

# A FAMILY STORY

## TWO WOMEN ON WHEELS.

IT'S a perfect day for a ride," said the young matron as she poured her husband's coffee at breakfast, "and if you can't stay at home from business I'm going to telephone in for some man to come out and go riding with us."

Her husband couldn't stay, but he would meet them at the Saddle and Cycle Club at 5 o'clock for dinner, then they could all ride home together by moonlight.

Then the city guest came downstairs and smiling apologized for being late, tactfully alluding to such a comfortable bed, and to the soothing influence of rural stillness.

When the young matron's husband, who was the bluest-eyed, blond-haired, mildest-mannered "one" in all of natural history, had gone, the city guest played with the baby in the hammock and the young matron excused herself to hold her regular morning session with the cook. But in the early afternoon the domestic machinery was running smoothly, the baby had been pampered-off by a freckled faced nurse who was "keeping steady company" with a private at Fort Sheridan, the young matron had telephoned for a man, and the city guest was putting on her bicyce clothes.

"We'll ride to Glenoe and meet him there, and then go on to the city. The roads aren't very good yet, but it will be fun if you can't mind road riding. I don't, for it's more exciting."

So, after oiling up and pumping up and tightening up, they rolled out of the little town into the fresh, early green of the country, with the meadows and fields on one side and the lake on the other.

The roads north of the city lie more or less near the lake, being, without doubt, the most attractive to wheelmen, and on fine Sundays they are traversed by many bicyclists. During the week there are portions of these roads which are lonely and deserted. While pedaling through a bit of woods, with the city guest looking into them on either side in search of violets, the young matron said, suddenly:

"My dear, isn't that a tramp lying there by that fallen tree ahead of us?"

The other looked apprehensively at the indicated bundle of fluttering ratters and discovered one nose visible among them—such a red, red nose—a stubby chin, three ragged black boots and one ragged tan shoe.

"No," she said, hopping off in order to prevent the collapse of her slow moving wheel, "it's two tramps, and they're worse than they are in the funny papers. There! I know you'd go over if you didn't get off!"

"Let's go back," tremulously suggested the young matron, pushing in several loosened hair-pins and raising her wheel. She was nervous and a little pale, but she asked the city guest if her hat was on straight. The city guest was frightened, too, but she had such a happy faculty of disguising it that she had the reputation of being unusually brave and ready in an emergency.

"No, let's go on and make a rush for it. We can pass so quickly they'll never know till we're gone."

But the passable part of the road was narrow just where the wayfarers were taking a siesta, and would permit of only one girl passing at a time. So the plan seemed hardly feasible, for neither of the riders could make up her mind to go last.

Just then there was a movement of the tatters, boots and nose. One of the men rose on his elbow and stared. His nose was less red than that of the other, but his chin was more stubby.

No, the city guest had a secret passion for all things histrionic, and she noticed with a thrill of quick pleasure that this godless man wore a bright handkerchief about his neck. This one artistic touch instantly transformed him from a common tramp to something akin to the stage brigand, while the background of trees and grass and yellow road disappearing below the crest of a little hill in the distance made as effective a setting as she had ever seen. Her fear was lost in this new emotion and she laughed, exclaiming under her breath to her companion:

"Oh, isn't it picturesque!"

The young matron turned her head and looked at the city guest's face, her dread rising to terror when she saw the radiant expression it wore. Suddenly she was seized with the fearful conviction that fear had temporarily unhinged her friend's mind, leaving her in the hands of a maniac and of two unscrupulous villains. She hid her face in her hands and sunk down by the now forgotten bicycle and wept quietly till she heard the voice of her poor deserted friend mingled in the most cordial converse with those of the two men; then she lifted her head and gazed at them agast.

The three were exchanging friendly remarks about the weather, after which they amicably discussed bi-

cycles and their respective merits, in spite of the shrouded intelligence concerning both the subject and the English language as displayed by two-thirds of the party. But unobtrusively the eyes that accompanied the red, red nose wandered toward the young matron and discovered several valuable rings on her small, bare hands.

"I'll take those purty rings, lady, don't get scared, but just hand 'em over, quiet like and we'll be movin' on."

The city guest turned sharply around at that. For in an instant she hoped that the other man would interfere and nobly dissuade his friend from his purpose. But he only winked at her cordially and said to the other:

"It's too risky, ain't it, Tobie?"

