

THE END OF THE ROAD.

BY WILLIAM HERVEY WOODS.

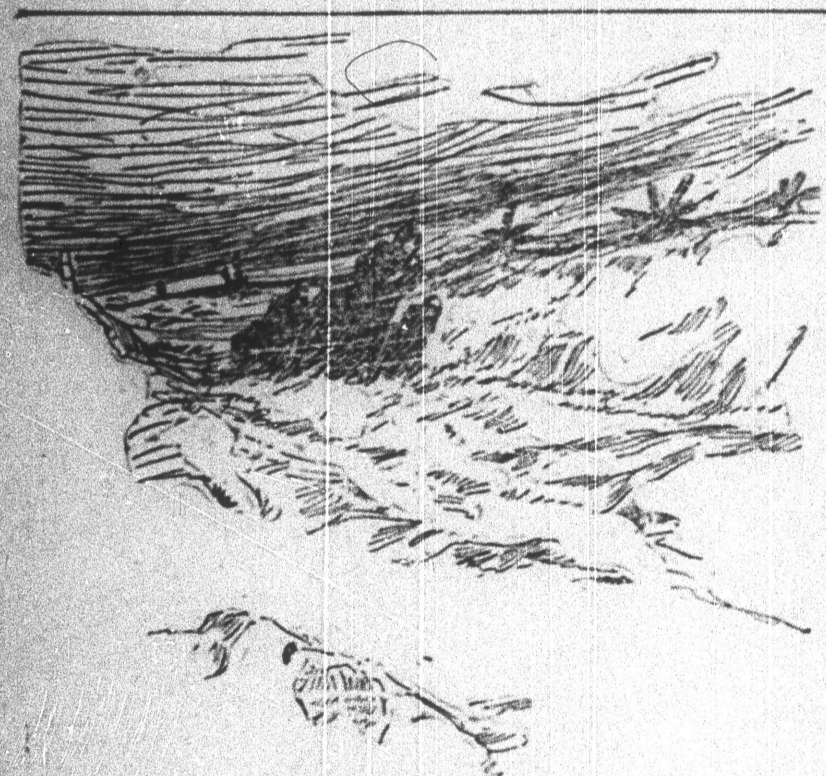
There was never a voice proclaimed the place. There was never a guard around it. Just a corner turned in the Lane of Life, And ere I could marvel, I found it— A wicket-gate in a moldering wall. With a wild vine over it sprawling, And a cowered shape on the low stone seat. By the wicket sitting and singing, "Smoky men of Araby, pilgrim and Paladin. Join in the goodly array— Knights of Plantagenet, horsemen of Saladin. All the world crowding the way."

In wonder I turned, and over the road I had trodden, a mist was stooping, And in it was thunder of viewless hoofs, Tumultuous myriad, trooped, To that one portal: The ways of the world From afar and afar came to it, And the gatekeeper said, as, out by one, He ushered the travelers through it. "Hither, rode Lamuelot, parted from Odiseus— Princes and Regemeren bold— Some like a Charlemagne, riding in mine, Some in their gabardines old."



Of the thousands of Norwegians and Swedes set upon the prairies of Dakota twenty years ago, comparatively few read or understood English. It was surprising, though, how quickly they adjusted themselves to their new environment. While the women worked in the prairie fields with the men, while all were tillers of the soil and carriers of burdens, they yet found time to master much of the new tongue, to open American schools and to purchase American books and newspapers. When the first hard winter came many of the men and women willingly went to school on such days as the blizzards permitted and, perched over spelling books and arithmetic with the children. A brave people were these descendants of the Vikings. They were pillaged by speculators on one side and fought by the elements on the other, but the thought of surrender never entered their minds and they conquered both adventurers and storms in the end.

In the Hay Meadows school district was a Norwegian family by the name of Torgeson. The mother, Anna, was perhaps twenty-two or twenty-three years old. The father was thirty. The three children were toddlers, too young for school and books. Nevertheless when winter school opened Anna Torgeson, with one child at her breast and two at her skirts, forced her way



GOING TO THE SCHOOL.

across the prairie to the schoolhouse and asked for admission. Torgeson himself did not go with her. He was one of the few who opposed any effort to change the order of things that had prevailed in the home land. He proposed to be a Norseman to the last of his days. He would speak in no tongue but his own. He would go to no church but the "kirke," and that not existing on the prairie he would do without worship.

