

**THE END OF THE ROAD.**

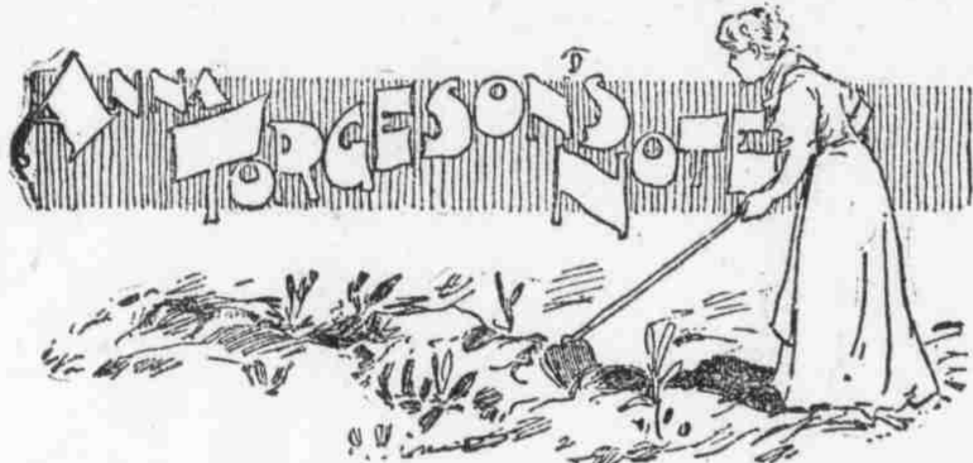
BY WILLIAM HERVEY WOODS.

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 mouldering wall  
With a wild vine over it springing,  
And a cowed shape on the low stone seat  
By the wicket sitting and singing.  
"Smart men of Araby, Pilgrim and Pala-  
din,  
Join in the goodly array—  
Knights of Pantagenet, horsemen of Sal-  
adin—  
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 myriads, trooping  
To that one portal: The ways of the world  
From afar and anear came to it,  
And the gatekeeper sang as, one by one,  
He ushered the travelers through it.  
"Hither rode Lancelot, parted from  
Guinevere—  
Princes and Beggars bold—  
Some like a Charlemagne, riding in min-  
iver,  
Some in their gaberdines old."

Then opened the gate, and lilies I saw  
In the cool grass, nodding and waving,  
A murmur of bees was borne on the breeze,  
A tinkle of rivulets laving  
Velvety banks where the riders reclined  
Asleep in the untroubled weather—  
The beggar and king, the sage and the  
knave.  
"Light, light, ye gentlemen, cease from  
your wandering,  
Won is the ultimate quest,  
Sages from counseling, fools from your  
maundering.  
Rest ye well. Silence is best."

But when I would enter, that keeper gray  
With a skeleton finger staved me.  
"Not yet," he whispered—His finger was  
cold,  
And the look of his eye affrayed me—  
"Twas fancy untimely showed thee the  
gate."  
(She only the future may borrow).  
Go, now; the feet of the galloping hours  
Shall bring thee again—and to-morrow."  
"Rest ye now soberly, striving is done for  
you,  
Finished the chase and fight—  
If ye were winners or losers is one for you,  
Rode ye for wrong or for right."  
—Youth's Companion.



OF the thousands of Norwe-  
gians 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 en-  
vironment. 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 pur-  
chase 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 pored over spelling  
books and arithmetic with the chil-  
dren. A brave people were these de-  
scendants 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.

