

RAILROAD THROUGH THE FARM.

There's that black abomination, that big locomotive there, It's smoke-tail like a pirat flag, a-warrior through the air; An' I must set twelve times a day, an' never raise my arm, An' see that gret black monster go a-sportin' through my farm.

My father's farm, my grandir's farm—I come of Pilerian stock— My great-great-great-great-grandir's farm way back to Plymouth Rock; Way back in the sixteen hundreds it was in our family name, An' no man dared to trespass till that tootin' railroad came.

I sez, "You can't go through this farm, you hear it fat an' plain!" An' then they blabbed about the right of "eminent domain." "Who's Eminent Domain?" sez I; "I want you folks to see Thet on this farm there ain't no man so eminent ez me."

An' w'en their gangs begun to dig I went out with a gun, An' they rushed me off to prison till their wretched work wuz done. "If I can't purtect my farm," sez I, "w'y, then, it's my idee You'd better shot off callin' this 'the country of the free.'"

There, there, ye hear it toot agin an' break the peaceful calm, I tell ye, you black monster, you've no business on my farm! An' men ride by in stovepipe hats, an' women lol in silk, An' lookin' in my barnyard, say, "See thet old codger milk!"

Git off my farm, you stuck-up doods, who set in there an' grin, I own this farm, railroad an' all, an' I will fence it in! Ding-ding, toot-toot, you black of fiend, you'll find w'en you come back, An' of rail fence, without no bars, built straight across the track.

An' then you stuck-up doods inside, you Pullman upper crust, Will know this codger'll hold his farm an' let the railroad bust. You'll find this railroad all fenced in— 'twon't do no good to talk— If you want to git to Boston, w'y jest take yer legs an' walk.

—Sam Walter Foss.

DANGEROUS WOMAN.



HAT a splendid figure that lady has; I wish we could get a glimpse of her face. If it matches her form, she must be a superly beautiful woman." I remarked to Tom Poole, my detective friend.

"She is probably plain enough in features," responded Poole.

"Women are not given to hide their faces so completely when they are worth looking at. But, as you say, I should like a look at hers, for special reasons."

"Ah! And pray what are they?"

"Well, knowing that you can be trusted, I will tell you. Complaints of robberies of passengers' luggage from railway platforms have been so frequent of late that I have been detailed for the special duty of capturing the thieves. And from inquiries I have made, I have reason to believe that one of those thieves is a woman."

When we turned back she had disappeared. Poole peeped into the ladies' waiting rooms, but she had evidently left the station.

"I verily believe that woman 'spect-ed' me, in spite of my get-up," said the detective in a vexed tone. "I must try another role."

Several weeks passed, and Poole had not seen the lady. I had twitted him with his want of success in identifying the handsome lady with the luggage robberies, and he took my banter very coolly.

A few evenings afterward I was at Euston, seeing off a friend who had been staying with me for a few days. The train had just left, and I was going away by the main entrance, when a hansom drove up at full speed, and its occupant, a tall young lady, got quickly out.

"You're too late, miss; the Scotch express has gone," said a porter.

"O, heavens, what shall I do?" And the lady covered her face with her hands and sobbed bitterly.

Paris, but that, not liking that city, she was going to Edinburgh in a similar capacity.

No reply came to the telegram we sent, and Miss Dalrymple seemed in no hurry to go away. And Sarah Gribble, the younger of the two girls, would not be friendly to the stranger, notwithstanding her mother's remonstrances.

"Her gentleness is nothing but art, mother; her amiability is assumed. You are blind to her real character; she is a compound of cunning and selfishness," said Sarah.

The rustle of a dress outside the door caught Sarah's sharp ears, and suddenly opening the door, she found Miss Dalrymple standing there. With a flash of withering scorn Sarah confronted her.

"Is it necessary to stand with your ear to the keyhole, listening to our conversation?" she asked.

"Surely you cannot mean it, Miss Sarah? You do not know what cruel things you are saying! But I will leave; I have no wish to create discord between a mother and daughter."

After her departure I learned that she had sold her traveling trunks to Mrs. Gribble, on the excuse that they were far too large for her small wardrobe, which she took away in a gladstone bag. I resolved never again to play the knight errant in such a fashion to strange damsels in distress.