Tobie's only reply was to thrust into his pocket the glittering things which the young matron had, with trembling relief, drawn from her fingers and given him; the next moment they were both striding off through the wood.

Again that sense of adventure stimulated the city guest with a desire to live up to the occasion.

"You mustn't lose your rings that way; get up and ride as fast as you can over to Highland Park and tell everybody about it, and I'll go on to Glenoe and do the same."

Her directions were somewhat vague, but there was nothing for the young matron to do but obey them, for already the city guest had reached the top of the little hill.

Just then the young matron saw the man who had been telephoned to come out and ride to town with them coming up on his wheel rapidly. His bicycle stockings were of such brilliant and remarkable design that she recognized him immediately. When they were still some distance apart she began her story at the very top of her voice.

"Don't get off!" she shouted warningly; "there's no time to lose!"

He was interested at once, and he was angrily excited when she had finished.

"I'm going the wrong way," he said; "I'll go back and not let the beasts get away while you go on and get some other fellow to help," and he was tearing swiftly along over the road that had just come, while she, in her turn, did as she was directed.

Just before reaching the woods where the encounter had taken place the young man turned off on a disused wagon track skirting the south side of the timber. Just where the road ceased to become a road at a grassy meadow a man with a stubby chin and a bright handkerchief knotted below it stepped out from among the trees.

"We seen her meet you an' here's the stuff that belongs to the lady. I told Tobie it was too all-fired risky, an' he guesses it is hisself. So long, mister, an' he ran rapidly into the thick underbrush and disappeared.

Dinner at the Saddle and Cycle Club was a success, nevertheless. The young matron recovered sufficiently to enjoy the evening, but she absolutely refused to join in the toast proposed by the city guest: "To the Gent With the Bandana Handkerchief."—Washington Pathfinder.

**Too Strongly Epigrammatic.**

"Epigrammatic sentences are interesting, out there is such a thing as being too strongly epigrammatic," said R. F. Barnett, of Louisville, at the Shoreham. "I was going into Louisville from Memphis. On the train was a white haired old lady, with whom chance drew me into conversation. We became quite friendly, and she told me that she was going to visit her son, whom she had not seen for two or three years. He had written a few weeks ago, asking her to visit him at Louisville, naming a certain hotel. She arranged her affairs as quickly as possible and went. At the depot she was greatly disappointed not to meet her son, and I accompanied her to the parlor and volunteered to find her son. The clerk had not seen him, but gave me a letter for the lady. As soon as she read the first line she fainted, and I hurriedly sent for a physician, picking up the letter. The first paragraph was: 'My Dear Mother: I am now in the penitentiary.' I was shocked, but read further. The next paragraph said: 'I have a good position with the contractors, and it is impossible to get away. Come on to Frankfort. I have already rented a house for us to live in.' It took us three hours to bring the mother to consciousness."—Washington Star.

**Mummy Manufacture.**

A method of mummifying the dead by absorption of humidity and gases after the body is placed in the coffin has been devised by an Italian named Verettoni. The body seems to be preserved as if in life, except that the color is the yellowish copper that peculiar to Egyptian mummies.

### WORDS OF WISDOM.

The most preposterous thing in life is honesty in love.  
In too many cases marriage is simply a polite serfdom.  
Truth is a virtue, but a mighty awkward one in a horse trade.  
Death is a sauce without which life would be barely palatable.  
Death is a whip, and with famous persons it has a creeker on the end.  
Death is so swift that it overtakes everybody and yet so slow that anyone can catch it.  
When a woman is engaged to be married she thinks that life has just begun for her.  
Life is an oyster that very often turns out to be bad just as we get ready to eat it.  
Every girl of sixteen has contempt for the patience old women have for their husbands.  
The oiler never seeks the man because it can't push its way through the crowd of politicians.  
Some men are so mean that they have to be dead a long while before they are well spoken of.  
A girl always worries more about the lint on a man's coat before she marries him than she does afterward.  
When a man is engaged to be married he spends most of his time wondering if he hasn't made a big mistake.  
A monopoly is a good deal like a baby. A man is opposed to it on general principles until he has one of his own.  
Some persons win a certain social recognition by claiming to be tired of strawberries while they are yet high priced.  
Those who attain any excellence commonly spend life in one common pursuit, for excellence is not gained upon easier terms.  
The political orator is as jealous of a brass band as a preacher is of a splendid choir. It is a stand-off as to who draws the most people.—The South-West.

