

The
REVOLT OF THE
PEDESTRIANS

David H. Keller

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The REVOLT OF THE PEDESTRIANS

By David H. Keller M.D.

Here at last is a different story with a different theme. What will happen to us, the author must have asked himself, if we continue to ride in cars for centuries to come? You may laugh at the idea that we will lose the use of our legs entirely, but the idea is not as foolish as it may sound.

There is excellent science in this story, and if you do not believe that too much riding in cars is bad for you, just speak to your doctor and get his advice.

Here is a story worth reading because many of the things of which the author speaks are gradually coming about. There was a time when pedestrians had certain rights. In our large cities, however,

these rights are practically lost even now. But read for yourself, and learn.

CRASH!!

"Damn these pedestrians anyway!"

A deathly moan and a determined mutter of, "Your whole race will pay for this!" came in one breath from the automobile, the chauffeur, the murdered mother, and the ghastly lips of the little pedestrian son who was left mercilessly with the lifeless corpse in the slaughter pen of humanity.

A young pedestrian mother was walking slowly down a country road holding her little son by her hand. They were both beautiful examples of pedestrians, though tired and dusty from long days spent on their journey from Ohio to Arkansas, where the pitiful remnant of the doomed species were gathering for the final struggle. For several days these two had walked the roads westward, escaping instant death again and again by repeated miracles. Yet this afternoon, tired, hungry and hypnotized by the setting sun in her face, the woman slept even as she walked and only woke screaming, when she realized that escape was impossible. She succeeded in pushing her son to safety in the gutter, and then died instantly beneath the wheels of a skilfully driven car, going at sixty miles an hour.

The lady in the sedan was annoyed at the jolt and spoke rather sharply to the chauffeur through the speaking tube.

"What was that jar, William?"

"Madam, we have just run over a pedestrian."

"Oh, is that all? Well, at least you should be careful."

"There is only one way to hit a pedestrian safely, Madam, when one is going sixty miles an hour and that is to hit him hard."

"William is such a careful driver," said the Lady to her little daughter. "He just ran over a pedestrian and there was only the slightest jar."

The little girl looked with pride on her new dress. It was her eighth birthday and they were going to her grandmother's for the day. Her twisted atrophied legs moved in slow rhythmic movements. It was her mother's pride to say that her little daughter had never tried to walk. She could think, however, and something was evidently worrying her. She looked up.

"Mother!" she asked. "Do pedestrians feel pain the way we do?"

"Why, of course not, Darling," said the mother. "They are not like us, in fact some say they are not human beings at all."

"Are they like monkeys?"

"Well, perhaps higher than apes, but much lower than automobilists."

The machine sped on.

Miles behind a terror-stricken lad lay sobbing on the bleeding body of his mother, which he somehow had found strength to drag to the side of the road. He remained there till another day dawned and then left her and walked slowly up the hills into the forest. He was hungry and tired, sleepy and heart broken but he paused for a moment on the crest of the hill and shook his fist in inarticulate rage.

That day, a deep hatred was formed in his soul.

The world had gone automobile wild. Traffic cops had no time for snail-like movements of walkers—they were a menace to civilization—a drawback to progress—a defiance to the development of science. Nothing mattered in a man's body but his brains.

Gradually machinery had replaced muscle as a means of attaining man's desire on earth. Life consisted only of a series of explosions of gasoline or alcohol—air mixtures or steam expansion in hollow cylinders and turbines, and this caused ingeniously placed pistons to push violently against shafts which caused power to be applied wherever the mind of man dictated. All mankind was accomplishing their desires by mechanical energy made in small amounts for individual purposes, and in large amounts transmitted over wires as electricity for the use of vast centers of population.

The sky always had its planes; the higher levels for the inter-city express service, the lower for individual suburban traffic—the roads, all of reinforced concrete, were often one-way roads, exacted by the number of machines in order to avoid continual collisions. While part of the world had taken readily to the

skies, the vast proportion had been forced, by insufficient development of the semi-circular canals, to remain on earth.

The automobile had developed as legs had atrophied. No longer content to use it constantly outdoors, the successors of Ford had perfected the smaller individual machine for use indoors, all steps being replaced by curving ascending passages. Men thus came to live within metal bodies, which they left only for sleep. Gradually, partly through necessity and partly through inclination, the automobile was used in sport as well as in play. Special types were developed for golf; children seated in autocars rolled hoops through shady parks; lazily, prostrate on one, a maiden drifted through the tropical waters of a Florida resort. Mankind had ceased to use their lower limbs.

With disuse came atrophy; with atrophy came progressive and definite changes in the shapes of mankind: with these changes came new conceptions of beauty-feminine. All this happened not in one generation, nor in ten, but gradually in the course of centuries.

Customs changed so laws changed. No longer were laws for everyone's good but only for the benefit of the automobilist. The roads, formerly for the benefit of all, were finally restricted to those in machines. At first it was merely dangerous to walk on the highways; later it became a crime. Like all changes, this came slowly. First came a law restricting certain roads to automobilists; then came a law prohibiting

pedestrians from the use of roads; then a law giving them no legal recourse if injured while walking on a public highway; later it became a felony to do so.

Then came the final law providing for the legal murder of all pedestrians on the highway, wherever or whenever they could be hit by an auto.

No one was content to go slowly—all the world was crazed by a desire for speed. There was also a desire, no matter where an automobilist was, to go to some other city. Thus Sundays and holidays were distinguished by thousands and millions of automobilists going "somewhere," none being content to spend the hours of leisure quietly where they were. Rural landscapes consisted of long lines of machines passing between walls of advertisements at the rate of 60 miles an hour, pausing now and then at gasoline filling stations, at road houses or to strip an occasional tree of its blooms. The air was filled with vapors from the exhausts of machinery and the raucous noise of countless horns of all description. No one saw anything: no one wanted to see anything: the desire of each driver was to drive faster than the car ahead of his. It was called in the vernacular of the day—"A quiet Sunday in the country."