"Would you like to see how the members of the 'swell mob' enjoy themselves?" asked Tom Poole one evening some two months after my adventure with the blue-eyed orphan. "There is a ball and supper to-night to raise funds for the defense of that scoundrel Barton, who nearly killed one of our men when caught committing a burglary, as you will remember."

The janitor at the door demurred at first, and mildly declared that we had no right of entrance, the affair going on upstairs being quite a private one, but Tom Poole declared that if any further delay took place in opening the door he would raid the place. That threat was effectual, for possibly some of the gayly dressed men and women had property in their possession for which they would have found it difficult to account.

"Do you see any one you recognize?" he whispered.

"No," I replied, puzzled.

"The lady whose figure you admired at St. Pancras," he went on; "see, there she is, with her face turned to the girl behind her."

I looked in the direction indicated, and was more puzzled than ever. The girl possessed the splendid form of the veiled lady we had seen at St. Pancras, and her hair was of the reddest gold that was so much affected some time ago by the ladies; in all other respects she was exactly like Miss Evelyn Dalrymple, the glorious blue eyes, especially.

But Evelyn's hair was dark brown when I took her home with me to Mrs. Gribble's, hence my bewilderment. But as the girl turned in our direction, and I had a clear view of her face, my doubts vanished. Sarah Gribble had been right; the orphan was a fraud.

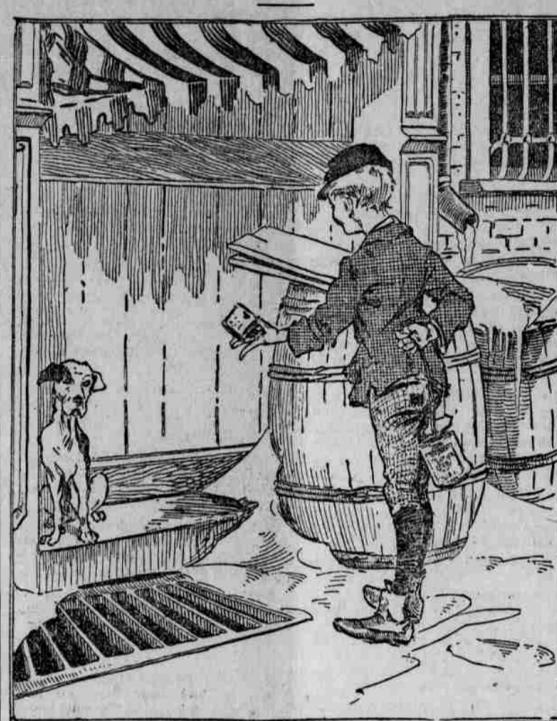
Rather more than a year afterward I happened to be at the central station, Manchester, seeing a chum off to South Wales by the 10:30 express. The train had just gone when a cab dashed up, and a lady alighted. It needed only a glance to satisfy me that Evelyn Dalrymple had again turned up, and evidently in her old character, for on the cab were two trunks and a large portmanteau.

Before she could fix upon a train that would enable her to get away with her booty, I had hurriedly told a railway constable what I knew of the lady, and she was arrested.

At the sessions a string of convictions were proved against her, and the appealing glances of her beautiful blue eyes were powerless to induce the recorder to "give her another chance."

"You are a dangerous woman, and society must be rid of you for a considerable period. Ten years' penal servitude."

CHARITY.



THE STOKER A HERO.

On Men-of-War There Is No Position More Trying than His.

Stripped to the waist, perspiring in the terrible heat of the furnaces, the stoker never knows how the battle is going, whether his ship will be blown into the air or sent to the bottom, as he throws the coal into the fiery maw of the furnace.

Among the heroes on a battleship none have so onerous a position and none more dangerous than the men who tend the furnaces and pass the coal. However the conflict above him may range, the stoker hears only its distant murmur and feels only the shock as the shells impact themselves against the steel sides and the great guns recoil from the thousand pounds of steel and powder hurled at the enemy.

Perhaps a chance shot may pierce the 10 inches of armor that guard the engines and boilers and the rushing water may drown him as he vainly seeks to escape. Perhaps the 50 tons of explosives in the magazines may be reached by a projectile from the enemy's guns and he may be blown to pieces in the steel cell where he is at work.

At any time the crisis may come, and small chance is there for him to catch on the floating spar or wreckage. In such cases the stoker-hole always proves the coffin of the man who feeds the furnaces and lend the initial assistance towards making the war vessel a thing of life.

