

Woman and the Home

Haley Over!

By Maud R. Burton

Out from the city's din,
My feet to-day
In the old, old way,
Followed the path they wandered in
Long years before my hair grew gray.
Down to the Pembroke hills
Where tangled lines
Of the berry-vines,
And grape and ivy the old spot fills.
And under the schoolhouse wall
I sat and heard them call—
"Ha-a—ley over!"
And then on the other side
The childish voices cried,
"Under!"

Listening to them so,
My thoughts to-day
Went far away,
And pictured the scenes of the long ago,
When the same old game I used to play.
And the tears unbidden came.
For faces long forgot
Hovered around the spot.
And sitting beneath the time-stained
wall
I heard "Chips" and "Spider" and
"Wilter" call,
"Ha-a—ley over!"
And off on the other side
It seemed my own voice cried,
"Under!"

Oh, to be back again
To that old way
For but a day!
To follow the cow-path through the lane,
For a mock fight under the hills.
With "Have a care!"
And "That's no fair!"
While good-natured shouts the old yard
fills.
Oh, to be under the wall
With the ball in my hand and call,
"Ha-a—ley over!"
And intoned to a minor cry,
The dear old friends reply,
"Under!"

Beautifully Written

The post-card was addressed to "Mr. Preacher Smith." Among the mountains of Tennessee, Kentucky and North and South Carolina any man is a preacher who elects to harangue his fellow men upon religious themes.

But "Mr. Preacher Smith" bore his title with peculiar humility, because he was really a clergyman.

On the other side of the card was written in a sprawling, childish hand, these words:

"I am very sick. I am going to die. Come to see me."

A woman's name was signed to the message, a name he did not know; and the postmark told him that the card had come from a little village a few miles up the railroad. He looked up trains on the time-table.

When Preacher Smith found the woman, she was lying in a bare, one-room cabin up in the mountains. A little flock of children scattered at his approach, all but one boy, who came forward shyly to hold the preacher's horse.

Her story, when she told it, was common-place enough, sad enough. She had lived a life that was far from being above reproach, even when judged by the tolerant views of the neighborhood. The strange thing about it was that the woman had come to see her life as it was, and was sorry. She had sent for the minister to tell him of her repentance and her desire to lead a better life.

The preacher comforted her that day, and the next time he came he baptized her; and afterward, as he sat beside her, telling her of the kingdom of heaven, she said to him suddenly, wistfully:

"Wasn't that postal card I sent you beautifully written?"

The preacher smiled as he recalled the poor little scrawl; and then, looking in the woman's eyes, he said gently, and indeed truthfully, "Yes, it was."

Her face lighted up, and she lay back on the pillow with a little sigh of happiness.

"Did you write it?" asked the preacher.

"Oh, no, I didn't write it!" she answered, softly. "I can't write—nor read. None of my folks that I ever knew of, before me, could ever write or read. No, John wrote it."

"And who is John?" said the preacher. "John's holdin' your horse. John's thirteen. Two years ago in the winter John went to the mission school, and he learned to read and write." She paused, and again that look of radiance came into her face: "Wasn't it beautifully written?"

"Yes," said the preacher, softly. "Yes."

"And only think!" she continued, presently. "Only think! If John hadn't gone to the mission school he couldn't have learned to write, and if he hadn't learned to write I could never have sent word to you. I should never have been baptized. I shouldn't have had this comfort and this happiness. Wasn't it beautifully written?"

Lost in the Desert

"The craze to find a metal is a funny thing," said the old prospector. "I always had it, and once, in British Columbia, away north, it gave me a close call. I was alone when I got as far as the

last settlement. There were four Indians and a fur trader there. They all advised me not to go on into the barrens, but like a good many others, I thought I was wiser than the natives, and I only meant to go a few miles. There was nothing to do but foot it, and carry your provisions and blankets on your back.

"The country was flat as a floor and bald and smooth as my head, with no landmarks. The only way I could get direction was by the sun and stars."

"When I had been out for about two days my provisions were nearly gone. I was going to turn back and make a dash for the settlement. All day long a gray cloud had been moving up from the west very slowly. I suppose it was coming on so slow I didn't realize what it meant to be without the sun to guide me. There wasn't even a blade of grass on that desert, nor a living thing, nor a stone sticking up. The clouds kept bending over more and more, and finally they closed down over me like a trap."

"I shall never forget the lonesomeness of that place, and how, whenever I stopped walking, I would strain and strain my ears without hearing a thing but the thump of my own heart. But I thought I was all right, and kept on walking toward the settlement, steadily,

until it was nearly night. Then I saw something white a few yards off to one side. In one gasp the breath went out of me. The white thing was a bit of cracker I had dropped when I had eaten my lunch!

"I sat down and tried to think. I knew it was no use to walk that way any farther. I began to think my bones would whiten out there on the barrens, but finally I went to sleep. In the morning I was crazy with hunger. I ate my last piece of hardtack, and nearly all day I walked aimlessly, hoping to find some landmark. There was no sleep in me that night. Whenever I shut my eyes I could see nothing but a great flat plain with a line across it—the straightest line you ever saw."

"Well, it was that crazy notion that saved my life. It suddenly occurred to me that I could draw a line across this desert. When it was getting light in the morning there were a few minutes when I could see which side of the circle was east by the glimmer through the clouds. So I worked with my sheath-knife till I had built a little pile of earth, and waited for day to come. The moment I saw the glimmer and had the direction I ran toward the south a hundred yards or so and built another pile; then I ran a hundred yards more,

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