There were no pedestrians; that is, almost none. Even in the rural districts mankind was on wheels mechanically propelled. Such farming as was done was done by machinery. Here and there, clinging like mountain sheep to inaccessible mountain-sides, remained a few pedestrians who, partly from choice, but mainly from necessity, had retained the desire to use their legs. These people were always poor. At first the laws had no terror for them. Every state had some families who had never ceased

to be pedestrians. On these the automobilists looked first with amusement and then with alarm. No one realized the tremendous depth of the chasm between the two groups of the Genus Homo till the national law was passed forbidding the use of all highways to pedestrians. At once, all over the United States, the revolt of the Walkers began. Although Bunker Hill was hundreds of years away, the spirit of Bunker Hill survived, and the prohibition of walking on the roads only increased the desire to do so. More pedestrians than ever were accidentally killed. Their families retaliated by using every effort to make automobiling unpleasant and dangerous—nails, tacks, glass, logs, barbed wire, huge rocks were used as weapons. In the Ozarks, backwoodsmen took delight in breaking windshields and puncturing tires with well-directed rifle shots. Others walked the roads and defied the automobilists. Had the odds been equal, a condition of anarchy would have resulted, being unequal, the pedestrians were simply a nuisance. Class-consciousness reached its acme when Senator Glass of New York rose in the Senate Chambers and said in part:

"A race that ceases to develop must die out. For centuries mankind has been on wheels, and thus has advanced towards a state of mechanical perfection. The pedestrian, careless of his inherent right to ride, has persisted not only in walking, but even has gone so far as to claim equal rights with the higher type of automobilists. Patience has ceased to be a virtue. Nothing more can be done for these miserable degenerates of our race. The kindest thing to do now is to inaugurate a process of extermination. Only thus can we prevent a continuation of the disorders which have marked the otherwise uniform peaceful history of our fair land. There is, therefore, nothing for me to do save to urge the passage of the 'Pedestrian

Extermination Act.' This as you know provides for the instant death of all pedestrians wherever and whenever they are found by the Constabulary of each state. The last census shows there are only about ten thousand left and these are mostly in a few of the mid-western states. I am proud to state that my own constituency, which up to yesterday had only one pedestrian, an old man over 90 years of age, has now a clear record. A telegram just received states that fortunately he tottered on a public road in a senile effort to visit his wife's grave and was instantly killed by an automobilist. But though New York has at present none of these vile degenerates, we are anxious to aid our less fortunate states."

The law was instantly passed, being opposed only by the senators from Kentucky, Tennessee and Arkansas. To promote interest, a bounty was placed on each pedestrian killed. A silver star was given to each county reporting complete success. A gold star to each state containing only autoists. The pedestrian, like the carrier pigeon, was doomed.

It is not to be expected that the extermination was immediate or complete. There was some unexpected resistance. It had been in effect one year when the pedestrian child swore vengeance on the mechanical means of destroying humanity.

Sunday afternoon a hundred years later, the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia was filled with the usual throng of pleasure seekers, each in his own auto-car. Noiselessly, on rubber-tired wheels, they journeyed down the

long aisles, pausing now and then before this exhibit or that which attracted their individual attention. A father was taking his little boy through and each was greatly interested: the boy in the new world of wonders, the father in the boy's intelligent questions and observations. Finally the boy stopped his auto-car in front of a glass case.

"What is that, Father? They look as we do, only what peculiar shapes."

"That, my son, is a family of pedestrians. It was long ago it all happened and I know of it only because my mother told me about them. This family was shot in the Ozark Mountains. It is believed they were the last in the world."

"I am sorry," said the boy, slowly. "If there were more, I would like you to get a little one for me to play with."

"There are no more," said the father. "They are all dead."

The man thought he was telling the truth to his son. In fact, he prided himself on always being truthful to children. Yet he was wrong. For a few pedestrians remained, and their leader, in fact, their very brains, was the great-grandson of the little boy, who had stood up on the hill with hatred in his heart long before.

Irrespective of climatic conditions, environment and all varieties of enemies, man has always been able to exist. With the race of Pedestrians it was in very truth the survival of the fittest. Only the most agile, intelligent and sturdy were able to survive the systematic attempt made to exterminate them. Though reduced in numbers they survived; though deprived of

all the so-called benefits of modern civilization, they existed. Forced to defend not only their individual existence, but also the very life of their race, they gained the cunning of their backwoodsmen ancestors and kept alive. They lived, hunted, loved, and died and for two generations the civilized world was unaware of their very existence. They had their political organization, their courts of law. Justice, based on Blackstone and the Constitution, ruled. Always a Miller ruled: first the little boy with hatred in his heart, grown to manhood; then his son, trained from childhood to the sole task of hatred of all things mechanical; then the grandson, wise, cunning, a dream-builder; and finally the great-grandson, Abraham Miller, prepared by three generations for the ultimate revenge.

Abraham Miller was the hereditary president of the Colony of Pedestrians hidden in the Ozark Mountains. They were isolated, but not ignorant; few in number but adaptive. The first fugitives had many brilliant men: inventors, college professors, patriots and even a learned jurist. These men kept their knowledge and transmitted it. They dug in the fields, hunted in the woods, fished in the streams, and builded in their laboratories. They even had automobiles, and now and then, with limbs tied close to their bodies, would travel as spies into the land of the enemy. Certain of the children were trained from childhood to act in this capacity. There is even evidence that for some years one of these spies lived in St. Louis.

It was a colony with a single ambition—a union of individuals for one purpose only; the children lisped it, the school children spoke it daily; the young folks whispered it to each other in the moonlight; in the laboratories it was carved on every wall; the senile gathered their children around and

swore them to it; every action of the colony was bent toward one end—

"We will go back."

They were paranoiac in their hatred. Without exception, all of their ancestors had been hunted like wild beasts, exterminated without mercy—like vermin. It was not revenge they desired, but liberty—the right to live as they wished, to go and come as they pleased.

For three generations the colony had preserved the secret of their existence. Year by year as a unit they had lived, worked and died for a single ambition. Now the time had come for the execution of their plans, the fulfillment of their desires. Meanwhile the world of automobilists lived on, materialistic, mechanical, selfish. Socialism had provided comfort for the masses but had singularly failed to provide happiness. All lived, everyone had an income, no one but was provided with a home, food and clothes. But the homes were of concrete; they were uniform, poured out by the million; the furniture was concrete, poured with the houses. The clothing was paper, water-proofed: it was all in one design and was furnished—four suits a year to each person. The food was sold in bricks, each brick containing all the elements necessary for the continuation of life; on every brick was stamped the number of calories. For centuries, inventors had invented till finally life became uniform and work a matter of push buttons. Yet the world of the autoists was an unhappy one, for no one worked with muscles. In summer time it was, of course, necessary to perspire, but for generations no one had sweated. The words "toil," "labor," "work" were marked obsolete in the

dictionaries.

Yet no one was happy because it was found to be a mechanical impossibility to invent an automobile that would travel over one hundred and twenty miles an hour and stay on the ordinary country road. The automobilists could not go as fast as they wanted to. Space could not be annihilated; time could not be destroyed.

