

The Mountain Divide

his authority by rolling a tipsy fellow out of a seat and piling him up in a corner near the stove—which fortunately had no fire in it.

During all this time he had not said a word. But at the last, having placed the woman and the children in two seats and made them comfortable, he asked the mother one question—her husband's name. She told him, and, without any comment or good-bys, he left the car and started through the rain up-town.

After the train pulled out, the wind shifted and the rain changed into a snow which, driven from the mountains, thickened on the wet window in front of the operator's table. A message came for the night yardmaster, and the operator, seeing the head-light of the switch-engine which was working close by, put on his cap and stepped out to deliver the message. As he opened the waiting-room door, a man confronted him—the bearded man who had taken the woman and children to the train. Bucks saw under the visor of a cloth cap, a straight white nose, a dark eye piercingly keen, and a rather long, glossy, black beard.