

quickly around the bend in the road a small hut appeared to my inquiring glance. With haste I dropped the bars of the rail fence, turned my little wheel in the air, and ran to the shed, submissively asking for shelter, which the good people gave me. My *quondam* hosts were half-breed Indians, and they must have been just as wicked as I was—if it were wrong to ride on this day—for I found the old fellow sharpening his saw for the morrow's work, while the wife was intent upon bread-baking. Anxiously, I awaited a cessation of the rain, and again it ceased, but just sufficiently to tempt me out and then to wreak vengeance upon a hapless one by its increased flood. But with the prospect of muddy roads, I mounted, hoping to reach the next village. Ugh! the thought of a "header" by the way-side seemed to worry me, so I slowly picked my road. Not a soul could I see as the rain made its appearance for an infinite number of times, accompanied by wind, blowing higher than ever. I looked ahead and saw a toll-gate house within a quarter of a mile. It was now three o'clock, and if rain and wind would cease only to regain greater strength, I could wait and make the few miles to the nearest hotel sometime during the evening, or I might safely travel in the dark since I carried my faithful light.

Penitently, I knocked for admission, which was heartily given, and drawing in my wheel, I divested myself of what clothes I could, and placed them before the fire, while I sat down and talked with the brawny keeper, who had been much over America, and his kindly *mere*. With nervousness, I would arise and scan the east and the west, with the hope of the slightest gleam which might show to me a change for the better. Down pattered the unceasing rain, drop upon drop, and ocean upon ocean; the very fowls stood upon one leg with the other drawn tightly up; the cows came home with their heads seemingly hanging down out of shame for their wet condition; the trees drooped; the road ran with rivulets, while I remained within a prisoner. Four o'clock came, five passed, and six began to show itself. The rain ceased, but the wind arose as if it had just escaped from Aeolus. I could not stay. I must push on. I took my bicycle without, and on a gentle incline, mounted with much difficulty, the wind hardly allowing even that act, already rendered venturesome by the slippery mud, to be undertaken. It seemed to become dark so quickly and I lighted my lantern. Oh, what a trudge it was up that long hill. I couldn't, after all, reach the next village, four miles, away, in this uncertain light. I spied a comely-looking farm-house to my right. I resolved to go in—the toll-gate keeper had told me of the hospitality of the inmates. I opened the gate gently, after a hasty dismount, and knocked softly at the door, which was opened by a middle-aged man, of whom I inquired the distance—which I knew perfectly well—to the next town, and sought a glass of water. He evidently sur-

mised my condition and asked me in. With feigned protestations I entered and they seated me before the fire, not, however, without compelling me to doff my coat and place a warm, heavy one about me. Ah, it was a hospitable family, for as I sat there warming myself, the good farmer's wife inquired if I had had tea. Dubiously I answered, and chatted on with the farmer and his sons, but soon I heard a quiet voice announce that "tea's ready." I was ravenously hungry, and the sight that met my eyes only increased my appetite. Never did I eat such bread and butter, never more enjoyable preserved pears, to which I must have helped myself a dozen times; while the tea surpassed any, "five o'clock" which it has been my pleasure to partake of. Satisfied, I placed my white napkin in the ring, which had been specially got out for this unknown guest, and turned to rejoin my new-found friends at the fire, but in came hurriedly the kind housewife and insisted that I had not taken a mouthful, and brought forth the half of a pumpkin pie, which she insisted I must consume. I am partial to that country delicacy, and was that night by persuasion. Again ready to join them at the fire, I was interrupted by the presentation of an enormous piece of jelly-cake, which I was enjoined "to just try." This command obeyed, thanks to the depletion of the larder, I was free and ready to chat again.

What a queer evening I passed. I was ushered from the sitting-room to the parlour to sing hymns, and lustily did I chant my relief from the burden of the four miles to the next village. I always imagined farmers retired at an early hour, but it was long after ten before they showed me their best room that night. I dreamed of all sorts of things—of being caught by the wind and hurled into the lake, of phantoms pursuing me, a sort of Tam O'Shanter of the wheel. But I awoke late, as my host had insisted upon my not departing early, and after returning thanks for my kindly treatment, I peddled away in the bright morning sun.

H. K. M.

"VERILY THOU ART A GOD THAT HIDEST THYSELF."

Not always does the star of morning, bright
In silver harness, run before the day.
But often with a flushed and sullen light
It breaks on eyes that wish the night away.

Not always does the angel of the spring,
With zephyrs rock the violet at its birth;
But often, sweeping on impetuous wing,
He chills the young, awakening hopes of earth.

Not always does the Love that rules the skies
Betray the tender urgency of love.
But often, in some stern and cold disguise,
It chides the heart it fain would draw above.

Yet still 'tis Love that to the spirit brings
Its better day; that life and light declares:
Immortal Love, in all the scheme of things!
Herald of joy, whatever mask it wears.

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