**Crippled, But Lively.**

It is a well known fact that nature makes partial amends for the loss of one faculty by strengthening those left to us. The loss of sight is followed by an extraordinary acuteness of the sense of sound. There are several blind men well known about New York who thread the crowded sections of Broadway with apparently as much ease as those who can see. They go about fearlessly, ignoring the dangers of cable cars, trucks and trolleys without even the assistance of the traditional dog, trusting wholly in the sound of the staff on the pavement.

There is a cripple who haunts the vicinity of Seventy-first street and First avenue, propelling himself on a crude little board on wheels by means of his hands. His withered limbs are twisted up beneath him, useless from birth. But his powerful arms take the place of both legs and feet. He can roll along through the crowded thoroughfares, across the streets, and dodge the trucks and trams with astonishing celerity and certainty. He is known to the entire neighborhood, and he is practically the boss of the ward. People seem to have much respect for his judgment on their various affairs, and he is consulted as often as a Tammany leader. Sometimes the street urchins attempt to take liberties with him. They never do it twice. He has a way of suddenly hopping off his board on his hands, with a leap like that of a kangaroo, and grabbing a boy by the leg and shaking all the courage out of him, which has earned him the respect of the knowing ones.

He can whip a man of twice his size and weight. All he wants is to get his enemy within reach, and it is done. Being high strung and quick tempered, his fighting qualities have been frequently tested. The young roughs of the neighborhood are in deadly fear of these arms. There is not much sympathy wasted on that cripple, you may readily imagine.—New York Herald.

**The Industrious Yellowhammer.**

William R. O'Neill, of the Pacific vinegar factory, noticed a yellowhammer industriously at work one day recently on the siding of the factory building. Mr. O'Neill watched the bird for some time, and inside of an hour it had cut a round hole two or three inches in diameter through the inch plank. Mr. O'Neill is not a mean man, and if the bird cared to make its home in his vinegar factory, why, it was all right. Next day, however, he noticed that the yellowhammer was engaged on another hole. "It's for a back door," thought the owner of the building. But after it had finished the back door it cheerfully went to work on the other holes, probably for windows. By the time there were fifteen holes in the side of the factory Mr. O'Neill concluded that the yellowhammer was taking liberties with his property. So he obtained permission from the Chief of Police to shoot it. For a whole day the office boy and Mr. O'Neill's brother bugged away without fazing the little bird, and it was finally necessary to employ an expert marksman to bring it down. The marksman charged fifty cents for his services, and Mr. O'Neill also lost the best part of a day nailing boards over the holes in the plank.—Portland Oregonian.

**Photographs in Watches.**

The new watch is to have a photograph cylinder hidden away, and at the hour and at each quarter of an hour a tiny voice will be heard giving you the exact time. You will simply touch a spring, hold the watch to your ear, and the little fairy on the inside will whisper the hour.

### THEY DEFY CROESUS.

#### PROPERTY OWNERS WHO WON'T SELL AT ANY PRICE.

Some Famous Cottages—Occupants Pleas'd to Have Millionaires for Neighbors—George Vanderbilt and Other Men of Wealth Make Offers in Vain.

**Special Letter.**

WHEN John D. Rockefeller bought those miles around Tarrytown, placing his titles over the country that runs along the most picturesque part of the Hudson, he planned placing a fence around it all and inclosing all

in one beautiful park. So large did he plan it that, out driving, he could drive ten miles straight ahead without going off his own estates.

In getting so vast a piece of property together many a stream had to be crossed, many mountains climbed, and much surveying done. Acres upon acres were added, as Mr. Rockefeller found new outlying pieces of property that pleased him. At length, driving over his lands, he found himself in pos-

session of so many miles of property that he needed no more. "Here I shall place my house," he said, "and the park shall extend for miles around us, farther than we can see or walk or drive. It shall be like a baronial estate into whose depths the owner can penetrate, but offering no access to the stranger."

When the surveyors set out to place the boundaries of the big fence they were amazed to find a small piece of property that was not in the plans. It consisted of a small strip of land running back about forty rods into Mr. Rockefeller's domains. Upon the little plot stood a simple frame house, unattended, while around the door strayed a few lonesome chickens.

The surveyors reported this to Mr. Rockefeller. "Purchase the piece of property," ordered he.

