes. He knew he was nearing a curve. If the little balance wheel lifted, if his shallow fangs raised

## A Novel Fishing Feat

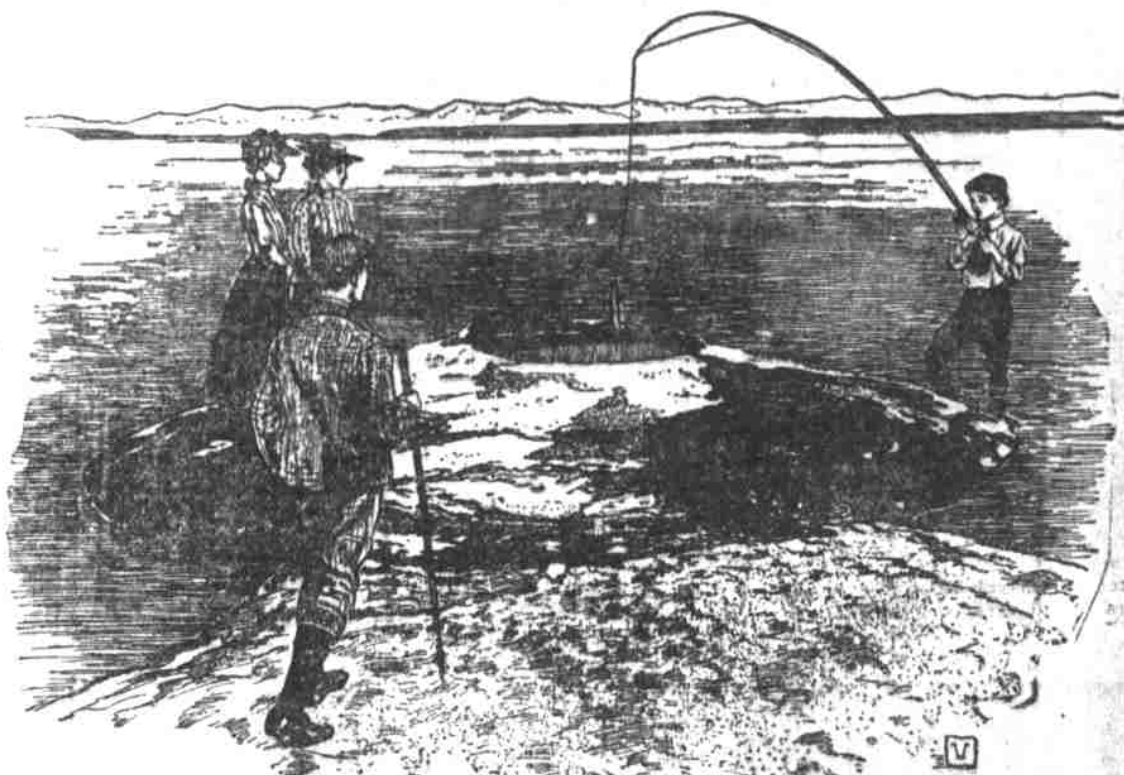
By EVERETT FOSTER

To catch a trout, and, without moving from the spot, to boil it while it is still hanging on the hook, and all this without a fire or a kettle, sounds like a fairy tale; but it has often been done, and the writer was once the witness of this interesting performance.

First let me say that probably there is only one place in the whole world where this can be done—namely, at a certain spot in the great Yellowstone Park. This part, as many of our young readers know, is a large forest and game preserve, a little larger than the State of Rhode Island, located mainly in Wyoming, but partly in Montana and Idaho. It belongs to the United States government,

came to the spot where we had heard the wonderful trick had been performed. Archie, the youngest of our party, a lad of thirteen, had brought his trout rod along, for, while shooting game is prohibited, the government has no objection to fishing. It was high noon, the day was sunny, and just at this place the shore was absolutely destitute of trees or shade of any kind. The surface of the water was like glass, and altogether the conditions were anything but favorable for catching trout. However, Archie was not to be deterred from trying. Fixing a gaudily colored fly to his line, he walked up to the place and made a cast.

Now, an exceedingly unusual combination of nat-



HE SLOWLY LOWERED HIS POLE AND LINE AS IF THEY HAD BEEN A MINIATURE DERRICK, AND GENTLY LOWERED THE FISH INTO THE SEETHING NATURAL CALDRON.

and a detachment of soldiers, mounted and unmounted, is stationed there to see that no one shoots or in any way molests the game and other wild animals within its boundaries, as well as to prevent vandalism of any sort.

A line of four-horse coaches make a tour of the park every day during the season, the trip occupying five days. On our third day out we made our regular stop for luncheon, this time at the head of Yellowstone Lake. After viewing the wonderful "paint-pots," as they are called, but which are nothing but innumerable holes filled with soft, boiling hot clay of different colors, bubbling up like huge masses of thick Indian mush in a kettle, we sauntered off to the edge of the lake a few feet distant. Here we

above the outer rail, the velocipede would leave the track, to be hurled over and down the embankment, and he with it! He threw himself sideways and bore down with all his weight on the connecting arm. Here was the curve. He heard the wheels grinding on the rails.