He wore his peaked hat, his oiled coat, his skin trousers and avoided his American neighbors except as he was forced to trade with them. Although he soon understood a few words of English when a land office collector came for the last payment of his final proof notice he would speak to him only in the Norse tongue. Then the strong arm of the Government reached out and Torgeson was frightened. He broke his vows and spoke in English until the title to his land was clear. But being conquered in this fashion angered him. He resorted frequently to strong drink, and the entreaties of his wife and his friends could not keep him from it.

The Hay Meadows district was a temperance community. The settlers from the distant lands of the North were strongly religious, hard workers, moderate in all habits, kindly to all

and be one with her again. In the school she was the most apt pupil. She was the first to learn to write English, and the first to be able to spell English rightly. Her neighbors, many of whom had known her before her marriage, rejoiced over her progress.

"Torgeson will be proud of his wife," they said.

But Torgeson remained bitterly against her. Only the babies gave her love and comfort.

A January day came when the sun rose warm over the snow-covered prairies and in the air there was a false whisper of spring. The Hay Meadows folk on their way to the school shook their heads. They had learned that this beauty of nature, at such a time, meant coming terror of blinding sleet and deadly cold. All through the morning the sunshine flooded the interior of the schoolhouse and the water dripped from the snow-covered roof eaves, but the pupils within did not trust the warmth. At noon they ate their lunches by the open door, but none failed to notice the growing grayness of the sky in the north and the change in the sweep of the wind.

When school closed a frightful blizzard was upon them. The thermometer fell to far below zero and the air was filled with sleet that cut the skin like chopped glass. The two pupils of the school looked at each other in the growing darkness. Every woman present had a man to guide her home but Anna Torgeson. Every child had a man protector but the children of Anna Torgeson.

"The rest of you will go on," said Anna Torgeson. "There is some fear here. I and my children will stay until this is over."

Some offered to guide her home before they went their own way, but she said the storm was growing worse every minute, and they must hasten for their own safety. They scraped together sleet for fuel and left from noon and gave it to her. It was not much for four months, but for the baby there was Anna Torgeson's breast. Just as the others prepared to leave, Anna Torgeson called to one: "Stay a moment, Torgeson will worry. I will send a note. Get it to him somehow when you can that he may know I am safe."

And she wrote in English: "Dear Husband: I am safe in the school with the babies. Don't worry about me. ANNIE TORGESON."

Late that afternoon, with the most awful storm he had ever known howling about his home, Torgeson got that note, and the bearer did not dare leave him for his life, so fierce was the blast. "I can't read it," grumbled Torgeson. So the other read it to him, and then Torgeson crumpled it in his hand and said: "Let her stay there. She cares more for the school than for me."

He sat before his good fire hour after hour, and once and awhile when he glanced at the writing of the note he could not read. At midnight he could stand it no longer. He was Torgeson, the obstinate, but his wife and babies were over in that schoolhouse without much fuel or food. He took with him the man who had brought the note, and they brought the horses out of the stable and they fought as men never fought before against snow and cold, and they gained the school, a mile away, in two hours, and Torgeson beat open the door and the blast came with him, but the anger and the old pain had gone from him forever.

Bending over the stove to keep herself and babies alive, Anna Torgeson heard his voice, knew by his note that out of the horror he had struggled with to reach her new love and hope was caught in his arms, never to be put from him again.—H. I. Cleveland, in the Chicago Record-Herald.

Damage Done by a Horse's Hoofs.
A Boston automobile enthusiast with a penchant for figures has calculated that a sharp-shod horse pulverizes twenty-four pounds of road material on a macadamized highway for each mile traveled. He arrived at this result, says Automobile Topics, by carefully collecting, with the aid of an envelope and a fine brush, all of the material loosened by two of the equine's hoofs. This performance he repeated in widely separated sections of the cultured city, and collected the material disengaged from the road surface by six hoof-beats, and which is usually blown away in the form of dust. On weighing this material he found that he had 6084 pounds, or 3042 pounds per hoof-beat. Multiplying this by 3900 steps per mile for each foot—4900 steps in all—he found that it totaled twenty-four pounds. A rubber-tired automobile, he says, makes practically no impression on the roadway. From which he concludes that horses and steel-tired vehicles are the sworn enemies of the automobile so far as good roads are concerned. Some kind of a law to prevent the rapid deterioration of roads under steel hoofs and narrow steel tires should, he thinks, be enacted at once—the sooner the better.

