

Poetry.

ONLY A GIRL.

I hear a sharp ring on the frosty way;
And I catch the gleam of a cycle bright,
Just a glimpse of a form in Quaker gray,
And then, the dear boy! he is out of sight.
Ah, out and away, ere the sun is high,
While the early clouds are all rose and pearl,
And the air like a wine that is bright and dry:
And I'm—only a girl.

I think of the hollows where leaves lie dead;
Of the gaunt trees' shadows against the sky;
Of the cool, clear stretch of blue overhead,
And the low, lush meadows he rattles by.
I look on the road with its dusty track,
Where the wind-gusts meet to whistle and whirl;
And—yes! I may look for his coming back,
For I'm only a girl.

I may watch and wait all day for the ring
Of his pretty plaything's glit-tening steel;
And, dressed in my gayest, may sit and sing
Over my work till I hear the wheel.
Then I shall see the eyes o' my lad,
And he a cheek and a drooping curl;
And—well, yes—perhaps—I'm a little glad
That I'm only a girl!

—RUTH HALL, in *Outing for Jan.*

For THE CANADIAN WHEELMAN.

A TWO WEEKS' HOLIDAY ON A BICYCLE.

The following is from the diary of Samuel Roether, of Port Elgin:

On the 24th August last I mounted my bicycle bent on a two weeks' trip through Western Ontario. I left our pleasant little town at 7 o'clock, bound for Goderich the first day. Before going many miles the weather clouded up, with a strong south wind and sprinkling rain, which made it anything but pleasant and easy to ride, as it was directly in my face, continuing to get stronger as the day passed by. I, however, managed to reach Kincardine in three hours, a distance of 24 miles, passing through Underwood and Tiverton over a first-class gravel road. After having a few hours' rest and some dinner, I again mounted my wheel, Mr. F. E. Coombe kindly accompanying me for several miles. The roads to Goderich were newly gravelled, which made it hard wheeling, but next summer I think will find them good. When about eleven miles from Kincardine, the wind increased to almost a hurricane, which made it impossible to mount. The prospects for having a pleasant trip were not at all good by this time, being about 25 miles from Goderich, with a strong head wind and a drizzling rain. But I had not long to wait until a young man overtook me with a horse and buggy, and I arranged to wheel behind him for about six miles, when I had a chance of some supper, after which I again faced the task, bound to reach Goderich in some shape. When about nine miles from Goderich, darkness overtook me, and I found the wind too strong to permit me lighting my lamp, so had to ride in the dark until I reached

a corner store, where I got shelter to light up, and I found myself just eight miles from Goderich, five miles of which was fresh gravel. However, I managed to reach Goderich in an hour and a half, tired out and covered with dust, sixty miles away from home, and expecting to be laid up for the next week.

Arising next morning, I still found a very strong wind, but happily in a different direction, it being a nor'-wester. I started at 11.30, to make my second day's trip—to London—which proved to be a pleasure trip, and not like the previous day's work. Able pens than mine having described this road, suffice it to say that bicyclists cannot expect to find a better road for such a long stretch. On reaching London, I was surprised, on reckoning the distance, to find that I had made it in eight hours' running time, which I thought was very good, considering the hard day's work I had the previous day.

The afternoon of the third day found me bound for St. Thomas, in company with Mr. Ellis, of the St. Thomas Club. We reached St. Thomas in two hours. The afternoon and evening were agreeable and pleasantly spent with our worthy vice-president, who kindly piloted me around the city and then to Port Stanley, returning by train to St. Thomas.

