

AT THE GATE.

In the warm, health giving weather
My poor pale wife and I
Drive up and down the little town
And the pleasant roads thereby :
Out in the wholesome country
We wind, from the main highway,
In through the wood's green solitudes—
Fair as the Lord's own day.

We have lived so long together,
And joyed and mourned as one,
That each with each, with a look for speech,
Or a touch, may talk as none
But love's elect may comprehend—
Why, the touch of her hand on mine
Speaks volume-wise, and the smile of her eyes,
To me, is a song divine.

There are many places that lure us :—
"The old wood bridge" just west
Of town we know—and the creek below,
And the banks the boys love best :
And "Beech Grove," too, on the hill-top ;
And "The Haunted House" beyond,
With its roof half off, and its old pump-trough
Adrift in the roadside pond.

We find our way to "The Marshes"—
At least where they used to be ;
And "The Old Camp Grounds" ; and "The
Indian Mounds,"
And the trunk of "The Council-Tree" ;
We have crunched and spashed through
"Flint-Bed Ford" ;
And at "Old Big Bee Gum Spring"
We have stayed the cup, half lifted up,
Hearing the redbird sing.

Then there is "Wesley Chapel,"
With its little graveyard, lone
At the crossroads there, though the sun sets
fair
On wild-rose, mound and stone....
A wee bed under the willows—
My wife's hand on my own—
And our horse stops, too,....and we hear the
coo
Of a dove in undertone.

The dust, the dew and the silence !
"Old Charley" turns his head
Homeward then by the pike again,
Though never a word is said—
One more stop, and a lingering one—
After the fields and farms,—
At the old toll gate, with the woman await
With a little girl in her arms.—
—James Whitcomb Riley, in December
Ladies' Home Journal.

IS LOVE ENOUGH ?

'It was sad,' said the girl, Monica ;
'broken engagements are very sad break-
ings.'

'A kept engagement might have been
more sad,' replied the woman, Barbara.
'I had no one to tell me what girls should
know.'

'That is what I wanted to talk about,'
exclaimed Monica, in the tone of one find-
ing a treasure. 'I used to think that a
girl's heart should tell her, and anything
outside, from anybody else, was interfer-
ence.'

'Blessed interference!' ejaculated Bar-
bara.

'Once a lady came to mamma,' Moni-
ca ran on in her rippling voice, 'and I
was in the next room with the door be-
tween, and could not but overhear—to
ask her advice about marrying, and I
burned up with indignation. How could
she let any one but herself decide such a
question? If she loved him, she knew
that herself, and was not that enough?
How could mamma decide that? But

mamma advised her not to. I went away
so as not to hear it all, and she did as she
was advised.'

'Two years ago a girl wrote to me,
asking me what to do. I told her the
best I knew. She wrote that I had saved
her lifelong sorrow.'

'Oh, dear!' cried Monica. 'I thought
love was secret and sacred.'

'Sacred always, but not secret. Lovely
things seek the light. Girls are not wise
enough to hold such secrets. Can you
imagine yourself loving a generous man,
handsome, educated, even brilliant, who
was devoted to you?'

'Yes.'

'But he might be a drunkard.'

'Oh, I couldn't! That would spoil all,'
Monica shivered.

'But you might marry him to save
him.'

'I wouldn't dare,' Monica insisted.

'Then love wouldn't be all. You must
honor, respect, trust.'

'Especially trust,' said Monica.

He might be an unbeliever, with no
reverence for the God and Father of Jesus
Christ, to whom you have given your life.'

'Then I couldn't. I could not be
happy with him one day. We would go
separate ways in one day.'

'He might be idle, pleasure loving ;
he might be selfish, always placing him-
self first.'

'Then I wouldn't no matter how I
loved him,' said Monica, positively.

'He might be mercenary, and love you
for your father's money.'

'I should despise him then as much as
I loved him before.'

'You might be fascinated upon a half
acquaintance (girls are emotional), you
might think him your ideal ; then you
might overhear him speak roughly to his
mother.'

'I wouldn't stand that,' said Monica,
with indignation.

'Then love is not enough. He might
tell you a lie, he might be habitually de-
ceitful.'

'I couldn't live with any one who de-
ceived me.'

'You might love him and he might
not care half as much for you. Would
your love carry you through?'

'No,' said the girl, proudly.

'You might both love each with un-
selfish devotion, and he might have an in-
curable disease that would be a sorrow as
long as you both lived, would marriage be
wise? Your love might fail under the
steady strain. I know a girl-widow who
had a life like that.'

'I would be afraid. I couldn't do it.'

'There might be insanity in the family.
I know a girl who gave up her lover for
such a reason. He did become insane,
and when she married some one else he
was in the asylum.'

'How hard that was. Did he suspect
it before he became engaged to her?'

'He more than suspected, and tried to
rush ahead in spite of it, to the heart-ache
of both.'

'Was there no one to tell her?'

'She would not listen at first. Girls
will not always listen.'

'Love will not listen, I suppose,' said
Monica.

'Common sense will listen,' replied
Barbara.

'Then it is love and common sense to-
gether. Your own common sense and the
advice of some one else's common sense.
That would save girls,' said this girl,
thoughtfully.

'Often the girl herself has not the op-
portunity that her friends have of know-
ing and judging. A girl will recklessly
throw herself away, and her friends are
powerless. A girl I know who married
against her father's wishes is to-day the
widow of a suicide.'

'But some girls will listen,' Monica
interposed.

'A girl will ask advice about making
a dress, about a music teacher, about tak-
ing a journey, but in life's long journey,
with her eyes dazzled, her inexperience of
men, she must be left to her foolishness,
her romantic impulses, her own ideal of
love, she must run all the risk with a
judgment of her own. If she be in love
that settles it. But I love him, is her
plea, in the face of everything.'

'Perhaps she doesn't know what love
is,' reasoned Monica.

'They are in an ecstasy of something,
and they name it love. It always rests
me about girls—girls who are at once my
despair and my hope, to know that the
father and mother are satisfied with the girl's
choice. "With a little hoard of maxims
preaching down a daughter's heart." Per-
haps (most likely) it is the best thing in
the world for the daughter's heart to be
preached down. The "maxims" may be
God's truth. Mothers know. It is not
selfish to seek the best in marriage. Don't
think marriage is your missionary work,
and marry low down to raise somebody
up to your level, as did a Sunday school
teacher I know. Marriage is union—the
union of two who are walking in the same
way, with the same purpose—communion,
companionship—mutual helpfulness, mutu-
al burden bearing, and only love enough
is enough love for that. When you re-
member what such a union demands of
both, what "God, the best maker of mar-
riages," demands in it, and because of it,
think of the sin of marrying one with
whom your best is not possible. You
place yourself in a position to lower your
ideal, and God's ideal of marriage, to dis-
obey God's positive commands. Don't soil
and spoil a pure and beautiful thing by
following an impulse that deceives you
with love's being enough.'