

they both were seated. John munched slowly at first and, despite his hunger, soon forebore to eat at all. His stomach turned seeing his father sitting opposite him at that board. Sitting? Nay, lying over his plate, scooping the contents into his mouth held low over it, and then bawling for more.

John slipped into the stuffy passage and saw himself to the stowing of the goods, then arriving at the inn, in the bottom of the cart, also to the harnessing. A little shamefaced he bade the boy who waited on his father to ply him speedily with all the viands for which he might call. The more the father ate here the less he would need at home, and the mother might have a less terrible night of it; for John knew too well the scene that would ensue if, as she cooked and the husband swallowed, there came a too lengthy pause with empty plate.

Here, in the Bideford inn, alone with his father, instead of at home, John felt first and in a superlative, heartbreaking degree, sympathy with his mother.

At last they were in the cart and away, homeward bound.

As they crawled up High Street, perhaps it was due to the meal (or meals) that Upcott had just swallowed, the drunkard began to perceive and have a kind of clearer vision of his surroundings. Now they came upon a ghastly spectacle. The horse, despite the hill-climb, swerved to the side, but Upcott checked the curse on his tongue, risen at his son's faulty driving, for he, too, jibbed that moment, like the horse, seeing what it had seen.