When the Rockefeller agents approached the small house they found an old man out by the door feeding his hens. "I don't think as I want to sell," said he, reflectively glancing over the spreading acres beyond. "Fact is, I like to have a nice neighbor like that. I'm contented here, doin' chores for the neighbors an' working out winters. No, I don't want to sell."

"One of those obstinate old fellows," ejaculated the agent. "Leave him alone. He'll come around."

But the man did not come around fast enough. Meanwhile Mr. Rockefeller wanted to build that fence. The little plot stood next the best water chance on the place. A beautiful little river cascades into a ravine back of the plot. "Buy at any price," ordered the millionaire. But the agent held out

All summer the man worked out doing chores, and when winter came he housed up, only going out to do odd jobs. Spring dawned, and with it came the agent. The old man by this time was ugly. "You can't buy that that house for less than \$50,000," said he, "and cash at that."

"I'll pay it," said the agent. "I will be here tomorrow with the money and a lawyer."

Next morning came the agent, the lawyer and the money. But when they approached the house they saw something had gone wrong. The chickens were running wildly in all directions, the windows were broken and the door hung mournfully upon one hinge. As they stopped to gaze at the strange sight a wildly disheveled figure came rushing around the house crying: "Money, money! Where's the money? Let me eat it! Let me eat it!" It was the poor fellow, gone stark, raving mad with joy at the prospect of sudden wealth. Three months afterward he died in the madhouse!

Not all such tales have so tragic an ending. Upon the very border of Biltmore, George Vanderbilt's North Carolina estate, there dwells a farmer, fat, ruddy, and contented, knowing as he does that the owner of Biltmore would give a cool million any day to oust him.

Biltmore is so planned that its borders end upon streams, in forests, and upon large adjoining estates of gentlemen. Bill Nye's place touches Biltmore upon one end. These people nev-

er hear the quail? My boy, in a few years I'll have finer shooting than 'resford has got on his place."

A startled squawk of the wild fowl broke the stillness. A stamping of same in the woods told that a disturbing element was at hand. Through the elegantly planned park came the old man, with a gun on his shoulder and his dogs at his heels.

"Where are you going?" demanded Mr. Corbin.

"Going home," replied the old man, apologetically.

"I'll see about that," said Corbin. A lawyer was called in, and the law was read; but the closest application could find no hindrance to a man in reaching his own property. "A man is entitled to a hangplank to his own habitat," was the ultimatum; and they could get no further.

That man still holds the property. He has an idea his grandchildren will sell for millions.

There is a well known story that Levi P. Morten, with his Jersey pigs and his Alderney cows, would dearly like to purchase a snug bit of property that lies next to his; but the owner holds on, for peculiar reasons. He wants to be "next the rose." He is a politician of local repute, and the privilege of saying that he lives next to Morten is worth twenty votes to him. When so lofty a reason restrains a man, it is a mean politician that would seek to tempt.

At Lenox, upon one of the lovely hillsides heading up to October Mountain, the Harry Whitney country place, there stands a little shanty, with a cobble-stone foundation, and a single sprawny tree growing alongside. On each side of it end great estates. Many and many a time have the owners of the property on each side tried to buy of the old woman who owns it; but she, poor thing, keeps a thin-sided cow and sells her milk to the neighbors and holds on. At first she wanted \$5,000; now she refuses \$25,000. But she is old, and cannot live forever. Then her little place will be bought cheap from her son, who urges her to sell.

Such are a few of the tales of men who, having great estates, want a little spot besides; and such is the tale of man's cupidity that these owners, poor and suffering for necessities, bear their poverty and hardship, sure that a gold mine will open at their feet if they can only wait long enough for it.

ALBERT CAMERON.

### A COMING SINGER.

An Illinois Young Woman Vocalist with Brilliant Prospects.