A Ride of 1400 Miles.

The news comes from Berlin, says the Westminster Gazette, that Lieutenant Heyl of the Ninth Hanoverian Dragoons, has completed the journey on horseback from Metz to Bucharest, a distance of nearly 1400 miles, in twenty-five days. It is satisfactory to learn that when he arrived at the Rumanian capital Lieutenant Heyl's horse, which had been in training for some weeks previous to the journey, was as fit as when he started from Metz.

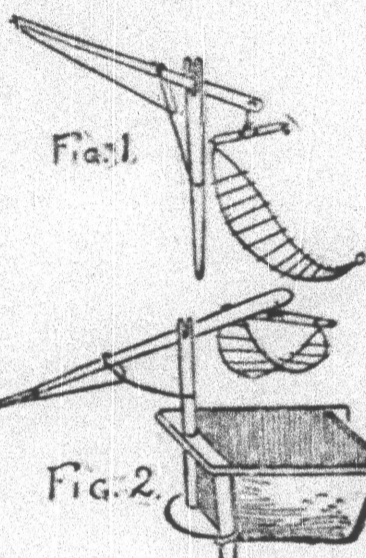
AGRICULTURAL.

English Method of Feeding Calves.

An English dairy farmer gives the following as his method of feeding calves: He makes a porridge of four quarts of corn meal, two quarts of ground buckwheat, four quarts of wheat bran and two handfuls of linseed meal. Each calf receives a heaping tablespoonful for each meal, which is made into a porridge with water, and added to one quart of sweet milk, in which a pinch of salt is put. The grain is gradually increased each week. As regards this ration it may be substituted that skim milk could well be substituted as more economical than new milk, and also that the feeding of corn meal and ground buckwheat would have a tendency to induce flesh-forming habits in the animal.

A Handy Scalding Device.

With this device one can handle the heaviest hog with it and know what I am saying. Place the hog on the rack



(Fig. 1), then close it, then proceed as shown in Fig. 2. Lift the hog over the trough by taking hold of the long lever. Lower it into the trough so that the rack springs clear of the bottom of the trough, then take hold of the cross lever and work it up and down, throwing the carcass from one side to the other, back and forth, until perfectly scalded. Keep trying the hair, so as to know when the proper scalding point is reached. Then swing out on the cleaning rack and take another hog. The figures explain themselves, says the Ohio Farmer.

Thorough Culture.

Quite often it is possible by thorough culture to bring up land which may not have been producing anything near what it should in a state of high fertility. Of this fact we have recently had good proof. On a comparatively new piece of land we had been having trouble for some time with wireweed, a species of goldenrod. Those who are acquainted with this plant do not need to be told what a hard thing it is to get rid of. It has long fibrous roots, often stretching out into the earth five or six feet and ramifying in every direction. I have pulled until my back ached on these roots. We have been trying to get rid of the pest by this sort of work, pulling by hand. It came up quickly in a field of potatoes. We thought by keeping the cultivator going we might root it out. The result was not favorable. It persistently kept its roots in the soil. Every tiny rootlet sprang up into a new plant. It seemed as if the more pieces it was broken into the more plants there would be.

Last summer before haying we plowed that field, putting on a chain to draw under every stalk of the rank weeds. Then we rested and let the hot sun of summer work. And it did very effectively. After haying we took the matter in hand again. Here and there stalks of the weed had thrust up their heads. Here we rested for a time, when we went on with the harrow and gave the ground a good stirring up. There the field lay all winter. This spring we sowed the land to oats and seeded it down to clover and timothy. The sunshine and the frosts of winter had done more than we could with all our back-breaking work and more than the horse and cultivator could do. In their place came a fine crop of oats and best of all a nice seeding of timothy and clover. We are trying still another field this year in the same way. We are satisfied to lose one crop if by so doing we can be rid of the weed pests. The time is coming when we will be compelled to recognize more frequently the value of rest for our land anyway. We work the soil too hard. It does not pay.—E. L. Vincent, in Agricultural Epitome.

