

not only drove them in swift circles round and round his head in endless procession, taking his very breath away sometimes as they went, but they seemed equally intent on tormenting and goading and bewildering the handsome grays. The powerful creatures tossed their heads and strained every muscle to advance, as though they scorned the discipline of harness and the direction of their master's hand, and shook their snowy coats as if in pain and anger.

They swept past the first tavern with only a glance thereto from their driver; the second was not reached till after dark, but the intense cold led Wallace to wheel into the yard, and spring to the ground with all the celerity his benumbed limbs would allow. He not only felt that he must have liquor, but that he must have it steaming hot. The horses were restive and very impatient when he again mounted to his seat. The long miles of stinging, biting cold, with the bewildering, blinding snow, were having their effect upon them, well trained as they were. It needed a strong, steady hand to hold the spirited creatures in check now; and Mr. Wallace's was fast growing weak and unsteady, although he was in no wise conscious of this.

However, the heavy load and fast-increasing and clogging snow soon compelled the horses to moderate their pace somewhat. Soon they entered a dense wood, and for a mile and more there was less to impede their progress—less to torment man and beast. Wallace had sufficient consciousness left to understand that the moment they left the wooded section they would again feel the full effect of the storm. To fortify himself for the coming onset, he drained one of the two bottles he had supplied himself with in Boston; but his hands were too numb to replace it, so it slipped to the ground and could no longer testify to his foolish treat. Too stupid and benumbed to know the fool-hardiness of what he was doing, he tried and at last succeeded in raising the second bottle to his lips. He could not replace this, either; but it did not slip to the ground, it rested beneath his feet in the wagon.

It is possible that he reasoned, if his poisoned brain permitted him to think at all, that he was now fully prepared and braced to meet the blast and hold his horses in check. Just before the road left the woods the ground rose quite abruptly; and now, when the storm again burst upon them in all its fury, the horses reared and plunged, but could not well break into a run, not because they felt a restraining, guiding hand on the lines, but from sheer inability to drag the heavy load up the hill through the drifts.

But the instant they began to descend, the principal impediment was, of course, removed; just here, too, the road was swept almost bare. And, not hearing the customary word of command or guidance, they broke into a gallop and dashed down the short hill at a furious pace. At the foot of the hill was an abrupt turn. If Wallace passed this without losing his balance, he might yet reach home safely. Dimly perceiving the possible danger, dimly conscious that his grays were not behaving, he endeavoured to regain the reins which had slipped from his stiffening fingers. It was a fatal endeavour. There could be, in-

deed, but a slight lurch possible to a wagon so heavily loaded, yet, slight as it was, it turned the scales against the expressman's safety.

The horses turned swiftly to the right. He was leaning far over to the left; and when they now plunged forward, eager to reach the sheltering stable, only a few miles distant, no driver occupied the high seat. Wallace was left lying in the drifting snow by the road side at the foot of the hill.

But the grays could now manage very well without a driver. They now showed themselves equal to the praise bestowed upon them in the early morning. They entered the village in their usual way, only somewhat slower on account of the storm. The few men on the street saw nothing unusual through the blinding snow. The horses nearly stopped at the union store; but feeling no check, and hearing no command to that effect, they kept on until they reached Mr. Morse's manufacturing shop. Here they stopped of their own accord to leave the usual freight.

About half way between the store and this shop stood a pretty little cottage. When the sound of the heavy express reached the cozy sitting-room of this cottage, two little girls sprang from their seats by the fire and joyfully ran to the window.

"It's all snow! I can't see papa, nor papa's horses," said the younger, pressing her bright, rosy face against the frosty pane.

"I can, Lila! Here's a bit of a place where I can look out. And I can just see a great big thing going past—yes, it's papa's wagon."

"Lift me up, Edna! Let me see papa!" urged little Lila, who was her father's favourite.

"O, you can't see papa," answered Edna. "He's all covered up in the wagon, where it is warm. We'll get his chair and his slippers ready, and mamma'll get his supper."

Lila ran for the slippers, and Edna wheeled the easy chair to the warmest corner.

"Now, everything is ready, and we will go into the sitting-room and wait till papa comes," said Mrs. Wallace, a delicate looking little woman, her own cheeks flushed with gladness like the little daughters' happy faces.

"Isn't papa most here by this time?" said Lila, turning the slippers for the fourth time.

"It's so very cold and stormy maybe they can't unload as quickly," answered the mother, glancing anxiously at the clock. "Go and see if the coffee is boiling, Edna," she added pleasantly. "Papa will want it hot to-night."

Soon a stamping was heard at the door, and Lila cried out joyfully: "Papa's come! papa's come!"

Edna opened the door. She saw, not papa, but Mr. Morse. "Your father here?" he asked.

"No; I thought papa was over to your shop. He went by. He hasn't come back yet."

"The horses are standing there. I thought he must have stopped a minute here and let them come on alone. Sure he isn't here? Where's your mother?" Here Mrs. Wallace appeared.

"Wasn't Ferd with the team?" asked she, her delicate face paling.

"I haven't seen him. Very likely he stopped at the store for something. I'll go and see. It's only a step. Don't worry," he said, quite carelessly; yet

Mrs. Wallace imagined there was plenty of worry in his manner.