The stoker-hole in a battleship is situated far below the water line at a point almost amidships. A long, grimy room it is, hemmed in by steel walls



STOKERS AT WORK.

and coal bunkers, with a score of fiery furnace doors that send out gleaming rays of light into the apartment, the only light that the room ever receives. It has no windows and no doors. In the ceiling above great ventilators pierce the steel. Currents of cool air take the place of that sucked in by the furnaces. The room is filled with a sickening heat that only the experienced stoker can stand.

In this room the stoker works, and works hard. The duties are so severe that he is rarely required to work a shift of more than four hours. A line of coal passers constantly moves, each man trundling a barrow of coal into the stoker-hole, and as it is dumped on the floor the stoker, armed with a long shovel, jerks the chain that opens the door, seizes a shovelful of fuel and dashes it into the great bed of glowing, roaring flame, where it is licked up almost before the stoker, with half-shielded face, can close the door.

Each stoker has an allotted number of furnace doors to take care of, according to the size of the ship and the capacity of its boilers. He has scarcely a moment's rest during his shift and when he is not throwing coal into the glowing ovens of flame he wields a rake in the burning fuel, and needy of experience keeps the great furnace at an even heat. The steam gauge over his head is watched and every fluctuation noted. The assistant engineer, who superintends the work of stoker, is constantly on the alert. The life of a battleship may often depend on a proper handling by the engineer. If one of the furnaces is disabled by a chance shot, no harm may result, but if more are disabled the ship may be at the enemy's mercy.

In spite of their hard duties the stokers are healthy, strong and vigorous men. The intense heat in which they work tans their skin a dark brown. They are fairly well paid and have many liberties. They are idle more or less when the vessel is in port and little steam is kept up.

When the battle begins the men in the stoker-hole are able to tell only that the ship has gone into action. They hear the roar of the batteries as they are fired and feel the shock of the shell as it bursts on the armored sides; but the terrible anxiety of a half day's conflict is greater to them than to the men who work the guns or direct the ship's movements.

As the battle goes on there are many who win praise for bravery in action, but to the stoker there is only to toil on in the furious heat, each one doing his small share. He helps to win by keeping his integral part of the engine of war in working order, at the direction of the commander.

The Use of the Great Tree. The negroes of the West Indies use the great tree constantly in climbing. Several years ago, while spending some time at one of the famous resorts in Jamaica, I had an opportunity to observe the skill with which the black women, who do a great part of the mental labor, carried stone, mortar and other building materials on their heads to the top of the five-story tower in a part of the hotel not then finished.

Much of the unerring accuracy with which they (women and girls) chased each other up and down the long ladders, with heavy loads skillfully poised on their woolly pates, was due to the firmness with which they grasped each rung of the ladders with the great toe. They did not place the ball or the hollow of the foot on the rung, but the groove at the juncture of the great toe with the body of the foot, and they held fast by making the back of the other toes afford the other gripping surface. In much the same way the Abyssinian native cavalry grasp the stirrup. And I have seen a one-armed Santo Domingo black, astride the near ox in a wheel yoke, guiding a lead mule with a rein held between his great and second toes, while his only arm was devoted to cracking his teamster's whip—Overland Monthly.

"No Repentance in the Grave." A Scotch divine entered the churchyard one day when the sexton was busily employed, neck deep in a grave, throwing up soil and bones to make room for a dead parishioner.

"Well, Saunders," said the minister, "that is a work well calculated to make an old man like you thoughtful. I wonder you do not repent of your evil ways and make resolves while so seriously occupied about another's grave to live a better life and prepare for your own." The old man, resting himself upon the edge of his spade, calmly replied, "I thought, sir, ye kent that there is no repentance in the grave."

On Dangerous Ground. Dick—I am convinced now that the funny men are right when they say a woman can't understand a joke.

Tom—Why, what's happened?

Dick—I called on Mrs. Dartleigh—that sprightly little widow, you know—last night and just in a joking way proposed to her.

Tom—Yes?

Dick—Well, it looks now as if I will have to furnish a very elaborate diagram to get her to see through it—Cleveland Leader.

Horse Brains. An East Hebron (Maine) horse proves his wit in this wise: Two nights in succession the nag slipped his headstall off and pushed an inner door of the stable open and slid the outer railroad door with his teeth and went into the field and helped himself to grass. He was detected by the prints of his teeth on the cross-bars of the door.

More than a fair profit is realized on the articles sold at a church fair.

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