

look in and hear the speechifying if Uncle Treve is to do it, and, after all that concession you will let me have a glass of brandy and water the last thing with my smoke on the quiet after supper, Katie?"

Bantering, teasing, as his words were, there was fear and gladness in her heart as she listened. But she sent him off with her ever ready bright smile, and not until after he had gone did she permit herself one quiet minute to grasp the meaning of it all—of what she had asked and of what he had promised. A 'flag of truce!' Thank God even for that; and she did thank him reverently, with bowed head and throbbing heart.

Punctually the five o'clock express drew up at the station, and Mr. Trevelyan Brooke, familiarly called Uncle Treve by his relations, instantly stepped out on the platform. Very alert, very much in the habit of taking note of every detail, and living in the present, was he. There was no hurry and equally no idleness about him. A capable man every inch of him, and people instinctively felt it. Even his nephew, Edgar Graham, felt it as he met him, and offered his hand. Mr. Brooke's clear eye glanced him over critically as well as kindly.

'Glad to see you again, Edgar,' said he. 'How is Kate?' She was pretty as good before she married you. I hope you have not spoilt her?"

Edgar Graham smiled as he shook his uncle's cordially offered hand. Certainly Uncle Treve seemed as if he were capable of enjoying life.

'Kate, as usual, is too good for me; but I am grateful that some get more than they deserve or I should fare badly. Kate will be waiting for us; are you ready, Uncle Treve?"

The way was not long, and soon the jovial guest was sitting with his young host and hostess at Kate's dainty tea table, enjoying the appetizing spread. It was spoken of as high tea, but Uncle Treve might be pardoned for thinking it would have been no discredit to call it by another and more imposing name. The three were merry enough, and even Edgar allowed to himself that this teetotal relation of his was provokingly good company. Mr. Brooke had a dozen capital stories ever on his lips, and each seemed better and more racy than its predecessor; and yet there was no manner of doubt but that he did an excellent practical part at the table, and was keen on every courtesy that could be bestowed upon Kate. So his nephew was constrained to admit that Temperance had not wrought deterioration in Mr. Trevelyan Brooke, and that at forty-five he was apparently just stepping into his prime. It was provoking for him to be his own best argument in favor of his principles, or so Edgar felt.

When the time arrived for starting for the hall where the meeting was to be held the lecturer took the fact as a perfectly natural and expected one that Edgar and Kate should accompany him, and again Edgar felt a curious irritation over the circumstance, an irritation that held other ingredients—amusement, a little injured dignity, and also an unacknowledged bit of satisfaction. He had meant Uncle Treve to understand that it was really a trifle condescending of his nephew to so far put aside all prejudice and be present at a temperance meeting; and yet it was curiously

good to feel that he thought Edgar far too much of a gentleman to do less than pay the tribute of courtesy to his guest. So Edgar's face was a study, and Kate's triumphant.

On entering the lobby one of the gentlemen of the committee looked with unconcealed amazement at Edgar Graham, and whispered distinctly to a colleague: 'There is Graham, of all people!"

And the other answered: 'Why, Trevelyan Brooke is his uncle; and he's staying with the Grahams, you know. The attendance is complimentary.'

Edgar and Kate both overheard these remarks, and they felt their color heighten a little as they passed on to the body of the hall. How ready people always were to discuss their neighbors' movements, Edgar thought, with a perturbed sense of unreality at the strangeness of his surroundings.

The lecturer was at his best, and Edgar found himself listening with a new feeling of interest in the bond which existed between him and the alert, well-trained, capable, courtly man on the platform. For the first time it occurred to him to acknowledge that this temperance business had some splendid and powerful advocates; men the world was forced to respect.