When to Market Produce.

With perishable goods, the producer does well to seek the best nearest market before the article has reached such a state of maturity that they will endanger in transit; but with farm products that can be kept indefinitely, the question of holding is more complicated. Undoubtedly there are extremes in holding too long, and in rushing to market too early. Some farmers are so convinced that holding goods is bad policy, that they rush products to market almost straight from the field, and sometimes in only half-ripe condition and with the soil still clinging to them. That this is bad policy has been demonstrated over and over again. The first rush of almost any farm product is overwhelming, and prices quickly track.

apparent than when there is a scarcity. Then every one is sure of a glut and break in prices, and each one tries to get ahead of all others. The result is that they all get their goods in market about the same time.

It is far better to hold off a few weeks or months. Let the first glut work itself out, and then when prices recover a little, ship the goods, but never in very large quantities. It is better to trust your crops in installment. A severe loss may thus be averted. If prices are poor when you ship them, the whole season's crops will sell for unprofitable sums.

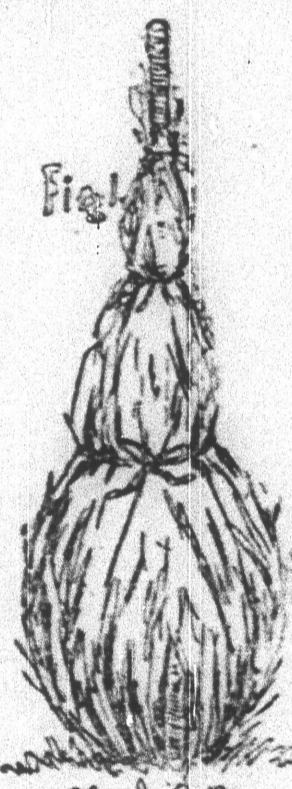
In holding goods the matter of shrinkage must be considered. In the case of hay and grain this amounts to a good deal in the course of a few months, but it is almost unimportant when held only for a short time. New green hay never brings the same as dry hay, and hence the question of shrinkage is partly discounted ahead. The loss through moulding, rotting and decaying in one way or another must be considered. If perfect storage conditions are provided this loss should be very little, but even then there is more or less danger of loss from rats, mice and insects. This must be thoroughly discounted whenever anything is held for five or six months.

In the cities, mammoth storage houses are erected for keeping all farm products indefinitely. Speculators purchase goods when prices are very low and store in these houses for a rise in price, paying meanwhile high rent and commissions. Many farmers have reasoned that if these speculators and dealers could find it profitable to store their goods in winter, they could do it likewise at a profit on the farm.

This is generally false reasoning for the simple reason that the storage houses provide absolutely against any loss from insects or rats, and to a large extent from shrinkage. The farmers cannot preserve their products under similarly favorable conditions. Moreover, the speculators are right in the market ready at a moment's notice to take advantage of high prices, to sell in enormous quantities. This gives them an advantage over the farmer in every transaction.—N. T. Whiting, in American Cultivator.

Protecting Evergreen Trees.

No more beautiful lawn trees can be found than our native hemlocks and pines, but where deep snows fall during the winter it is hard to keep the young trees of these varieties from being badly broken down. This is



particular, are often yearly ruined, not only having the branches stripped down by the weight of the snow, but by having the lower branches for a long time buried under a wet, cold mass. An excellent plan for protect-



ing such evergreens is shown in the cut, where the branches are brought up about the stalk and neatly tied, when sharpened pieces of board are driven into the ground about the young tree, inclining toward each other at the top, as shown. Thus established, the mass of snow that often covers small trees and shrubs is held away from the latter, while the snow in settling cannot strip down the branches and tender twigs. It pays to take a little trouble if thereby one can bring ever again the first rush of almost any farm product is overwhelming, and prices quickly track.

THE LIVING SOIL.

The Minute Organisms Which Produce Our Food.