Besides, everyone was toxic. The air was filled with the dangerous vapors generated by the combustion of millions of gallons of gasoline and its substitutes, even though many machines were electrified. The greatest factor contributing to this toxemia, however, was the greatly reduced excretion of toxins through the skin and the almost negative production of energy through muscular contraction. The automobilists had ceased to work, using the term in its purely archaic form, and having ceased to work, they had ceased to sweat. A few hours a day on a chair in a factory or at a desk was sufficient to earn the necessaries of life. The automobilist never being tired, nature demanded a lesser number of hours spent in sleep. The remaining hours were spent in automobiles, going somewhere: it mattered not where they went so long as they went fast. Babies were raised in machines; in fact, all life was lived in them. The American Home had disappeared—it was replaced by the automobile.

The automobilists were going somewhere but were not sure where. The pedestrians were confident of where they were going.

Society in its modern sense was socialistic. This implied that

all classes were comfortable. Crime, as such, had ceased to exist some generations previous, following the putting into force of Bryant's theory that all crime was due to 2 per cent of the population and that if these were segregated and sterilized, crime would cease in one generation. When Bryant first promulgated his thesis, it was received with some scepticism, but its practical application was hailed with delight by everyone who was not directly affected.

Yet even in this apparently perfect society there were defects. Though everyone had all the necessities of life, it was not true of luxuries. In other words, there were still rich men and poor men, and the wealthy still dominated the government and made the laws.

Among the rich there were none more exclusive, aristocratic and dominant than the Heislars. Their estate on the Hudson was enclosed by thirty miles of twelve-foot iron fence. Few could boast of having visited there, of having week-ended in the stone palace surrounded by a forest of pine, beech and hemlock. They were so powerful that none of the family had ever held a public office. They made Presidents, but never cared to have one in the family. Their enemies said that their wealth came from fortunate marriages with the Ford and Rockefeller families but, no doubt, this was a falsehood based on jealousy. The Heislars had banks and real estate; they owned factories and office buildings. It was definitely stated that they owned the President of the United States and the Judges of the Supreme Court. One of their possessions was

rarely spoken of, or mentioned in the newspapers. The only child of the ruling branch of the family walked.

William Henry Heisler was an unusual millionaire. When told that his wife had presented him with a daughter he promised his Gods (though he was not certain who they were) that he would spend at least an hour a day with this child supervising her care.

For some months nothing unusual was noticed about this little girl baby, though at once all the nurses commented on her ugly legs. Her father simply considered that probably all baby legs were ugly.

At the age of one year, the baby tried to stand and take a step. Even this was passed over, as the pedestricians were united in the opinion that all children tried to use their legs for a few months, but it was a bad habit usually easily broken up like thumb-sucking. They gave the usual advice to the nurses which would have been followed had it not been for her father who merely stated, "Every child has a personality. Let her alone, see what she will do." And in order to insure obedience, he selected one of his private secretaries, who was to be in constant attendance and make daily written reports.

The child grew. There came the time when she was no longer called "baby" but dignified by the name of "Margaretta." As she grew, her legs grew. The more she walked, the stronger they became. There was no one to help her, for none of the adults had ever walked, nor had they seen anyone walk. She not only walked but she objected in her own baby way to mechanical locomotion. She screamed like a baby

wild cat at her first introduction to an automobile and never could become reconciled even to the auto cars for house use.

When it was too late, her father consulted everyone who could possibly know anything about the situation and its remedy. Heisler wanted his child to develop her own personality, but he did not want her to be odd. He therefore gathered in consultation, neurologists, anatomists, educators, psychologists, students of child behavior and obtained no satisfaction from them. All agreed that it was a pitiful case of atavism, a throwback. As for a cure, there were a thousand suggestions from psycho-analysis to the brutal splinting and bandaging of the little girl's lower extremities. Finally, in disgust, Heisler paid them all for their trouble and bribed them all for their silence and told them sharply to go to Hell. He had no idea where this place was, or just what he meant, but found some relief in saying it.

They all left promptly except one who, in addition to his other vocations, followed genealogy as an avocation. He was an old man and they made an interesting contrast as they sat facing each other in their autocars. Heisler was middle aged, vigorous, real leader of men, gigantic save for his shrunken legs. The other man was old, gray haired, withered, a dreamer. They were alone in the room, save for the child who played happily in the sunshine of the large bay windows.

"I thought I told you to go to Hell with the rest," growled the leader of men.

"How can I?" was the mild reply. "Those others did not obey you. They simply autoed out of your home. I am waiting for

you to tell me how to go there. Where is this Hell you order us to? Our submarines have explored the ocean bed five miles below sea level. Our aeroplanes have gone some miles toward the stars. Mount Everest has been conquered. I read all these journeyings, but nowhere do I read of a Hell. Some centuries ago theologians said it was a place that sinners went to when they died, but there has been no sin since Bryant's two per cent were identified and sterilized. You with your millions and limitless power are as near Hell as you will ever be, when you look at your abnormal child."

"But she is bright mentally, Professor," protested Heisler; "only seven years old but tested ten years by the Simon Binet Scale. If only she would stop this damned walking. Oh! I am proud of her but I want her to be like other girls. Who will want to marry her? It's positively indecent. Look at her. What is she doing?"

"Why, bless me!" exclaimed the old man. "I read of that in a book three hundred years old just the other day. Lots of children used to do that."

"But what is it?"

"Why, it used to be called 'turning somersaults.'"

"But what does it mean? Why does she do it?"

Heisler wiped the sweat off his face.

"It will all make us ridiculous if it becomes known."

"Oh, well, with your power you can keep it quiet—but have

you studied your family history? Do you know what blood strains are in her?"

"No. I never was interested. Of course, I belong to the Sons of the American Revolution, and all that sort of thing. They brought me the papers and I signed on the dotted line. I never read them though I paid well to have a book published about it all."

"So you had a Revolutionary ancestor? Where's the book?"

Heisler rang for his private secretary, who autoed in, received his curt orders and soon returned with the Heisler family history which the old man opened eagerly. Save for the noise made by the child, who was playing with a small stuffed bear, the room was deadly still. Suddenly the old man laughed.

"It is all as plain as can be. Your Revolutionary ancestor was a Miller; Abraham Miller of Hamilton Township. His mother was captured and killed by Indians. They were pedestrians of the most pronounced strain; of course, every one was a pedestrian in those days. The Millers and the Heislers intermarried. That was some hundred years ago. Your Great Grandfather Heisler, had a sister who married a Miller. She is spoken of here on page 330. Let me read it to you.

"Margaretta Heisler was the only sister of William Heisler. Independent and odd in many ways, she committed the folly of marrying a farmer by the name of Abraham Miller, who was one of the most noted leaders in the pedestrian riots in

Pennsylvania. Following his death, his widow and only child, a boy eight years old, disappeared and no doubt were destroyed in the general process of pedestrian extermination. An old letter written by her to her brother, prior to her marriage, contained the boast that she never had ridden in an automobile and never would; that God had given her legs and she intended to use them and that she was fortunate in finally finding a man who also had legs and the desire to live on them, as God had planned men and women to do.'

