

THE GIRL IN THE SAILOR COLLAR

(Original.)

Traveling in the west where the stage-coach is not yet obsolete, riding beside the driver, I asked him to narrate some adventure that had happened to him while on the box. This is what I succeeded in drawing forth:

When they were buildin' the Union Pacific I was drivin' between Julesburg—that was the end of the rail—to Denver. One night I'd scarcely got out o' town when I could see in the dusk the figur' of a gal skippin' along the road ahead of me. When I ketch'd up with her she turned a frightened glance at me, and, feelin' kind o' cur'us about her, I asked her to git up on the coach. I give her a hand and lifted her to the seat you're occupypin' now. She didn't seem inclined to talk, and as I pushed her pretty hard to do so she climbed up onto the hindmost seat, where I couldn't git at her.

When we made the second change of stock it was dark as pitch, for it was 10 o'clock and a cloudy night. Soon as I'd twisted the ribbons in the brake I turned round toward the gal and found her sprawled half on the seat and half on the coach top. I went back to her and found her dead, with a knife stickin' into her heart.

Well, the body was sent back to Julesburg, where there was an inquest. The gal was recognized as one of the kind that made up the population of that temporary settlement, though she hadn't been at the place more'n two days. The coroner didn't give himself much trouble about the case, and as for suspectin' me he knew I hadn't no motive for the act. Them rough and tough people was always a-killin' each other, and the gal was probably runnin' away from some un who follered her, climbed up over the "boot" and stabbed her.

The railroad reached Laramie, and Julesburg was deserted. I was drivin' from Laramie one night—it was just about as dusky as when I tuk on the gal a year before—when I see a feller ahead of me beside the road washin' his hands in a pool o' water. When I come up with him, he didn't seem to notice me, keepin' on washin' his hands as though he'd got pisen on 'em and was mighty anxious to git it off. I noticed he was mighty pale, and, not likin' to leave a human being who didn't seem quite right out so far from any one, I asked him if he wanted a lift. He turned his face on me, and I give you my word, stranger, it was the wildest lookin' face I ever see. He didn't say nothin', but jist kep' on washin' his hands. More 'n ever dislikin' to leave him, I asked him ag'in. This time he stopped his washin' and climbed up. I wanted him to set by me so 's I could pump him, but he went up to the back seat and never said a word. I concluded to let him alone, and as he didn't say nothin' I forgot he was there.

Bimeby I remembered him and looked around to see if he was all right. It was a dark night, but I could see his figur', for it stood out above the sky line. But what surprised me was that close beside him was another figur', which, it seemed to me, was a woman.

But I wasn't certain that it was either man or woman—I wasn't certain that it was any living thing at all. I didn't want to make a mule o' myself by askin' the feller if he had any one beside him when I wasn't certain there was anybody there, so I jist attended to my drivin' and let him alone. Not hearin' no conversation, I concluded I'd been mistaken, and to make sure I turned to look ag'in.

If that what he was a-leanin' up ag'in wasn't a gal, then I hadn't eyes capable o' drivin' a six hoos team. Conspic'us was a white sailor collar where the neck ought ter be, and I suddenly remembered that the gal that had been murdered had worn jist such a collar. I had to supply the head by imaginin' it, but bimeby it secured to me the face of the murdered gal came out o' the blackness.

I must have been flustered, for I didn't show no kind o' sense. If it was the gal it must have been her ghost, and there wasn't no use talkin' about her to no one. Instead o' keepin' quiet I asked:

"Where did y' take on the gal?"

The feller seemed to wake from a sleep, for he set up straight instead of leanin' ag'in the figur' or whatever it was and asked kind o' dazed:

"What?"

"The gal beside y'? Where did y' take her on?"

"Gal? What gal?"

"The gal with the white sailor collar."

The feller give a shriek and climbed over the back of the seat, keepin' his face my way and goin' backward till he disappeared behind the coach and I heard some'n go thud on the road. I pulled in and went back and there he lay dead. He'd broke his neck.

Soon as we'd got the body on the coach I looked for the gal. What do ye suppose, stranger, I'd tuk for her? A bundle of rolled blankets with part of a linen duster stuck out at one end, which in the dark I'd tuk for a collar. The feller had taken it up on to the seat and gone to sleep ag'in it.

The cur'us part of it was that we found the gal's pictur' in his pocket, and she wore the same sailor collar as when she'd been murdered. Before the coroner people testified that the

man had gone to Julesburg with her and, since the murder, had been continually washin' his hands.

JOHN TURNER WYETH.

YOUR GRIP ON YOURSELF.

Retain That Though You Have to Let Everything Else Go.

Some people get along beautifully for half a lifetime perhaps while everything goes smoothly. While they are accumulating property and gaining friends and reputation their characters seem to be strong and well balanced, but the moment there is friction anywhere, the moment trouble comes—a failure in business, a panic or a great crisis in which they lose their all—they are overwhelmed. They despair, lose heart, courage, faith, hope and power to try again—everything. Their very manhood or womanhood is swallowed up by a mere material loss.

This is failure indeed, and there is small hope for any one who falls to such a depth of despair. There is hope for an ignorant man who cannot write his name even if he has stamina and backbone. There is hope for a cripple who has courage, there is hope for a boy who has nerve and grit, even though he is so hemmed in that he has apparently no chance in the world, but there is no hope for a man who cannot or will not stand up after he falls, but loses heart when opposition strikes him and lays down his arms after defeat.

Let everything else go if you must, but never lose your grip on yourself. Do not let your manhood or womanhood go. This is your priceless pearl, dearer to you than your breath. Cling to it with all your might. Give up life itself first.—Success.

The Baby Beetle's Cradle.

If, at almost any time of the year, we walk through the woods where the red, scarlet, black or pin oaks are growing—that is, where we find those that ripen their acorns in two seasons and therefore belong in the pin oak group—we shall probably find on the ground fallen branches that vary in size from that of a lead pencil to that of one's thumb or even larger. These at the broken end appear as if cut away within the wood, so that only a thin portion is left under the bark. Within the rather uneven cut, generally near the center of the growth, is a small hole tightly plugged by the "powder post" of a beetle larva. Split open the branch or twig, when a burrow will be seen, and the little, white, soft, hard jawed larva that made it will be found or perhaps the inactive pupa.—St. Nicholas.

Why Sailors Wear Collars.

Probably not many people, including the wearers themselves, know the origin of the sailor's collar. Many years ago when Jack Tars wore their hair in pigtails, which they were in the habit of keeping very greasy, the backs of their coats used to get in a very dirty and untidy condition owing to coming in contact with the hair, consequently the order was given for a detachable and washable collar to be worn, so that they might look more tidy.—London Standard.

Forget Once in Awhile.

The health of the body as well as of the mind depends upon forgetting. To let the memory of a wrong, of angry words, of petty meanness, linger and rankle in your memory will not only dissipate your mental energy, but it will react upon the body. The secretions will be diminished, digestion impaired, sleep disturbed and the general health suffer in consequence. Forgetting is a splendid mental calisthenic and a good medicine for the body.

A Notable Deficiency.

The Professor—Of course in many respects the ancients were far behind us in civilization. His Wife—Yes. Now, I never heard you say that anybody had discovered the ruins of an ancient retail dry goods store.—Brooklyn Life.

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