Dr. Niley, head of the Department of Agriculture, in his recent lecture in this city, discussed the minds of a large audience of the very commonly accepted opinion that the soil is a dead material. He teaches that to be fertile it must be teeming with minute organisms of many different varieties. A soil absolutely devoid of these is at most as ineffective as so much iron or brass filings would be. For an example he mentioned the wonderfully rich ranch lands of Florida, in the attempted development of which millions of dollars have been fruitlessly expended. This soil contains all the elements essential to plant nutrition and growth, but it is also so acid in reaction that the several organisms are unable to develop and consequently failure after failure has followed. By neutralizing the acidity or acidity of the soil with lime an environment suitable for the bacteria to develop in results. Lantern slides were shown illustrating rest crops grown in this Florida much soil treated with lime, and as it occurs naturally. In the former case an increase crop resulted, while in the latter the growth from the same seedling was very scanty indeed. All decaying organic matter is reduced to assimilable form by a cycle of life processes of different bacteria. The first step is the conversion of such organic matter into humus, which is accomplished by a very large number of bacilli and bacteria. Ammonia of matter is next excreted by its other organisms and only one organism has been discovered that can produce this change into nitrous acid. When the material has reached this stage still another single invisible bacterium completes the conversion of nitrous acid into nitric acid, which is the only form in which nitrogen, the most essential element of plant food, is assimilable. If a soil is sterilized by heating to a sufficiently high temperature and all these invisible organisms destroyed, and it is protected from inoculation with others of their kind, then it is impossible to mature anything in such a soil. It has been killed. These organisms bear the same relation to plant assimilation that the ferment of digestion bear to animal assimilation.

One of the most interesting lantern slides showed a crop that was produced in a sterilized soil by merely scratching it with an inoculated point. Dr. Niley compared this to the human vaccination, which is just now so vividly in almost everybody's mind. The virus, or germs, are introduced into the soil by scratching it, just as the virus is introduced into the system by scratching the arm with a prepared point.

England's continued remarkable fertility, through centuries of cultivation, was explained as being attributable to the chalky formation of the land. This has resulted in a soil in which there is an abundance of lime, and, therefore, one adapted to bacteria development. These continually prepare the feed for plant assimilation, thus preserving the soil's fertility. Soil may become sterile through continued farming, owing to the exhaustion of all the elements upon which the organisms feed, but when these are added in the shape of fertilizers the soil regains its original fertility.

In the light of recent knowledge adding lime to a soil is not beneficial, because it is a plant food. But because it provides the proper environment for the development of the minute organisms, some of which even assimilate nitrogen from the air.

The bacteria of fermentation are also being investigated by the Department, and hopes are held out that the fermentative industries of this country, such as wine, cider, beer, etc., will within a few years be on a par with the best in the world. This is particularly true of the cider industry. The Department has had a special agent in Europe studying the best cultures for producing a superior quality of cider, and cultures are now being made in Washington laboratories. Dr. Niley volunteered the promise that within a year or two the product would be ready to be placed in the hands of the country, when America would be as able to produce as fine a cider as ever was made in Normandy or any other part of the world. The farmer will first sterilize his apple juice, and then inoculate it with a pure culture, and set it to work, as at present. The palatability and flavor of the scientific product will be immeasurably superior to the lot of the product of to-day.

Royal Babes on the Stage.

The approaching coronation of Edward VII. has revived interest in historical royal robes and the uses to which they were put at various times. The Tower of London was at one time the repository of the royal wardrobe, and from it actors and actresses who were in favor at court often were permitted to borrow. At a play presented before Queen Elizabeth at Oxford in 1550 several gowns that had been the property of Queen Mary, her sister, were worn, and Pope speaks of a performance at which "old Edward's armor beamed on Cibber's breast," referring to Colley Cibber, the famous actor. Peg Woffington, as Roxana, was permitted to wear a straw colored sash robe from the same august collection, and Frederick appeared on one occasion in the coronation robes of King I. Mrs. Mewart, the famous American actress, because the owner of Queen Adelaide's coronation gown, and Mrs. Tassand bought the coronation robe of George IV. to adorn his wax effigy.

A German trolley car has attained a speed of ninety miles and a half miles an hour.