"There is the secret of this child of yours. She is a reversal to the sister of your great grandfather. That lady died a hundred years ago rather than follow the fashion. You say yourself that this little one nearly died from convulsions when the attempt was made to put her in an automobile. It is a clear case of heredity. If you try to break the child of the habit, you will probably kill her. The only thing to do is to leave her alone. Let her develop as she wishes. She is your daughter. Her will is your will. The probability is that neither can change the other. Let her use her legs. She probably will climb trees, run, swim, wander where she will."

"So that is the way of it," sighed Heisler. "That means the end of our family. No one would want to marry a monkey no matter how intelligent she is. So you think she will some day climb a tree? If there is a Hell, this is mine, as you suggest."

"But she is happy!"

"Yes, if laughter is an index. But will she be as she grows older? She will be different. How can she have associates? Of course they won't apply that extermination law in her case; my

position will prevent that. I could even have it repealed. But she will be lonely—so lonely!"

"Perhaps she will learn to read—then she won't be lonely."

They both looked at the child.

"What is she doing now?" demanded Heisler. "You seem to know more than anyone I ever met about such things."

"Why, she is hopping. Is not that remarkable? She never saw anyone hop and yet she is doing it. I never saw a child do it and yet I can identify it and give it a name. In Kate Greenaway's illustrations, I have seen pictures of children hopping."

"Confound the Millers anyway!" growled Heisler.

After that conversation, Heisler engaged the old man, whose sole duty was to investigate the subject of pedestrian children and find how they played and used their legs. Having investigated this, he was to instruct the little girl.

The entire matter of her exercise was left to him. Thus from that day on a curious spectator from an aeroplane might have seen an old man sitting on the lawn showing a golden-haired child pictures from very old books and talking together about the same pictures. Then the child would do things that no child had done for a hundred years—bounce a ball, skip rope, dance folk dances and jump over a bamboo stick supported by two upright bars. Long hours were spent in reading and always the old man would begin by saying:

"Now this is the way they used to do."

Occasionally a party would be given for her and other little girls from the neighboring rich would come and spend the day. They were polite—so was Margaretta Heisler—but the parties were not a success. The company could not move except in their autocars, and they looked on their hostess with curiosity and scorn. They had nothing in common with the curious walking child, and these parties always left Margaretta in tears.

"Why can't I be like other girls?" she demanded of her father. "Is it always going to be this way? Do you know that girls laugh at me because I walk?"

Heisler was a good father. He held to his vow to devote one hour a day to his daughter, and during that time gave of his intelligence as eagerly and earnestly as he did to his business in the other hours. Often he talked to Margaretta as though she were his equal, an adult with full mental development.

"You have your own personality," he would say to her. "The mere fact that you are different from other people does not of necessity mean that they are right and you are wrong. Perhaps you are both right—at least you are both following out your natural proclivities. You are different in desires and physique from the rest of us, but perhaps you are more normal than we are. The professor shows us pictures of ancient peoples and they all had legs developed like yours. How can I tell whether man has degenerated or improved. At times when I see you run and jump, I envy you, I and all of us are tied down to earth—dependent on a machine for every part of our daily life. You can go where you please. You can do this and all you need is

food and sleep. In some ways this is an advantage. On the other hand, the professor tells me that you can only go about four miles an hour while I can go over one hundred."

"But why should I want to go so fast when I do not want to go anywhere?"

"That is just the astonishing thing. Why don't you want to go? It seems that not only your body but also your mind, your personality, your desires are old-fashioned, hundreds of years old-fashioned. I try to be here in the house or garden every day—at least an hour—with you, but during the other waking hours I want to go. You do the strangest things. The professor tells me about it all. There is your bow and arrow, for instance. I bought you the finest firearms and you never use them, but you get a bow and arrow from some museum and finally succeed in killing a duck, and the professor said you built a fire out of wood and roasted it and ate it. You even made him eat some."

"But it was good, father—much better than the synthetic food. Even the professor said the juice made him feel younger."

Heisler laughed, "You are a savage—nothing more than a savage."

"But I can read and write!"

"I admit that. Well, go ahead and enjoy yourself. I only wish I could find another savage for you to play with, but there are no more."

"Are you sure?"

"As much so as I can be. In fact, for the last five years my agents have been scouring the civilized world for a pedestrian colony. There are a few in Siberia and the Tartar Plateau, but they are impossible. I would rather have you associate with apes."

"I dream of one, father," whispered the girl shyly. "He is a nice boy and he can do everything I can. Do dreams ever come true?"

Heisler smiled. "I trust this one will, and now I must hurry back to New York. Can I do anything for you?"

"Yes—find some one who can teach me how to make candles."

"Candles? Why, what are they?"

She ran and brought an old book and read it to him. It was called, "The Gentle Pirate," and the hero always read in bed by candle light.

"I understand," he finally said as he closed the book. "I remember now that I once read of their having something like that in the Catholic Churches. So you want to make some? See the professor and order what you need. Hum—candles—why, they would be handy at night if the electricity failed, but then it never does."

"But I don't want electricity. I want candles and matches to light them with."

"Matches?"

"Oh, father! In some ways you are ignorant. I know lots of words you don't, even though you are so rich."

"I admit it. I will admit anything and we will find how to make your candles. Shall I send you some ducks?"

"Oh, no. It is so much more fun to shoot them."

"You are a real barbarian!"

"And you are a dear ignoramus."

So it came to pass that Margaretta Heisler reached her seventeenth birthday, tall, strong, agile, brown from constant exposure to wind and sun, able to run, jump, shoot accurately with bow and arrow, an eater of meat, a reader of books by candle light, a weaver of carpets and a lover of nature. Her associates had been mainly elderly men: only occasionally would she see the ladies of the neighborhood. She tolerated the servants, the maids and housekeeper. The love she gave her father she also gave to the old professor, but he had taught her all she knew and the years had made him senile and sleepy.

There came to her finally the urge to travel. She wanted to see New York with its twenty million automobilists; its hundred story office buildings; its smokeless factories; its standardized houses. There were difficulties in the way of such a trip, and no one knew these better than her father. The roads were impossible and all of New York was now either streets or houses. There being no pedestrians, there was no need of sidewalks. Besides, even Heisler's wealth would not be able to

prevent the riot sure to result from the presence in a large city of such a curiosity as a pedestrian. Heisler was powerful, but he dreaded the result of allowing his daughter the freedom of New York. Furthermore, up to this time, her deformity was known only to a few. Once she was in New York, the city papers would publish his disgrace to the world.