The fourth day I was bound for Simcoe. I reached the pretty little town of Aylmer in time for dinner, after which I started for Simcoe, but on reaching Richmond I got off the track, and found myself about two miles astray; so, retracing my steps to Richmond, I reached there in time to escape a passing shower, and, as it had every appearance of rain, I made quick time for the nearest R. R. Station, which was Corinth, a distance of four miles, and from there I took the train to Simcoe, and the next day to Hamilton, as I found the roads impassable on account of the rain which fell that night. Even with fair weather, I cannot see how the roads can be very good from Aylmer to Hamilton. From Hamilton I took the "Southern Belle" for Toronto. On tendering payment of my fare, I was also asked to pay for my wheel, which I did, but I told them that I would not charge anything for letting my fellow-wheelmen know about it, and in future would not trouble them with my custom.

After spending several days in Toronto, I left on the 2nd Sept. for Niagara Falls by steamer "Chicora." On this steamer, instead of being asked to pay for my wheel, I was assisted to stow it away in a place of safety. After reaching Niagara Falls, I started to wheel to Buffalo, but seven miles was as much as I wanted to wheel on that road, so I took the train for Buffalo, arriving there about 3 o'clock, after which I spent the balance of the afternoon on their asphalt streets, which are really splendid. Any wheelman going within fifty miles of Buffalo should go and see them.

I left there next morning for Niagara Falls, leaving there at 9 o'clock, bound for Hamilton. I got to St. Catharines for dinner, where I met several members of the C. W. A., who all reported the roads as being good, but I failed to find any good roads until I came near Beamsville, and from there to Hamilton they are first-class. There is considerable side-path riding

near Grimsby. After leaving Grimsby I was met by Mr. A. H. Ridout, of the Hamilton B. Club, who accompanied me to the city. I was amply repaid for going over the rough roads by the magnificent scenery, and would recommend this trip to all lovers of scenery; but after making it, I think a person can go over any kind of a road.

I left Hamilton next morning by train for Woodstock, where I met several members of the C. W. A. After doing justice to a good dinner, I started for Stratford, which town I reached in time for supper. I found the road very good, but could get nothing to drink all the afternoon. I enquired at Tavistock for a soft drink, when I was handed lager beer, but I declined it, as I thought it would be too soft for a hot day.

At Stratford I also met several members of the C. W. A., who, like all other bicyclists, have their hearts in the right place. I left next morning for Goderich, distance 42 miles; splendid roads, but that day very dusty. Leaving Stratford, a person could go easily 24 miles without a dismount, the roads being very free of hills until Seaforth is reached, and then only one or two until we reach Clinton, where I think all the hills in that part of the country have been placed. But still the roads are first-class, and I made the 12 miles to Goderich in 1½ hours.

Left Clinton next morning at 9.30, after having the dust laid by a heavy shower. Mr. Geo. Cox kindly accompanied me as far as Carlow. The road to Lucknow cannot be beat; made six miles in 25 minutes. Several wheels at Lucknow, but I was told that they were kept in glass cases.

After dinner at Lucknow, started for Walkerton, distance 26 miles, via Black Horse, Riversdale and Enniskillen, on the Durham Gravel Road. Kincardine can also be reached this way, it being about 18 miles from Lucknow. I reached Walkerton in the evening, almost prostrated with the heat, it being excessively hot, with a strong sun and hot wind on my back all day. I stayed there until Monday, and then took train for Port Elgin, it being too hot to wheel with any comfort.

Before starting out, I invested in a ten cent straw hat, and placed therein a cabbage leaf, changing it several times a day, which I found an excellent covering for the head, as neither rain, sun, nor dust can spoil it.

I found the C. W. A. Guide Book indispensable, and a great help in securing first-class hotel accommodation. After riding 50 or 60 miles a day, I found myself a pretty hard-looking case, covered from head to foot with dust and dirt, for there is no use trying to keep clean when out on a bicycle. And I believe that if it were not that I was on a bicycle I would have been run out of several hotels and sent to the cells as a tramp; but the bicycle saved me.

I returned with a ravenous appetite and weighing eight pounds heavier, and the next week I gained another eight pounds. I did not meet with a single accident, and had fine weather generally, and enjoyed it immensely, only sorry that it was not two months instead of two weeks.