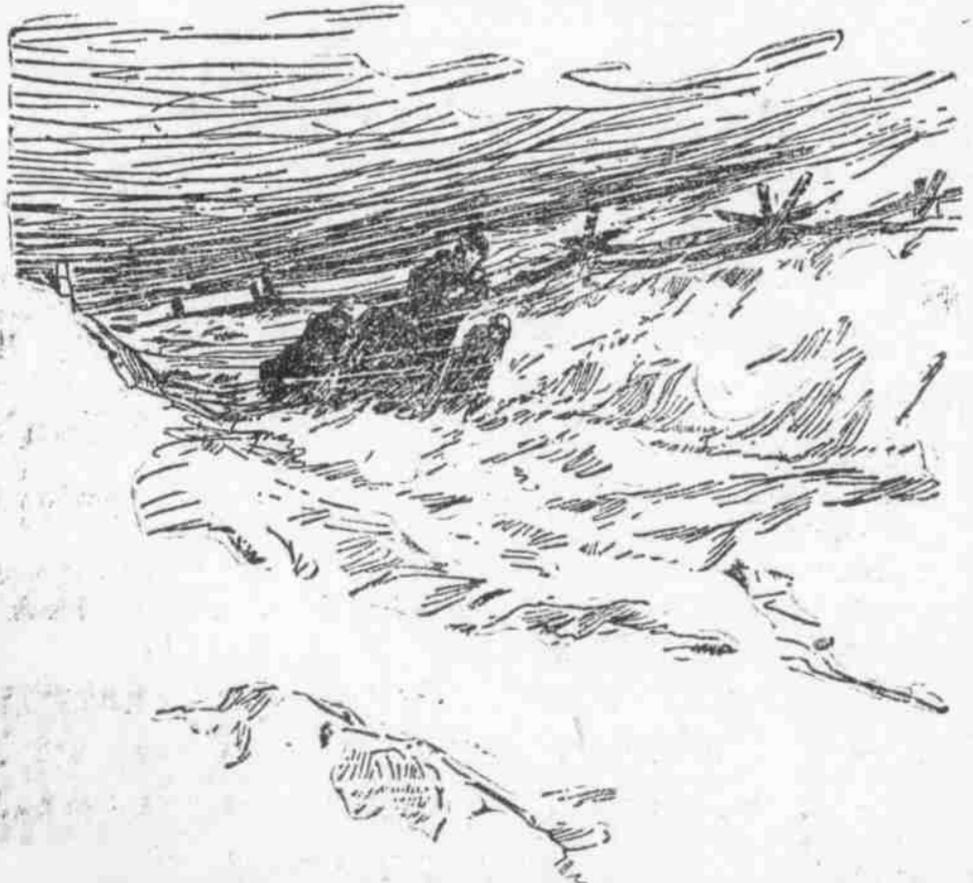
In the Hay Meadows school district  
was a Norwegian family by the name  
of Torgeson. The mother, Anna, was  
perhaps twenty-two or twenty-three  
years old. The father was thirty. The  
three children were toddlers, too young  
for school and books. Nevertheless  
when winter school opened Anna Tor-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

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  
who met them. That Torgeson should  
be the only one among them to fail  
to rightly accept the new life in the  
Republic pained them. They earnestly  
labored with him, but he would not  
listen. When Anna Torgeson made  
known her desire to attend the district  
school he swore loudly and at first  
said she should not go. Later he an-  
swered to her pleadings:

"Go if you will, but you put some-  
thing between us two you will never  
get over. I am as my fathers were.  
If you would be different, all right.  
But it will go hard with both of us  
later."

Anna Torgeson was straight of limb  
and blue of eyes. She was beautiful  
when Torgeson made her his bride.  
Motherhood had added to her charms.  
She had mind, too—quick-witted intel-  
ligence, a rare aptitude for knowing  
the best and clinging to it. For her  
children's sake she believed that she  
ought to attend the district school.



GOING TO THE SCHOOL.

across the prairie to the sod school-  
house and asked for admission. Tor-  
geson 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 "kirk," and that  
not existing on the prairies 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 on 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

When Torgeson finally gave his con-  
sent she wound her arms about his  
neck and kissed him long, but Tor-  
geson pushed her away and growled.  
He would not surrender. He came to  
America but for gain; when that was  
had, he would return to his folkland,  
unchanged.

All through November and Decem-  
ber of that dreary winter Anna Tor-  
geson made her way to the schoolhouse  
and worked for mastery of the Eng-  
lish tongue. Torgeson stayed at the  
farm, minding the cattle and their  
fodder, or brooding over his pipe and  
cups. That his wife should not side  
with him was the bitterest thing he  
had to endure. He was not a bad  
man—only a cruelly obstinate one, and  
having started on the wrong path, he  
would not turn back and find the right  
one. He might have made his wife's

winter a bright one. He might have  
taken out the sledge and driven her  
and the children the short mile to the  
schoolhouse, but he would not. No  
matter how deep the snow and fierce  
the winds he let them go alone, un-  
aided, unless neighbors gave them a  
helping hand.

When January, the worst month  
of the season, came, he made no effort  
to assist them. So wide was the gulf  
between husband and wife now that  
he even let the New Year's Day pass  
without the home celebration they had  
never missed before. Even that night  
when Anna Torgeson came to where  
he brooded in his chair, and, weeping,  
begged him to be the man of their first  
days, he pushed her from him and  
answered:

"I am not of yours. I have not  
changed. It is you that has changed.  
Let me be."