Several of the office buildings in New York City were one hundred stories high. There were no stairways but as a safety precaution circular spiral ramps had been built in each structure for the use of autocars in case the elevators failed to work. This, however, never happened, and few of the tenants ever knew of their existence. They were used at night by the scrub women busily autocarring from one floor to another cleaning up. The higher the floor the purer was the air and the more costly was the yearly rental. Below, in the canyon and the street, an ozone machine was necessary every few feet to purify the air and make unnecessary the use of gas masks. On the upper floors, however, there were pure breezes from off the Atlantic. Noticeable was the absence of flies and mosquitoes; pigeons built their nests in the crevices, and on the highest roof a pair of American eagles nested year after year in haughty defiance of the mechanical auto, a thousand feet below.

It was in the newest building in New York and on the very highest floor that a new office was opened. On the door was the customary gilded sign. "New York Electrical Co." Boxes had been left there, decorators had embellished the largest room, the final result being that it was simply a standardized

office. A stenographer had been installed and sat at a noiseless machine, answering, if need be, the automatic telephone.

To this roomy suite one day in June came, by invitation, a dozen of the leaders of industry. They came, each thinking he was the only one invited to the conference. Surprise as well as suspicion was the marked feature of the meeting. There were three men there who were secretly and independently trying to undermine Heisler and tear him from his financial throne. Heisler himself was there, apparently quiet, but inwardly a seething flame of repressed electricity. The stenographer seated them as they arrived, in order around a long table. They remained in their autocars. No one used chairs. One or two of the men joked with each other. All nodded to Heisler, but none spoke to him.

The furniture, surroundings, stenographer were all part of the standard office in the business section. Only one small portion of the room aroused their curiosity. At the head of the table was an arm chair. None of the men around the table had ever used a chair; none had seen one save in the Metropolitan Museum. The autocar had replaced the chair even as the automobile had replaced the human leg.

The chimes in the tower nearly rang out the two o'clock message. All of the twelve looked at their watches. One man frowned. His watch was some minutes late. In another minute all were frowning. They had a two-o'clock appointment with this stranger and he had not kept it. To them, time was valuable.

Then a door opened and the man walked in. That was the

first astonishing thing—and then they marveled at the size and shape of him. There was something uncanny about it—peculiar, weird.

Then the man sat down—in the chair. He did not seem much larger now than the other men, though he was younger than any of them, and had a brown complexion which contrasted peculiarly with the dead gray-white pallor of the others. Then, gravely, almost mechanically, with clear distinct enunciation, he began to speak.

"I see, gentlemen, that you have all honored me by accepting my invitation to be present this afternoon. You will pardon my not informing any of you that the others were also invited. Had I done so, several of you would have refused to come and without any one of you the meeting would not be as successful as I intended it to be.

"The name of this company is the 'New York Electrical Co.' That is just a name assumed as a mask. In reality, there is no company. I am the representative of the nation of Pedestrians. In fact, I am their president and my name is Abraham Miller. Four generations ago, as, no doubt, you know, Congress passed the Pedestrian Extermination Act. Following that, those who continued to walk were hunted like wild animals, slaughtered without mercy. My great-grandfather, Abraham Miller, was killed in Pennsylvania; his wife was run down on the public highway in Ohio as she was attempting to join the other pedestrians in the Ozarks. There were no battles, there was no conflict. At that time there were only ten thousand pedestrians in all the United States. Within a few years there were none—at least so your ancestors thought. The race of

Pedestrians, however, survived. We lived on. The trials of those early years are written in our histories and taught to our children. We formed a colony and continued our existence although we disappeared from the world as you know it.

"Year by year we lived on until now we number over two hundred persons in our Republic. We are not, in fact never have been ignorant. Always we worked for one purpose and that was the right to return to the world. Our motto for one hundred years has been:

'We will go back.'

"So I have come to New York and called you into conference. While you were selected for your influence, wealth and ability, there was present in every instance another important reason. Each of you is a lineal defendant of a United States Senator who voted for the Pedestrian Extermination Act. You can readily see the significance of that. You have the power to undo a great injustice done to a branch of American citizens. Will you let us come back? We want to come back as pedestrians, to come and go as we please, safely. Some of us can drive automobiles and aeroplanes, but we don't want to. We want to walk, and if a mood strikes us to walk in the highway, we want to do it without constant danger of death. We do not hate you, we pity you. There is no desire to antagonize you; rather we want to cooperate with you."

"We believe in work—muscle work. No matter what our

young people are trained for, they are taught to work—to do manual work. We understand machinery, but do not like to use it. The only help we accept is from domestic animals, horses, and oxen. In several places we use water power to run our grist mills and saw our timbers. For pleasure we hunt, fish, play tennis, swim in our mountain lake. We keep our bodies clean and try to do the same with our minds. Our boys marry at 21—our girls at 18. Occasionally a child grows up to be abnormal—degenerate. I frankly say that such children disappear. We eat meat and vegetables, fish, and grain raised in our valley. The time has come when we cannot care for a continued increase in population. The time has come when we must come back into the world. What we desire is a guarantee of safety. I will now leave you in conference for fifteen minutes, and at the end of such time I will return for an answer. If you have any questions, I will answer them then."

He left the room. One of the men rolled over to the telephone, found the wire cut; another went over to the door and found it locked. The stenographer had disappeared. There followed sharp discussion marked by temper and lack of logic. One man only kept silent. Heisler sat motionless: so much so that the cigar, clenched between his teeth, went out.

Then Miller came back. A dozen questions were hurled at him. One man swore at him. Finally there was silence.

"Well!" questioned Miller.

"Give us time—a week in which to discuss it—to ascertain public opinion," urged one of them.

"No," said Heisler, "let us give our answer now."

"Oh, of course," sneered one of his bitter opponents. "Your reason for giving a decision is plain, though it has never been in the newspapers."

"For that," said Heisler, "I am going to get you. You are a cur and you know it or you would not drag my family into this."

"Oh, H—! Heisler—you can't bluff me any more!"

Miller hit the table with his fist—

"What's your answer?"

One of the men held up his hand for an audience.

"We all know the history of Pedestrianism: the two groups represented here cannot live together. There are two hundred million of us and two hundred of them. Let them stay in their valley. That is what I think. If this man is their leader, we can judge what the colony is like. They are ignorant anarchists. There is no telling what they would demand if we listened to them. I think we should have this man arrested. He is a menace to society."

That broke the ice. One after another they spoke, and when they finished, it was plain that all save Heisler were hostile, antagonistic and merciless. Miller turned to him—

"What is your verdict?"