On and on and on. The curve was passed; he was nearing the edge of town. The knowledge gave him new heart, and he raised himself. The track here, he knew, became level. Soon he could grasp the lever and check the speed, but not yet. The dust flew into his eyes, and he closed them.

A sudden, wild shout startled him. In front was a hand-car and four men! Powerless to stop, he plunged nearer and nearer. Almost on them! They were striving to lift the car from the track. Could they do it before he struck it? They tugged and lifted desperately. They had it off! No—not quite. Yes! Now!

When Jimmy opened his eyes he saw a crowd of faces about him. Where was the hand-car? And the velocipede? He looked up at the man who bent over him.

"Where am I?" he asked.

"At the C. & N. station. You hit the corner of a hand-car, you know."

At the station! Jimmy sat up and then staggered to his feet. They were waiting for him at the office. He started for the door. How long had he been unconscious? Had the paper gone to press? Was he too late, after all? He glanced up at a clock which hung on the wall.

The next moment he was through the door and running toward a cab.

"Gazette's office!" he gasped. "Hard as you can go! Whip up!"

Up the office stairs he toiled, clinging to the rail, panting, breathless and dizzy. He heard the voice of the city editor.

"We'll give him three minutes more," Mr. McIntyre was saying. "If we don't get word then, you may lock up and go to press. We've waited long enough."

"You don't have to wait any longer, Mr. McIntyre," and Jimmy, hatless, grimy, a red streak of blood down his face, stumbled into the office, waving a pad of paper in his hand. "Here it is! All of it. And the other papers won't have it!"

In an instant the foreman, waiting in the door, had torn the pad apart, with an exultant whoop, and dashed back to the composing room to distribute the copy. The city editor and the reporters stood about Jimmy, who sank into a chair. Some one brought him a drink of water; and he heard, as though in a dream, the voice of the chief editor, saying:

"You've got a place here as long as you want to work, Jimmy Burns."

And Jimmy is on the staff now, but he is city editor, and not the "Gazette's" boy.

ural features makes this little spot, scarcely three yards square, unique in all the world. In the first place, the lake contains trout that may be caught in the shallow water near its edge; then, and most wonderful of all, a small boiling spring, or geysicent geyser, happens to be located at the very shore of the lake. In the early spring, when the waters of the lake are very high, this cone is wholly submerged. As the water gets lower the cone may be seen boiling furiously; and at long intervals the lake gets so low that the waters recede, leaving the cone, like a tiny peninsula, attached to the shore.

The boiling water, supplied from unfathomable depths, has, of course, no connection with the lake, although the flat rock cone enclosing its basin shelves gradually below the surface of the larger body of water, and will be seen from the picture.

It was on this flat, shelving rock that Archie stood when he cast his fly. We smiled at the young man's hopefulness, which I am afraid none of us shared, for we sauntered off to look at more of the "paint-pots" close by.

In a few minutes we heard him shout—a bad thing, to be sure, for a trout fisherman to do—and, running back, we found him, in his eagerness, ankle deep in the water, with his line see-sawing the surface of the lake. After a lot of reeling in and letting out of the line, Archie proudly raised his pole, showing a very respectable half-pound trout hanging from the hook. Elated at having successfully accomplished the first stage of the performance—the part, indeed, in which we had little idea he would succeed—Archie conscientiously set about to complete the program. He was now all excitement, but he never for a moment forgot to "play fair." With his feet still under water, and without moving except to turn his body, he slowly swung his pole and line as if they had been a miniature derrick, and gently lowered the fish into the seething natural caldrion but a few feet away.

"Three cheers for Isaac Walton!" some one shouted. "Now for a trout cooked while you wait." But we were to be disappointed. Within a minute the trout had slipped off and slowly sunk out of sight. It was at once clear that it had become so quickly cooked that the flesh fell apart, leaving only the head.

"Well, I've done the stunt, any how," said Archie, triumphantly. "The trout was cooked, all right, and that's all the rules call for. But, jingo! I wish we could have eaten him. I've a mind to try again."

So once more he cast his fly, and again, to our astonishment, he brought in a trout—if anything, a little bigger than the first. To prevent a repetition of the former accident, he wrapped an extra trout line about the body of the fish, around and around, every once in a while taking a turn over the hook. Then he lowered it into the spring; and in less than two minutes it was thoroughly cooked. We could not understand why it was cooked so much more quickly than it would have been in a pot at home; we afterward suspected it was because there was so much of the hot water that the fish had no effect in cooling it. At any rate, we all tasted it to please Archie, and pronounced it excellent—all agreeing, however, that considerably less salt in the water would have made it superb.

One of the party was disposed to object to what he called the cruelty of the thing; but we reminded him that live crabs and lobsters are thrown into boiling hot water to be cooked; while Archie suggested that as the fish was killed at the first plunge, it was more humane than the usual plan of letting it die slowly at the bottom of a boat. And I rather think he was right.

Well, so that is a true story of a fishing feat that can be done nowhere else in the world, but which any boy or girl who happens to be in the Yellowstone Park can do, if, by good luck, the trout happens to be biting that day.