When the three returned home from the meeting they found Kate's supper table as dainty in its appointments and viands as the meal to which they had done justice earlier in the evening. Mr. Trevelyan Brooke was better company than ever. Edgar seemed to have absolutely forgotten the absence of those fascinating decanters and the gleaming contents of the spirit stand; but Kate, preternaturally sensitive on this point, observed Uncle Treve's quick critical glance, which compassed every detail of the table, and she knew that the whole of the time he was abnormally conscious of the omission. If it surprised him, however, he, with consummate tact, for which Kate mentally blessed him, utterly ignored the fact outwardly, and the talk flowed on in rippling, sparkling current. For half an hour after supper was concluded Mr. Brooke was still discussing some difficult political problem with Edgar, and with such warmth as to bring a keen flash of absorbed interest to the eyes of the younger man. Then he rose, and, with a cordial smile and bow, offered his hand to Kate.

'You will excuse me if I ask you to let me say good-night? I want to write a couple of letters before sleeping.'

The good-nights were hearty enough, then when husband and wife were both alone, Edgar went over and stood on the hearthrug, looking thoughtful.

'Uncle Treve is a fine fellow,' he said. 'Kate, has he referred to—to what you term our "flag of truce"?"

He gave a little embarrassed laugh. The day, the evening, had been so strange.

'Not by a word,' answered Kate, very promptly, thankful she could say so.

He sank into an easy chair with a relieved sigh, then silently filled and lighted his familiar pipe, yet he did it in a half-hearted way; or it seemed so to Kate. Meanwhile she wondered how far her duty and conscience claimed speech or silence. Was it, could it be, her duty to set before him the 'one glass' of alcohol which had been the mutually agreed upon compromise? She evaded the definite position

by taking an intermediate one, and asking Edgar if he wished her to do anything more for him before going up stairs. He hesitated a moment, then finally said 'No' to her question, and Kate left him alone. She knew the key of the sideboard, where the wines and spirits were kept, was in her dress pocket, and Edgar had not asked for it.

As for Mr. Trevelyan Brooke, when he had closed the door of his room he went straight over to a large lounge chair that looked peculiarly tempting to a tired man, and, sitting down, let his head rest motionless on the cushioned back and shut his eyes. A half-smile curved his lips. He was tired, and he knew it; but until that moment he had had other and far more important business in hand than the luxury of self-indulgence. He sat now, and the smile came unbidden as he remembered St. Paul's declared ambition to be 'all things to all men, lest haply he might win some.' Uncle Treve's business that evening had been to win his nephew. Edgar was worth winning. Had the first step toward it been taken? Mr. Trevelyan Brooke was wise, and he instinctively understood that Kate was wise, too. He felt that Edgar and Kate both needed help, and he wondered if he should know just how to help them. Then before writing his two letters, he opened his Bible, and his eye fell on the words—

'I will guide thee.'

It was enough. He read no more that night; and soon he was sleeping the deep profound sleep of health.

The bright joviality of the previous night was just as prevalent at the breakfast table the next morning. No one quite knew what made the meal so delightful, but the magnetic influence was undoubtedly focussed around Uncle Treve. As Edgar at length hastily rose to hurry away to his office, Mr. Brooke remarked that he must look up the trains to find a suitable one to take him back to the city. Edgar paused.

'You will not surely leave us to-morrow, Uncle Treve?"

'I had intended, indeed, arranged, to return this afternoon.'

'Stay and spend the week-end with us. Kate and I would be delighted.'

'This is extremely kind of you——.' He hesitated, then met Kate's eye. Was there appeal in it? He thought so. 'It will give me great pleasure to do so.'

'It will give us more to have you,' rejoined Edgar gaily, and he sprang off so that he might not be late at his post.

The days passed delightfully, and it was not until Sunday evening that Edgar referred to the absence of wine from his table. Then he entered on the warfare bravely, yet abruptly.

'Uncle Treve, do you believe from your very soul that all your enthusiasm about temperance is needed? Do you pile it on a bit because the fad has caught on with some, and certain quarters, and you are keen on being up-to-date, or——'

'Or do I do this thing from an honest conviction that in the great day the Lord will charge me with the stupendous and mighty reality of it, and ask at my hand the soul of my brother, my sister, and I do not dare to neglect my responsibilities?' asked Mr. Brooke, with subdued and impassioned intensity. 'Before God, I tell