"I am going to keep quiet. These men know it all. You have heard them. They are a unit. What I would say can make no difference. In fact, I don't care. For some time I have ceased to care about anything."

Miller turned in his swivel chair and looked out over the city. In some ways it was a pretty city, if one liked such a place. Under him, in the city streets, in the bee-hives, over twenty million automobilists spent their lives on wheels. Not one in a million had a desire beyond the city limits; the roads connecting the metropolis with other cities were but urban arteries wherein the automobiles passed like corpuscles, the auto-trucks proceeded like plasma. Miller feared the city, but he pitied the legless pigmies inhabiting it.

Then he turned again and asked for silence.

"I wanted to make a peaceful adjustment. We desire no more bloodshed, no more internecine strife. You who lead public sentiment have by your recent talk shown me that the pedestrian can expect no mercy at the hands of the present Government. You know and I know that this is no longer a nation where the people rule. You rule. You elect whom you please for senators, for presidents; you snap your whip and they dance. That is why I came to you men, instead of making a direct appeal to the Government. Feeling confident what your action would be, I have prepared this short paper which I will ask you to sign. It contains a single statement:

'The Pedestrians cannot return.'

"When you have all signed this, I will explain to you just what we will do."

"Why sign it?" said the first man, the one seated to the right of Miller. "Now my idea is this!" and he crumpled the paper to a tight ball and threw it under the table. His conduct was at once followed by applause. Only Heisler sat still. Miller looked out the window till all was quiet.

Finally he spoke again:

"In our colony we have perfected a new electro-dynamic principle. Released, it at once separates the atomic energy which makes possible all movement, save muscle movement. We have tested this out with smaller machines in limited space and know exactly what we can do. We do not know how to restore the energy in any territory where we have once destroyed it. Our electricians are waiting for my signal transmitted by radio. In fact, they have been listening to all this conversation, and I will now give them the signal to throw the switch. The signal is our motto,

'We will come back.'"

"So that is the signal?" sneered one of the men. "What happened?"

"Nothing much," replied Heisler, "at least I see no

difference. What was supposed to happen, Abraham Miller?"

"Nothing much," said Miller, "only the destruction of all mankind except the pedestrians. We tried to imagine what would happen when our electricians threw the switch and released this new principle, but even our sociologists could not fully imagine what would be the result. We do not know whether you can live or die—whether any of you can survive. No doubt the city dwellers will die speedily in their artificial bee-hives. Some in the country may survive."

"Hello, hello!" exclaimed a multi-millionaire, "I feel no different. You are a dreamer of dreams. I am leaving and will report you at once to the police. Open your damn door and let us out!"

Miller opened the door.

Most of the men pressed their starting button and took hold of the steering rod. Not a machine moved. The others startled, tried to leave. Their auto cars were dead. Then one, with a hysterical curse, raised an automatic at Miller and pulled the trigger. There was a click—and nothing more.

Miller pulled out his watch.

"It is now 2:40 P.M. The automobilists are beginning to die. They do not know it yet. When they do, there will be a panic. We cannot give any relief. There are only a few hundred of us and we cannot feed and care for hundreds of millions of cripples. Fortunately there is a circular inclined plane or ramp in this building and your autocars are all equipped with brakes. I will push you one at a time to the plane, if you will steer your

cars. Obviously you do not care to remain here and equally obviously the elevators are not running. I will call on my stenographer to help me. Perhaps you suspected before that he was a pedestrian trained from boyhood to take female parts. He is one of our most efficient spies. And now we will say good-bye. A century ago you knowingly and willingly tried to exterminate us. We survived. We do not want to exterminate you, but I fear for your future."

Thereupon he went behind one of the autocars and started pushing it towards the doorway. The stenographer, who had reappeared as a pedestrian, and in trousers, took hold of another car. Soon only Heisler was left. He held up his hand in protest.

"Would you mind pushing me over to that window?"

Miller did so. The automobilist looked out curiously.

"There are no aeroplanes in the sky. There should be hundreds."

"No doubt," replied Miller, "they have all planed down to earth. You see they have no power."

"Then everything has stopped?"

"Almost. There is still muscle power. There is still power produced by the bending of wood as in a bow and arrow—also that produced by a metal coil like the main spring in a watch. You notice your watch is still running. Of course, domestic animals can still produce power—that is just a form of muscle power. In our valley we have grist mills and saw mills running

by water power. We can see no reason why they should not keep on; all other power is destroyed. Do you realize it? There is no electricity, no steam, no explosions of any kind. All those machines are dead." Heisler pulled out a handkerchief, slowly, automatically and wiped the sweat from his face as he said:

"I can hear a murmur from the city. It rises up to this window like distant surf beating rhythmically against a sandy shore. I can hear no other noise, only this murmur. It recalls to my mind the sound of a swarm of bees leaving their old hive and flying compactly through the air with their queen in the center, trying to find a new home. There is a sameness to the noise like a distant waterfall. What does it mean? I think I know, but I cannot bear to say it with words."

"It means," said Miller, "that below us and around us twenty million people are beginning to die in office buildings, stores and homes; in subways, elevators and trains; in tubes and ferry boats; on the street, and in the restaurant twenty million people suddenly realize that they cannot move. No one can help them. Some have left their cars and are trying to pull themselves along on their hands, their withered legs helplessly trailing behind them. They are calling to each other for help, but even now they cannot know the full extent of the disaster. By tomorrow each man will be a primitive animal. In a few days there will be no food, no water. I hope they will die quickly—before they eat each other. The nation will die and no one will know about it, for there will be no newspapers, no telephones, no wireless. I will communicate with my people by carrier pigeons. It will be months before I can rejoin them. Meanwhile I can live. I can go from place to place. The sound you hear from the city is the cry of a soul in despair."

Heisler grabbed Miller's hand convulsively. "But if you made it stop, you can make it start?"

"No—we stopped it with electricity. There is now no more electricity. I presume our own machines were at once put out of power."

"So we are going to die?"

"I believe so. Perhaps your scientists can invent a remedy. We did a hundred years ago. We lived. Your nation tried by every known scientific art to destroy us, but we lived. Perhaps you can. How can I tell? We wanted to arbitrate. All we asked for was equality. You saw how those other men voted and how they thought. If they had had the power, they would instantly have destroyed my little colony. What we did was simply done in self-protection."

Heisler tried to light his cigar. The electric lighter would not work, so he held it dry in his mouth, in one corner, chewing it.

"You say your name is Abraham Miller? I believe we are cousins of some sort. I have a book that tells about it."

"I know all about that. Your great-grandfather and my great-grandmother were brother and sister."

