

his friend. A few minutes later he was in the village smithy waiting while his horse was being shod.

"Hot work, Saunders," he said when the job was completed, as the smith wiped the beaded sweat from his brow and brawny breast. "Makes you thirsty, don't it?"

"Yes, that it do. I've drank about a gallon of water this morning," said the smith.

"Bad for your constitution, so much water. Take a drink of new cider—nice and cooling you know," and Jake handed him the jug.

"Don't mind if I do," said Saunders, and lifting the jug to his lips, he drank a long and copious draught.

"Tastes queer for cider," he said as he set down the jug and went on with his work.

"May be some of last year's wuz in the bottom of the barrel," said Jake, and taking another drink himself he offered it again to Saunders.

Scarce knowing what he did, the smith drank again and again, till between them the jug was emptied. By this time Saunders was visibly under the influence of the brandy. The slumbering appetite was aroused within him, and like a tiger that has tasted blood was clamouring for more.

It required slight persuasion to induce the half-demented man to accompany Jake Jenkins to the tavern to appease the insatiable craving which was rekindled in his breast.

"Come at last, have ye?" sneered Larkins, "I knowed ye couldn't stay away long. I'll set up drinks for the crowd, just to welcome ye back to your old friends. Come, boys!" and he gave each what he asked, except that when Saunders hiccupped out a request for cider, he filled his glass with brandy.

The unhappy man madly drank, and drank, and drank again, till delirium built its fires in his brain, and the scoundrel tempter sent him raving like a mainac to his home. As he reeled through the door of his cottage, his wife who had been singing gaily at her work, stopped suddenly, her face blanched white as that of a corpse, and she burst into a flood of tears. Her small home-palace, but now so happy, seemed shattered in ruins to the ground. The husband of her love, the father of her babes had become like a raging fiend. Those lips which that very morning