

**THE FOREST FARM:  
TALES OF THE  
AUSTRIAN TYROL**

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The forest farm: tales of the Austrian Tyrol by Peter Rosegger

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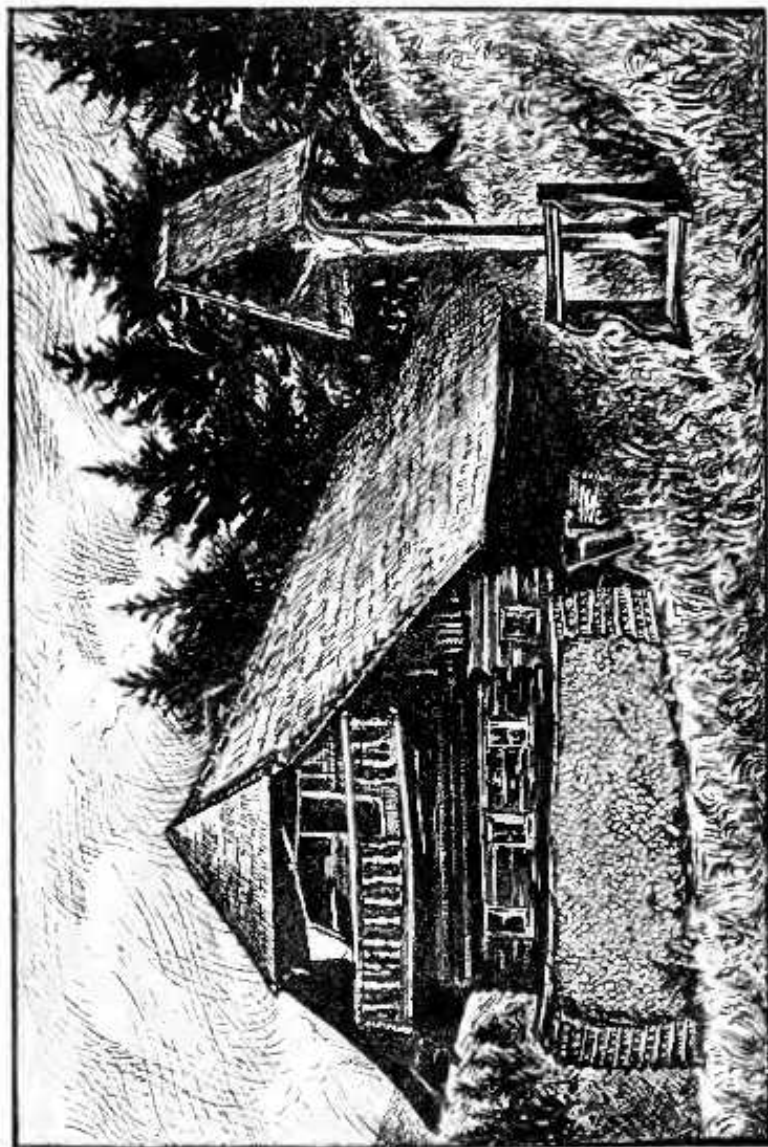
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**PETER ROSEGGER**

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*Frontispiece.*

THE FOREST FARM.

[Drawn by Misses A. & S.]

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# The Forest Farm

*Tales of the Austrian Tyrol*

By

Peter Rosegger

With an Appreciation by Maude Egerton King  
And a Biographical Note by Dr. Julius Petersen



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## Rosegger : An Appreciation

THE unmistakable trend of our time is the civilisation —which, in its modern form, is largely urbanisation —of the whole habitable globe. From its centres outwards it is thrusting itself upon places, men, processes—ultimate sanctuaries, never before reached by alien trespassing. Most men are looking on at its destruction of the old order with shrugging acceptance of the inevitable, or hailing the chaotic stuff of the new in its making with so far unjustified joy. With a wit worn somewhat threadbare with use they invariably counsel the few eccentrics who deny its inevitability and question its beneficence to quit the hopes and mops of Mrs. Partington for the discreet submission of the wiser Canute. Then they grow properly grave, and declare that this modern civilisation, for all its shortcomings, has been well described as a banquet, the like of which, for those below as for those above the salt, has never been spread before. However that may be, there is no question that here and there a guest is sometimes moved to look round on the company and scan its several types with a sudden sense of their significance. Some of these, good and bad, are common to all late civilisations, he perceives, others as hatefully peculiar to our own as certain diseases. Where, in God's name, were there ever till now men like these, who bend a complaisant spectacled gaze on a world going under, content if they may but first secure their museum sample (including one carefully chosen, perfectly embalmed, stuffed

and catalogued peasant) of every species? Or their younger kindred—men whose intellect obeys no inspiration save curiosity nor law save its own limit, whose inventions, therefore, cannot foster good and beauty but only spoil these in Nature and men's souls? As for that splendid group beyond, one may question if Athens, Rome, or Byzantium, whose sumptuous culture of brain and body achieved an almost criminal comeliness by Christian standards, ever equalled them: question, too, whether their selfish perfection or the travesty of it in this mob of women dull with luxury, of men brutalised by the scramble of getting it for them—be less desirable for the race! Thankfully his eye passes from them to those who turn such a cold shoulder upon their vulgarity: a little company, fine-edged, polished and flexible with perpetual fence of wit and word, hardly peculiar to our day perhaps, but rather such as might have played their irresponsible game on the eve of any red revolution. Now and again they lend an amused ear to various gassy gospels over the way, where, as he perceives, he is once more among the children of this latter day alone: notably certain insignificances who, because they have raised their self-indulgence to the dignity of a problem play, are solemnly mistaking themselves (as actors and audience too) for pioneers of social progress; and some earnest women who have slammed the front door on their nearest and dearest stay-at-home duties and privileges, to go questing after problematical rights. It looks, too, as if the same types, modified for worse and better by class conditions, were repeated below the salt; but there the multitude is so great that the individuals are soon lost in a far-off colourless mass—sometimes a menacing mass—by no means so content with stale bread as the others with caviare.

Is then this civilisation to become the universal order? he asks himself; and must the world it has laid waste be repeopled from these? The very fear of it summons a