"I believe that is what the professor said, except that at that time we did not know about you. What I want to talk about, however, is my daughter."

The two men talked on and on. The murmur continued to mount from the city, unceasing, incessant, full of notes new to the present generation. Yet at the distance—from the earth below to the hundredth story above, it was all one sound. Though composed of millions of variants, it blended into unity. Miller finally began walking up and down, from one office wall to the window and back again.

"I thought no one more free from nerves than I was. My whole life has been schooled in preparation for this moment. We had right, justice, even our forgotten God on our side. I still can see no other way, no other way, but this makes me sick, Heisler; it nauseates me. When I was a boy I found a mouse caught in a barn door, almost torn in two. I tried to help it and the tortured animal bit my finger so I simply had to break its neck. It couldn't live—and when I tried to help it, it bit me, so, I had to kill it. Do you understand? I had to, but, though I was justified, I grew deadly sick; I vomited on the barn floor. Something like that is going on below there. Twenty million deformed bodies all around us are beginning to die. They might have been men and women like those we have in the colony but they became obsessed with the idea of mechanical devices of all kinds. If I tried to help—went into the street now—they would kill me. I couldn't keep them off me—I couldn't kill them fast enough. We were justified—man—we were justified, but it makes me sick."

"It does not affect me that way," replied Heisler, "I am accustomed to crushing out my opponents. I had to, or they would crush me. I look on all this as a wonderful experiment. For years I have thought about our civilization—on account of my daughter. I have lost interest. In many ways I have lost my

fighting spirit. I don't seem to care what happens, but I would like to follow that cur down the circular spiral plane and wrap my hands around his neck. I don't want him to die of hunger."

"No. You stay here. I want you to write a history of it all—just how it happened. We want an accurate record to justify our action. You stay here and work with my stenographer. I am going to find your daughter. We cannot let a pedestrian suffer. We will take you back with us. With suitable apparatus you could learn to ride a horse."

"You want me to live?"

"Yes, but not for yourself. There are a dozen reasons. For the next twenty years you can lecture to our young people. You can tell them what happened when the world ceased to work, to sweat, when they deliberately exchanged the home for the automobile and toil and labor for machinery. You can tell them that and they will believe you."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Heisler. "I have made Presidents and now I become a legless example for a new world."

"You will attain fame. You will be the last automobilist."

"Let's start," urged Heisler. "Call your stenographer!"

The stenographer had been in New York one month prior to the meeting of Miller and the representatives of the automobilists. During that time, thanks to his early training in mimicry as a spy, he had been absolutely successful in deceiving all he came in contact with. In his autocar, dressed as a stenographer, his face perfumed and painted, and rings on his

fingers, he passed unnoticed amid the other thousands of similar women. He went to their restaurants and to their theatres. He even visited them in their homes. He was the perfect spy; but he was a man.

He had been trained to the work of a spy. For years he had been imbued with loyalty to an enthusiasm for his republic of pedestrians. He had sworn to the oath—that the republic should come first. Abraham Miller had selected him because he could trust him. The spy was young, with hardly a down on his cheeks. He was celibate. He was patriotic.

But for the first time in his life, he was in a big city. The firm on the floor below employed a stenographer. She was a very efficient worker in more ways than one and there was that about the new stenographer that excited her interest. They met and arranged to meet again. They talked about love, the new love between women. The spy did not understand this, having never heard of such a passion, but he did understand eventually, the caresses and kisses. She proposed that they room together, but he naturally found objections. However, they had spent much of their spare time together. More than once the pedestrian had been on the point of confiding to her, not only concerning the impending calamity, but also his real sex and his true love.

In such cases where a man falls in love with a woman the explanation is hard to find. It is always hard to find. Here there was something twisted, a pathological perversion. It was a

monstrous thing that he should fall in love with a legless woman when he might by waiting, have married a woman with columns of ivory and knees of alabaster. Instead, he loved and desired a woman who lived in a machine. It was equally pathological that she should love a woman. Each was sick—soul-sick, and each to continue the intimacy deceived the other. Now with the city dying beneath him, the stenographer felt a deep desire to save this legless woman. He felt that a way could be found, somehow, to persuade Abraham Miller to let him marry this stenographer—at least let him save her from the debacle.

So in soft shirt and knee trousers he cast a glance at Miller and Heisler engaged in earnest conversation and then tiptoed out the door and down the inclined plane to the floor below. Here all was confusion. Boldly striding into the room where the stenographer had her desk, he leaned over her and started to talk. He told her that he was a man, a pedestrian. Rapidly came the story of what it all meant, the cries from below, the motionless auto-cars, the useless elevators, the silent telephones. He told her that the world of automobilists would die because of this and that, but that she would live because of his love for her. All he asked was the legal right to care for her, to protect her. They would go somewhere and live, out in the country. He would roll her around the meadows. She could have geese, baby geese that would come to her chair when she cried, "Weete, weete."

The legless woman listened. What pallor there might be in her cheeks was skillfully covered with rouge. She listened and looked at him, a man, a man with legs, walking. He said he loved her, but the person she had loved was a woman; a

woman with dangling, shrunken, beautiful legs like her own, not muscular monstrosities.

She laughed hysterically, said she would marry him; go wherever he wanted her to go, and then she clasped him to her and kissed him full on the mouth, and then kissed his neck over the jugular veins, and he died, bleeding into her mouth, and the blood mingled with rouge made her face a vivid carmine. She died some days later from hunger.

Miller never knew where his stenographer died. Had he time he might have hunted for him, but he began to share Heisler's anxiety about the pedestrian girl isolated and alone amid a world of dying automobilists. To the father she was a daughter, the only child, the remaining and sole branch of his family. To Miller, however, she was a symbol. She was a sign of nature's revolt, an indication of her last spasmodic effort to restore mankind to his former place in the world. Her father wanted her saved because she was his daughter, the pedestrian because she was one of them, one of the race of pedestrians.

On that hundredth floor kegs of water, stores of food had been provided. Every provision had been made to sustain life in the midst of death. Heisler was shown all these. He was made comfortable and then Miller, with some provisions, a canteen of water, a road map, and a stout club in his grasp, left that place of peace and quiet and started down the spiral stairway. At the best it was simply difficult walking, the spirals being wide enough to prevent dimness. What Miller feared was the obstruction of the entire passage at some point by a tangled mass of autocars, but evidently all cars which had managed to reach the plane had been able to descend. He paused now and

then at this floor or that, shuddered at the cries he heard and then went on, down, down into the street.

