

hoary heads against the frosty blue. It was the season still remembered in the North as the White Winter—the worst, they say, since the famous 1808.

For days together Jim Mason was stuck with his bags in the Dalesman's Daughter, and there was no communication between the two Dales. On the Mere Marches the snow massed deep and impassable in thick, billowy drifts. In the Devil's Bowl men said it lay piled some score feet deep. And sheep, seeking shelter in the ghylls and protected spots, were buried and lost in their hundreds.

That is the time to test the hearts of shepherds and sheep-dogs, when the wind runs ice-cold across the waste of white, and the low woods on the upland walks shiver black through a veil of snow, and sheep must be found and folded or lost: a trial of head as well as heart, of resource as well as resolution.

In that winter more than one man and many a dog lost his life in the quiet performance of his duty, gliding to death over the slippery snow-shelves, or overwhelmed beneath an avalanche of the warm, suffocating white: "smooored," as they call it. Many a deed was done, many a death died, recorded only in that Book which holds the names of those—men or animals, souls or no souls—who Tried.

They found old Wrottesley, the squire's head shepherd, lying one morning at Gill's foot, like a statue in its white bed, the snow gently blowing about the venerable face, calm and beautiful in death. And stretched upon his bosom, her master's hands, blue and stiff, still clasped about her neck, his old dog Jess. She had huddled there, as a last hope, to keep the dear, dead master warm, her great heart riven, hoping where there was no hope.

That night she followed him to herd sheep in a better land. Death from exposure, Dingley, the vet., gave it; but as little M'Adam, his eyes dimmer than their wont, declared huskily: "We ken better, Wullie."

Cyril Gilbraith, a young man not overburdened with emotions, told with a sob in his voice how, at the terrible Rowan Rock, Jim Mason had stood, impotent, dumb, big-eyed, watching Betsy—Betsy, the friend and partner of the last ten years—slipping over the ice-cold surface, silently appealing to the hand that had never failed her before—sliding to Eternity.

In the Daleland that winter the endurance of many a shepherd and his dog was strained past breaking-point. From the frozen Black Water to the white-peaked Grammoich Pike two men only, each always with his shaggy adjutant, never owned defeat; never turned back; never failed in a thing attempted.

In the following spring, Mr. Tinkerton, the squire's agent, declared that James Moore and Adam M'Adam—Owd Bob, rather, and Red Wullie—had lost between them fewer sheep than any single farmer on the whole March Mere Estate—a proud record.

Of the two, many a tale was told that winter. They were invincible, incomparable; worthy antagonists.

It was Owd Bob who, when he could not drive the band of Black Faces over the narrow Razorback which led to safety, induced them to follow him across that ten-inch death-track, one by one, like children behind their mistress. It was Red Wullie who was seen coming down the precipitous Saddler's How, shouldering up that grand old gentleman, King o' the Dale, whose leg was broken.

The gray dog it was who found Cyril Gilbraith by the White Stones, with a cigarette and a sprained ankle, on the night the whole village was out with lanterns searching for that well-loved young scapegrace. It was the Tailless Tyke and his master who one bitter evening came upon little Mrs. Burton, lying in a huddle beneath the lee of the fast-whitening Druid's Pillar with her latest baby on her breast. It was little M'Adam who took off his coat and wrapped the child in it; little M'Adam who unwound his plaid, threw it like a breast-band across the dog's great chest, and tied the ends round the weary woman's waist. Red Wullie it was who dragged her back to the Sylvester Arms and life, straining like a giant through the snow, while his master staggered behind with the babe in his arms. When they reached the inn, it was M'Adam who, with a smile on his face, told the

landlord what he thought of him for sending his wife across the Marches on such a day and on his errand. To which: "I'd a cauld," pleaded honest Jem.

For days together David could not cross the Stony Bottom to Kenmuir. His enforced confinement to the Grange led, however, to no more frequent collisions than usual with his father. For M'Adam and Red Wullie were out at all hours, in all weathers, night and day, toiling at their work of salvation.

At last, one afternoon, David managed to cross the Bottom at a point where a fallen thorn-tree gave him a bridge over the soft snow. He stayed but a little while at Kenmuir, yet when he started for home it was snowing again.

By the time he had crossed the ice-draped bridge over the Wastrel, a blizzard was raging. The wind roared past him, smiting him so that he could barely stand; and the snow leaped at him so that he could not see. But he held on doggedly; slipping, sliding, tripping, down and up again, with one arm shielding his face. On, on, into the white darkness, blindly on; sobbing, stumbling, dazed.

