

far off. The horses advanced with difficulty. The travellers felt the cold under their thick furs. At four o'clock the west wind rose. It swirled between the rocky walls which bounded the way, raising the snow and blowing it into impalpable particles. Like frozen needle points they beat into the nose, eyes, ears, and stopped breathing, sight and hearing. The Lieutenant marched a little in advance of the two women. Tikraïne, advancing, said to him in a low voice: "I think that we are in danger. This is the commencement of a snow tempest. I have never seen one, but I have heard of them, and it is said to be terrible."

"What is the nature of the danger?"

"At first the animals refuse to advance, and the men blinded by the whirling snow cannot see two steps before them. All trace of the way having disappeared they are forced to remain where they are and wait by the grace of God the conclusion of the tempest."

"How long does it ordinarily last?"

"That varies. Sometimes two hours, sometimes two days," said the Armenian, becoming suddenly grave and affrighted with his own words. "They say that the simoom of Arabia is nothing in comparison."

At the same time the Lieutenant saw that the chief of the muleteers had stopped to confer with his men. Stewart, who had learned the Persian at Taurus, as well as his cousin, demanded what he did. "Why," said the muleteer, "Do you not see the *tipi*?" at the same time shaking off the snow which covered his beard and thick eye-lashes.

"What must we do?"

"We have no choice. Neither men nor brutes can make ten steps now, and in half an hour not that. If the storm continues we are in great danger."

Stewart went to tell the women that it was necessary to stop a little. Mrs. Morton, who had no consciousness of danger, descended from her mule with all the grace in the world, but Lucy had read some descriptions of these terrible storms. She comprehended the truth and turned pale. Stewart was sadly affected. To the sentiment of love was added that of responsibility.

The travellers in a caravan are as the company in a ship, and experience has traced the line of conduct which each should follow in these mountain tempests, as it determines the duty of