Clay Morse came home with the horses by-and-by. But he could tell them nothing of Mr. Wallace, he only knew that men were out searching for him.

Hour after hour passed, and still the storm raged. Every fresh blast seemed to congeal the blood in the veins of the delicate mother and child. They shiveringly drew nearer each other and the fire, and waited still.

Near midnight voices and steps were heard approaching, then the loud barking of Mr. Morse's Newfoundland dog. This roused Lila, and she sat up, rubbing her eyes. The door opened; there was the sound of hushed, confused voices—of heavy, unsteady steps, as though men were bearing some heavy burden; yet Mrs. Wallace still sat holding Edna's hand, incapable of speech or action.

Presently Mr. Rockwood entered the sitting-room and came to her side. The white faces and frightened eyes made him hesitate; but the men were waiting, and the truth, dreadful though it was, must be made known. He spoke at last, huskily:

"I'm very sorry for you, Mrs. Wallace." Then, holding Lila's hand—she had slipped to the floor and came over to him—he added gently, "They wish to lay him on the lounge."

Mrs. Wallace tried to speak, tried to reach and clasp Lila in her arms, but the effort was too much. She would have fallen to the floor, except for the minister's supporting arm. Friendly hands tried to draw the children away, but Edna would not leave her mother, and it was with great difficulty that Lila could be kept from her father's side.

There was great grief and consternation in the little village. No one called Mr. Wallace a drunkard. "One of our very best young men," one and another said. "A very sad thing!"

Mr. Rockwood, tender in his sympathy, could not listen in silence. "The liquor fiend never neglects an opportunity to take one of the best young men," he said to the crowd at the union store. "He especially delights in that. Many a fatal ending of life may be accounted for, as we all know how to account for poor Wallace's fate. I tell you not one man in fifty may trust himself to take liquor on temperate principles. True safety for all lies in total abstinence. Wallace never drank much at home, only on his trips. But behold his end!"

Even Mrs. Wallace had never apprehended danger from her husband's habit. And I think she never comprehended fully that her husband's own folly had torn him out of life and home so ruthlessly.

The trials of the widow's lot were meted out to her by a merciful hand.

The handsome grays did not "express it" alone to be sure, but they did much better for Mrs. Wallace, for they were the means of procuring her a home. Mr. Morse was so honourable as to offer the same price to Mrs. Wallace that he had to her husband, and the thousand dollars would just cover the cottage and land occupied by Mrs. Wallace, he said. And one day, much to her surprise, he handed her a deed of the place. He had far rather own the horses than the house, he told her; yet, undoubtedly, he appraised the place at the lowest possible figure, as he was a generous, whole-souled

man, even if not "radical on the temperance question."

He did even more; for he not only thus purchased the leaders, but found a good buyer for the other pair; and, through his influence and the activity of other friends, the remaining horses and various express and baggage wagons were sold to advantage. So, before Mrs. Wallace could hardly realize that she had a home for herself and little ones, Mr. Morse came again and placed in her hand fifteen hundred dollars as the result of the sales.

"You have been very kind, said Mrs. Wallace. "I wish I knew how to thank you."

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Ten years have passed; and Edna, who had inherited her mother's consumptive tendencies, has been laid to rest beside her father.

Lila has learned and understands the cause of her father's death; and her whole soul has risen up in righteous indignation that a trade in merchandise so deadly, so productive of a thousand woes worse than death, is permitted in this land, blessed with all that culture and religion can do. "O, mother," she says, "I cannot stand it in silence! Some day I shall speak or write what I feel. I shall tell, mother, why you are a widow, and why I have no father; and I shall never leave the people in peace until there is nowhere any traffic in the deadly stuff that cost my own dear father his life! People are good and kind, mother; it is only that they do not realize these things. But they will when they listen to me."

There are hot tears in Lila's eyes; there are great surges of grief in Lila's breast. But do you think it will make any difference in the "traffic" when Lila pours forth her soul in earnest words, and tells why her mother is a widow and she has no father?

#### The New Hope.

MEN of thought! be up and stirring  
Night and day:  
Sow the seed—withdraw the curtain—  
Clear the way!  
Men of action, aid and cheer them,  
As ye may!  
There's a fount about to stream,  
There's a light about to beam,  
There's a warmth about to glow,  
There's a flower about to blow;  
There's a midnight blackness changing  
Into gray;  
Men of thought and men of action,  
Clear the way!

ABOUT twelve years ago I presided over the North Georgia District Conference in Forsyth. One of the questions discussed was the extravagance of dress and jewelry. While the subject was at its height, the Conference adjourned. As I was to speak that night, and the people seemed to be interested in the topic of the day, I took it up. While speaking on the question of jewelry, Mr. Knight put me altogether out of argument by interrupting: "Don't trouble yourself about it, Bishop, it's all brass."—*Bishop Pierce.*

"WHERE are you taking me to?" asked a criminal, addressing the detective, who had just arrested him. "I am taking you to the office of the police superintendent," was the reply. "I wish to observe in this case, then," said the culprit, "that it is the office that seeks the man, and not the man the office."