At length, nigh dead, he reached the brink of the Stony Bottom. He looked up and he looked down, but nowhere in that blinding mist could he see the fallen thorn-tree. He took a step forward into the white morass, and sank up to his thigh. He struggled feebly to free himself, and sank deeper. The snow wreathed, twisting, round him like a white flame, and he collapsed, softly crying, on that soft bed.

"I canna—I canna!" he moaned.

Little Mrs. Moore, her face whiter and frailer than ever, stood at the window, looking out into the storm.

"I canna rest for thinkin' o' th' lad," she said. Then, turning, she saw her husband, his fur cap down over his ears, buttoning his pilot-coat about his throat, while Owd Bob stood at his feet waiting.

"Ye're no goin', James?" she asked, anxiously.

"But I am, lass," he answered; and she knew him too well to say more.

So those two went quietly out to save life or lose it, nor counted the cost.

Down a wind-shattered slope—over a spar of ice—up an eternal hill—a forlorn hope.

In a whirlwind chaos of snow, the tempest storming at them, the white earth lashing them, they fought a good fight. In front, Owd Bob, the snow clogging his shaggy coat, his hair cutting like lashes of steel across his eyes, his head lowered as he followed the finger of God; and close behind, James Moore, his back stern against the storm, stalwart still, yet swaying like a tree before the wind.

So they battled through to the brink of the Stony Bottom—only to arrive too late.

For, just as the Master, peering about him, had caught sight of a shapeless lump lying motionless in front, there loomed across the snow-choked gulf through the white riot of the storm a gigantic figure, forging doggedly forward, his great head down to meet the hurricane. And close behind, buffeted and bruised, stiff and staggering, a little dauntless figure holding stubbornly on, clutching with one hand at the gale; and a shrill voice, whirled away on the trumpet tones of the wind, crying:

"Noo, Wullie, wi' me!"

"Scots wha' hae wi' Wallace bled! Scots wham Bruce has often led! Welcome to——!"

Here he is, Wullie!

"—or to victorie!"

The brave little voice died away. The quest was over; the lost sheep found. And the last James Moore saw of them was the same small, gallant form, half carrying, half dragging the rescued boy out of the Valley of the Shadow and away.

David was none the worse for his adventure, for on reaching home M'Adam produced a familiar bottle.

"Here's something to warm yer inside, and"—making a feint at the strap on the wall—"here's something to do the same by yer—But, Wullie, oot again!"

And out they went—unreckoned heroes.

It was but a week later, in the very



## Best Bread in the World

is none too good for the man who needs daily vim and vigor.

## PURITY FLOUR

is the most health-giving, vitalizing Bread Flour ever produced by modern milling methods from selected Western Canada Hard Wheat. Besides, it is

**Absolutely Dependable in the Baking**

Sold Everywhere in  
The Great Dominion

WESTERN CANADA FLOUR MILLS CO., LIMITED  
Mills at  
Winnipeg, Coderich and Brandon

## ATTENTION

to detail in the making of any article of food is most important. In the milling of flour it is *ev-rything*. The slightest carelessness or neglect in any one process results in a poor flour. **"Five Roses" Flour** is tested and re-tested at every stage of its milling, and this care, and the scientific methods used throughout our mills, guarantees a perfection of quality not to be found in any ordinary brands.

Ask your grocer for a 7-lb. bag to-day.

LAKE OF THE WOODS MILLING CO.,  
LIMITED.

## POTASH means PROFIT

It has been conclusively demonstrated by the world's leading agricultural scientists that a readily available supply of Potash is indispensable to the production of maximum yields of FRUIT AND ALL FARM CROPS of FIRST-RATE QUALITY, a fact which the progressive Canadian farmer of to-day cannot afford to ignore.

POTASH in the highly-concentrated forms of

**SULPHATE of POTASH or MURIATE of POTASH** can be procured from leading fertilizer dealers, and may be applied (along with a phosphatic manure) either in the Fall or early Spring.

The Fall application of POTASH and PHOSPHATE in Europe has been carried out with very satisfactory results.

For TOBACCO, POTATOES and SUGAR-BEETS, apply **Sulphate of Potash**.

For other farm crops, as well as IN THE ORCHARD, **Muriate of Potash** will give admirable results.

Pamphlets treating of the cultivation and fertilization of all crops on the farm will be sent FREE on application.

The Dominion Agricultural Offices of the Potash  
Syndicate, 3 Holbrook Chambers, Ottawa, Ont.

When Writing Advertisers Please Mention Advocate