Here it was even worse than he expected. On the second the electro-dynamic energy had been released from the Ozark valley—on that very second all machinery had ceased. In New York City twenty million people were in automobiles or autocars at that particular second. Some were working at desks, in shops; some were eating in restaurants, loafing at their clubs; others were going somewhere. Suddenly everyone was forced to stay where he was. There was no communication save within the limits of each one's voice; the phone, radio, newspapers were useless. Every autocar stopped; every automobile ceased to move. Each man and woman was dependent on his own body for existence; no one could help the other, no one could help himself. Transportation died and no one knew it had happened save in his own circle, as far as the eye could see or the ear could hear, because communication had died with the death of transportation. Each automobilist stayed where he happened to be at that particular moment.

Then slowly as the thought came to them that movement was impossible, there came fear and with fear, panic. But it was a new kind of panic. All previous panics consisted in the sudden movement of large numbers of people in the same direction, fleeing from a real or an imaginary fear. This panic was motionless and for a day the average New Yorker, while gripped with fear, crying with fright, remained within his car.

Then came mass-movement but not the movement of previous panics. It was the slow tortuous movement of crippled animals dragging legless bodies forward by arms unused to muscular exercise. It was not the rapid, wind-like movement of the frenzied panic stricken mob, but a slow convulsive, worm-like panic. Word was passed from one to another in hoarse whisperings that the city was a place of death, would become a morgue, that in a few days there would be no food. While no one knew what had happened everyone knew that the city could not live long unless food came regularly from the country, and the country suddenly became more than long cement roads between sign-boards. It was a place where food could be procured and water. The city had become dry. The mammoth pump throwing millions of gallons of water to a careless population had ceased to pump. There was no more water save in the rivers encircling the city and these were filthy, man-polluted. In the country there must be water somewhere.

So, on the second day began the flight from New York—a flight of cripples, not of eagles; a passage of humanity shaped like war-maimed soldiers. Their speed was not uniform, but the fastest could only crawl less than a mile an hour. Philosophers would have stayed where they were and died. Animals, thus tortured, would quietly wait the end, but these automobilists were neither philosophers nor animals, and they had to move. All their life they had been moving, The bridges were the first spaces to show congestion. On all of them were some automobiles, but traffic is not heavy at 2 in the afternoon. Gradually, by noon of the second day, these river highways were black with people crawling to get away from the city. There came congestion, and with congestion, stasis, and with

stasis, simply a writhing without progression. Then on top of this stationary layer of humanity crawled another layer which in its turn reached congestion, and on top of the second layer a third layer. A dozen streets led to each bridge but each bridge was only as wide as a street. Gradually the outer rows of the upper layer began falling into the river beneath. Ultimately many sought this termination. From the bridges came, ultimately, a roar like surf beating against a rock-bound shore. In it was the beginnings of desperate madness. Men died quickly on the bridges, but before they died they started to bite each other. Within the city certain places showed the same congestion. Restaurants and cafés became filled with bodies almost to the ceiling. There was food here but no one could reach it save those next to it and these were crushed to death before they could profit by their good fortune, and dying, blocked with bodies, those who remained alive and able to eat.

Within twenty-four hours mankind had lost its religion, its humanity, its high ideals. Every one tried to keep himself alive even though by doing so he brought death sooner to others. Yet in isolated instances, individuals rose to heights of heroism. In the hospitals an occasional nurse remained with her patients, giving them food till she with them died of hunger. In one of the maternity wards a mother gave birth to a child. Deserted by everyone she placed the child to her breast and kept it there till hunger pulled down her lifeless arms.

It was into this world of horror that Miller walked as he emerged from the office building. He had provided himself with a stout club but hardly any of the crawling automobilists noticed him. So he walked slowly over to Fifth Avenue and then headed north, and as he walked he prayed, though on that

first day he saw but little of what he was to see later on.

On and on he went till he came to water and that he swam and then again he went on and by night he was out in the country where he ceased to pray continuously. Here he met an occasional autoist, who was simply annoyed at his machine breaking down. No one in the country realized at first what had really happened; no one ever fully realized before he died in his farm house, just what it all meant. It was only the city dwellers that knew, and they did not understand.

The next day Miller rose early from the grass and started again, after carefully consulting the road map. He avoided the towns, circling them. He had learned the desire, constant, incessant, inescapable, to share his provisions with those starving cripples, and he had to keep his strength and save food for her, that pedestrian girl, alone among helpless servants, within an iron fence thirty miles long. It was near the close of the second day of his walk. For some miles he had seen no one. The sun low in the forest of oaks threw fantastic shadows over the concrete road.

Down the road, ever nearing him came a strange caravan. There were three horses tied to each other. On the backs of two were bundles and jugs of water fastened stoutly but clumsily. On the third horse an old man rested in a chair-like saddle and at this time he slept, his chin resting on his chest, his hands clutching, even in sleep, the sides of the chair. Leading the first horse walked a woman, tall, strong, lovely in her strength, striding with easy pace along the cement road. On her hack was slung a bow with a quiver of arrows and in her right hand she carried a heavy cane. She walked on fearlessly,

confidently; she seemed filled with power, confidence and pride.

Miller paused in the middle of the road. The caravan came near him. Then it stopped in front of him.

"Well," said the woman, and her voice blended curiously with the sunlit shadows and the flickering leaves.

"Well! Who are you and why do you block our way?"

"Why, I am Abraham Miller and you are Margaretta Heisler. I am hunting for you. Your father is safe and he sent me for you."

"And you are a pedestrian?"

"Just as truly as you are!" and so on and on——

The professor woke from his nap. He looked down on the young man and woman, standing, talking, already forgetting that there was anything else in the world.

"Now, that is the way it was in the old days," mused the professor to himself.

It was a Sunday afternoon some hundred years later. A father and his little son were sightseeing in the Museum of Natural Sciences in the reconstructed city of New York. The whole city was now simply a vast museum. Folks went there to see it but no one wanted to live there. In fact, no one wanted to live in such a place as a city when he could live on a farm.

It was a part of every child's education to spend a day or more in an automobilist's city, so on this Sunday afternoon the father and his little son walked slowly through the large buildings. They saw the mastodon, the bison, the pterodactyl. They paused for some time before a glass case containing a wigwam of the American Indian with a typical Indian family. Finally they came to a large wagon, on four rubber wheels, but there was no shaft and no way that horses or oxen could be harnessed to it. In the wagon on seats were men, women and little children. The boy looked at them curiously and pulled at his father's sleeve.

"Look, daddy. What are that wagon and those funny people without legs. What does it mean?"

"That my son is a family of automobilists," and there and then he paused and gave his son the little talk that all pedestrian fathers are required by law to give to their children.

THE END

[The end of *The Revolt of the Pedestrians* by David H. Keller]