Anna Torgeson went on with the  
school, praying every night to her God  
that her husband might yet awaken  
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  
yet," 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 deathly cold. All  
through the morning the sunshine  
flooded the interior of the schoolhouse  
and the water dripped from the snow-  
covered sod eaves, but the pupils with-  
in 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 bliz-  
zard was upon them. The thermom-  
eter had fallen to far below zero and  
the air was filled with sleet that cut  
the skin like chopped glass. The twelve  
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 chil-  
dren of Anna Torgeson.

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

Some offered to guide her home be-  
fore 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 such food as they had left  
from noon and gave it to her. It was  
not much for four mouths, 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 howl-  
ing about his home, Torgeson got that  
note, and the beaver 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  
thought he was unobserved he would  
glance 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 her-  
self and babies alive, Anna Torgeson  
heard his voice, knew by its note that  
out of the horror he had struggled  
with to reach her new love and hope  
had come, and she leaped to him and  
was caught in his arms, never to be  
put from him again.—H. I. Cleveland,  
in the Chicago Record-Herald.

**Fish of Other Days.**

The discovery in the sands of Jerl-  
anage, at Woking, England, of well-  
preserved examples of the teeth of pre-  
historic sharks and the remains of  
other fish, is announced in Nature.  
The find is regarded as an unusually  
interesting one, and the material has  
been turned over to the experts of the  
British Museum for examination.



**Convict Labor on Roads.**

THE suggestion which was  
some time ago made in these  
columns that able bodied in-  
mates of prisons and peniten-  
tiaries be set at work building im-  
proved roads seems at last to be acted  
upon to a considerable extent, and with  
gratifying results. The convicts in  
the State prisons are as a rule other-  
wise employed, but those in charge of  
the penitentiaries have not been able  
to provide work in prison shops for the  
prisoners under their control, and so  
have sought it outside. In eight or  
more counties of this State the peni-  
tentiary prisoners are employed either  
at road building or at crushing stone  
for road building. It is not known that  
any bad effects have been experienced  
from the undertaking, while the good  
effects are numerous and obvious.  
Among the latter these are conspicu-  
ous: The prisoners have the physical  
and moral benefit of healthful labor  
in the open air; the prisoners are made  
to pay their way instead of being a  
heavy charge upon the community; the  
construction of good roads is promoted  
and the cost of them is decreased; and  
the number of prisoners is diminished,  
for tramps and other "sons of rest"  
avoid counties where committal to the  
penitentiary means stone breaking and  
road building. It may be added that  
one of the chief objections to the  
system—the offensive parading of con-  
victs in the public view—has been  
found groundless, for no one would  
take the penitentiary prisoners work-  
ing on the roads to be other than ordi-  
nary laborers.

There is reason to believe that this  
system might profitably and properly  
be extended throughout the State, and  
be applied to the inmates of State pris-  
ons as well as of penitentiaries—when  
other work fails. The prisoners might  
also be employed at repairing and  
maintaining the roads after they are  
built. Most of the prisoners at Sing  
Sing are now at work, but it is not  
long since that most of them were  
idle and were seriously suffering, mor-  
ally and physically, from enforced  
idleness. And yet within a few hours'  
drive of Ossining are hundreds of  
miles of road that are in their badness  
a reproach to the community and a  
cause of vexation and of actual pecu-  
niary loss to all who are compelled to  
use them. We do not mean, of course,  
that counties and towns are to wait  
until prisoners can be secured to build  
good roads. But whenever and where-  
ever able bodied prisoners are idle the  
reproach of bad roads is aggravated  
twofold. All roads should be made  
and kept good, and all prisoners who  
are able to work should be kept at  
healthful and profitable work. These  
are two rules which should be con-  
stantly observed, and between which  
an intimate relationship is to be found.  
—New York Tribune.

**Benefit For Road Taxes.**

Those who objected to the high taxes  
for road improvement last spring may  
find themselves more heavily taxed  
with bad roads than if compelled to  
pay cash to the collector. In some por-  
tions of the State farmers are almost  
blockaded when heavy snows fall or  
the frost is leaving the ground. More  
benefit is derived from road taxes than  
from any other sums expended in the  
community.—Philadelphia Record.