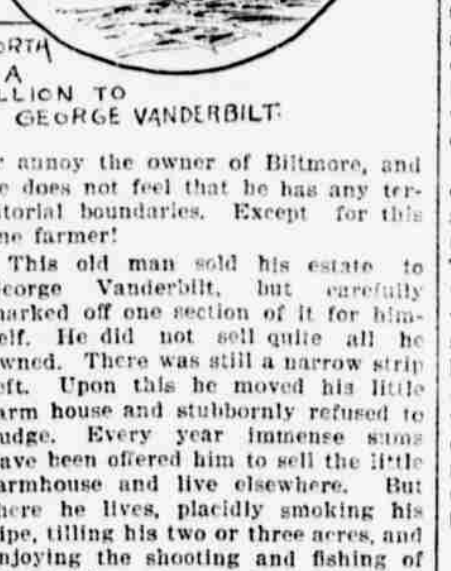
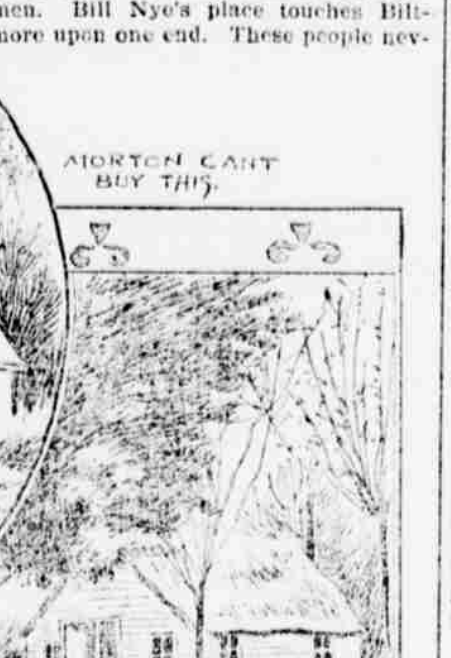
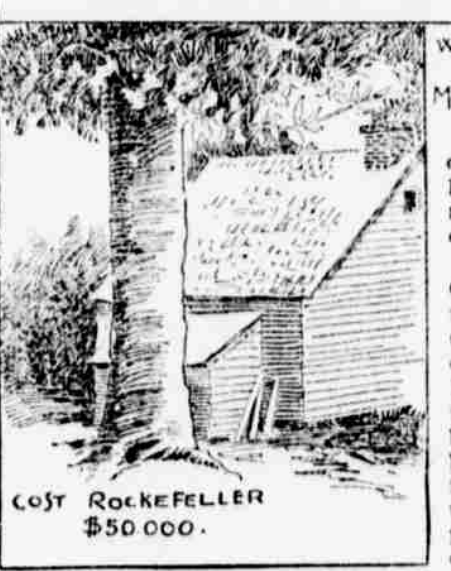
(Springfield, Ill., Letter.)

Miss Bessie O'Brien, who is now studying music under the great Mme. Marchesi at Paris, is progressing admirably. In musical circles abroad this young lady is now regarded as a coming star of the first magnitude. She speaks of herself in a letter of recent date as follows: "Last week, after a month's vacation, I resumed my musical studies with Mme. Marchesi. My voice is in excellent condition, and its improvement is more apparent now than at any time previous. Since I began studying with Marchesi I have gone through some very difficult work, the Madame requiring her pupils to understand 'time' perfectly and to define thoroughly the vocal sentiment and expression of selections, so that one must necessarily spend time and labor in translating and acquiring the full sense of each study in progress." Miss O'Brien's voice is of wonderful quality and of a compass little short of three octaves, from lower E to high D flat. Her tones are superb in quality and are warmly sympathetic, and she has good dramatic ability. She is a pretty girl, with dark brown hair and dark blue eyes, is very earnest and determined, and, with all the applause that she has received, is modest and unassuming.

This youthful vocalist is at the present time not quite 18 years of age. She was born in this city in October, 1878, and is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dennis O'Brien, old and respected residents of the capital city. When but 10 years of age Miss O'Brien used to accompany her sister, who is organist at St. Agnes' church in Springfield, to choir rehearsal, and, without the notice of anyone, the child sang with the

choir. Later at home she would sing this difficult classical music with the feeling and expression of an older person and with a dramatic force which quite astonished her friends. She soon became a regular member of the choir, and two years later was its principal soloist. Miss O'Brien made her first great impression when she sang a solo in St. Jarlath's church in Chicago about eighteen months ago, on which occasion she surprised those who were fortunate enough to hear her by the great power and beauty of her voice.

London and the Greater New York. A recent census makes the population of the administrative district of London, 4,214,492 and of the suburban belt of the metropolis 1,756,421, making a total of 6,177,913. The population of Greater New York is estimated at about 3,100,000; its area is 259 3/4 square miles. The nearly twice as many inhabitants of Greater London are spread out over 688 1/3 miles.



BESSIE O'BRIEN.