**An Example of the Benefits.**

An example of the benefits of good  
roads to a country town is well set  
forth by General E. G. Harrison, of  
the Road Inquiry Office, Department  
of Agriculture. He found that good  
roads made Morristown, a little New  
Jersey village, a centre of culture and  
sociability because the people for  
miles around, finding travel on the  
highways easy and comfortable,  
sought relaxation and improvement  
and drove into the town to find them.  
And still better, the good roads gave  
a great impetus to free rural postal  
delivery. He says:

In that section more than double the  
number of miles were covered by car-  
rier than on common roads, and now  
these mails are delivered from house  
to house at less expense than when  
the mail was carried under the star  
route system from village to village,  
and left at the store or postoffice; a  
saving of \$800 on those roads. I was  
interested in getting the result of that  
free rural delivery, and here it is. I  
will give it to you in round numbers,  
so you can remember it. It was es-  
tablished and went in force in July,  
1898; for the month of July a little  
short of 1500 pieces were carried. In  
the month of December of that year  
2300 were carried. Now, take the  
same months in the year 1899. In  
July there were 3500, and in Decem-  
ber, 8000 pieces carried, and a little  
over. Now, you see, there is some  
improvement there. That might be  
on lines of business, but it is more  
likely that it stirred up social interest

and letter writing, which all tends to  
develop the country. Now, here is a  
further result. You know the city de-  
livery is by rules of the Postoffice De-  
partment only put in cities, and it is  
established where the city's popula-  
tion is 10,000, or where the annual  
receipts of the postoffice are \$10,000  
and over. The result of this is that  
now Morristown, N. J., has a city de-  
livery, because the receipts have come  
up to the required \$10,000. These are  
some of the results of the system of  
good roads.—New York Tribune.

**A Great Work Undone.**

No greater work remains undone in  
this country than the improvement of  
country roads.

**TROUBLE WITH THE CASHIER.**

Lunchrooms Feeding Thousands Find It  
Hard to Balance Up.

One of the most difficult positions to  
fill in the big retail establishments  
where automatic cash registers are in  
use is that of cashier. The question is  
not so much one of honesty, as of ability  
to perform the work day by day  
without too great a margin of error.

None has found so great difficulty  
in this connection as the owners of big  
quick lunch establishments, where  
"change" has to be made quickly at  
the rush hours of noon, and when  
but little time is allowed the cashier  
to check receipts with the figures  
marked up on the register.

The cashier at one of the largest  
downtown places was recently dis-  
charged simply because she was often  
"off" in her change; that is, the cash  
register and the amount turned in at  
night did not tally. It mattered little  
to the company when there was a  
shortage, for, according to agreement,  
the cashier made it up from her salary.  
On many occasions there was even  
overcash above the amount recorded.  
The young woman turned in this over-  
cash faithfully; the company dis-  
charged her for having any overcash  
at all.

When the young woman was dis-  
charged, it may be noted incidentally,  
she had become a great favorite with  
the customers, and when it was learned  
that they were to see her no more  
behind the cashier's desk, some one  
started a petition, which was signed  
by over 600 names and turned in to  
the management. The management  
decided to give the young woman an-  
other chance if she would come and  
apply for the position, which she de-  
clined to do.

Another cashier was taken on in her  
place and lasted exactly four days.  
Another girl succeeded. She lasted  
two days. Still another came and  
lasted four days. In all eight girls  
were tried out behind the marble desk,  
and then the company was no better  
off than at first. Days came when  
there were shortages to be taken out  
of the young women's pockets, and  
others when they honestly turned in  
what was over and above the amount  
on the cash register. But the shortage  
and the overcash continued, and the  
company has decided to give up ex-  
periments and charge the difficulty  
not to the incompetence of the cashiers  
but the difficulty of filling the position  
without mistakes.

The trouble is said to be that the  
2500 or 3000 changes made during  
the day are not, as in dry goods stores,  
or other concerns, more or less scat-  
tered throughout a day, but are all  
crowded into an hour or so. The rate  
at which one girl makes change during  
that one hour is at the rate of 12,000 in  
a day of nine hours.—New York Times.

**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 re-  
sult, says Automobile Topics, by care-  
fully collecting, with the aid of an en-  
velope and a fine brush, all of the ma-  
terial loosened by two of the equine's  
hoof-beats. This performance he re-  
peated in widely separated sections  
of the cultured city, and collected the  
material disengaged from the road sur-  
face by six hoof-beats, and which is  
usually blown away in the form of  
dust. On weighing this material he  
found that he had .0366 pounds, or  
.0061 pounds per hoof-beat. Multi-  
plying this by 1090 steps per mile for  
each foot—or 4000 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 con-  
cludes that horses and steel-tired vehi-  
cles are the sworn enemies of the auto-  
mobile so far as good roads are con-  
cerned. 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.

**The Water in Wood.**

Chemists have come to the conclu-  
sion that forty-five per cent. of water  
is present in the composition of green  
wood. Even when the lumber is sea-  
soned, they hold that it is impossible  
to drive out all the water, ten per cent.  
of which remains even in highly sea-  
soned wood.

Cuban railroads are compelled by  
their charters to carry mails free