

'It's all down hill th' rest of th' way,' he said. 'I always give 'em a little breather here. You can get out an' walk to the level if you want to.'

'No,' said George Guthrie. 'I'll ride.'

'Th' road would be purty good of 'twasn't for th' bowlders, an' we ain't in no condition to stand a sudden jar. Gitap.'

The horses moved ahead, the driver holding them in firmly, his short figure thrust forward, his keen eyes on the road.

And then something happened. It was not the unexpected. Quite likely the old driver had carried the thought of this emergency down the hill with him many times.

As the team, firmly held back by Haskins, felt their way downward, the nigh horse suddenly slipped and fell. As the animal went down, Haskins, who was leaning well forward, was jerked from his seat, and half turning fell heavily across the sharp edge of the dashboard. He gave a low groan and turned white.

George Guthrie reached forward and drew the old man back to his seat, his hands still clutching the reins. As the driver dropped the fallen horse plunged forward. The plunge was so sudden that the reins would have been dragged from the old man's hands had not George caught them.

'Jump!' shrieked the old man. 'Jump for your life! Never mind me. Save yourself. In a moment more it may be too late. Jump!'

He clutched at Guthrie's coat, his face writhing with pain. But the young man did not heed him. His feet firmly braced, his stout young arms extended, he did his best to hold them in the roadway.

And the old driver crouched on the floor, moaning and praying.

The road wound along the side of the mountain and came out in the valley where the mining village lay. George Guthrie's tense gaze swiftly took in the possibilities that confronted him. If he could guide the frantic horses safely around the curve just ahead he might hope to quiet them down on the easy grade below.

And now they were close to the curve, and his arms stiffened and his grip tightened. And the old man on the floor looked up and caught sight of his face and cried out in terror.

George half arose and called to the team reassuringly. Instinctively his body swayed to one side as they struck the curve, the waggon careened, he fancied he heard the load behind him shifting, the old man cried out again and covered his face with his hands, there was a quick swerve as George swung the horses, and then they were on the almost level road galloping free.

It was half a holiday at the mines, and the main village street was filled with idlers. They gave way as the team came pounding down the incline, and stared in wild amazement at the tall figure gripping the reins.

'Cut them loose,' cried the stranger as he drew the team to a standstill.

George Guthrie stooped and lifted the old man to the seat.

'Haskins has been hurt,' he told them. 'A little brandy will revive him.' A flask was quickly passed up and pressed to the driver's lips.

'Lift me up,' he said to George.

'Men,' he cried, and his voice suddenly grew strong. 'You all know me, old Jim Haskins. I've been hurt, and I've rubbed elbows with death, and I've something to tell you. The horse fell on th' hill yonder an' the team ran away—ran away with all that death behind us—an' I was hurt an' helpless—an' this boy caught the reins away from me—he looked up—'caught th' reins an' gripped 'em fast, an' I cried to him to jump and save himself—an' he wouldn't do it, men—he wouldn't leave me—he clung fast to th' lines an' kept the team on th' road—an' me lying there helpless an' all that death behind us—an' he swung 'em round the curve, men—you know th' place—an' he brought the team down here.' His voice, which had faltered suddenly, grew strong again. 'Look at him, men,' he cried. 'This is th' lad that saved my life an' never thought of savin' his own! Look at him well, for he's your new superintendent—an' a braver man than Jack Barclay ever thought of being! Give him a mighty cheer of welcome, boys. Now!'

A wild roar went up from the excited throng as the old man, limp and trembling, fell back in George Guthrie's arms.

'You've won 'em, lad,' he gasped. 'It's all right now.'

—Cleveland Rain Dealer.

A SHRINE LAID WASTE

A motor car had just turned in to the courtyard of the big house that belonged to the famous deputy for the Department of Haut Tarn; and as it drew up at the steps, the deputy himself got out of it and passed quickly up to the glass entrance door. A footman, warned by the bell that the porter had rung to announce the arrival of the motor at the outer gate, stood ready to receive his master in the hall, where the thickness of the Turkey carpets, the richness of the Eastern hangings, and the pictures on the walls told alike of culture, taste, and lavish expenditure.

The deputy's study opened from this hall; and, crossing it, he entered the smaller room, where a bright wood fire burned upon the hearth. After laying the roll of papers that he carried on his writing table, he threw himself into a big armchair and stretched himself at ease, sighing as he did so, or rather drawing a deep breath of satisfaction.

He was tired, it is true; but, judging from his expression, his day had been passed in work that was worth the doing. It had indeed been a memorable day—a day of triumph unusual even in his successful career. He had made a speech in the Chamber of Deputies that would long be remembered. For nearly three hours he had held the attention of his audience; his flow of language had never failed; his well-chosen sentences had lashed his opponents unmercifully; the sound of the applause with which his own side had greeted his mocking, cutting words still echoed in his brain; and the faces of the Ministers rose before him, startled by his daring, triumphing in the work his oratory had done, yet half afraid that he might go too far and so spoil all. But this he had not done; he had not allowed himself to be carried away; and when at length he resumed his seat he and his party felt that their work of dechristianising France had made material progress.

'When first we started this campaign,' he murmured to himself, 'it seemed as though the very earth would rise against us, so deeply did the faith of twenty centuries appear to be imprinted on men's minds. But that was twenty-five years ago; now, after that speech of mine, we Rationalists have a different tale to tell. In spite of opposition, we have persevered; and gradually but surely we are destroying the religious sense of the people. The day is drawing near when the State will be the unrivalled mistress of the nation' (he almost laughed at his own thought), 'and I may be at the head of the State.'

He paused for a moment to consider himself on this pinnacle of fame and success, and then continued his train of thought:

'I am afraid that the women still cling to the old ideas. I know if my poor wife had lived we should have disagreed; in fact, I never could have succeeded in bringing Germaine up in the way I have done. She at least is above all foolish sentiment and superstition. I took care to see to that. If all our girls could only be brought up as she has been, France would soon be freed from all religious trammels. No religious books or emblems, no church-going; no intercourse with those who hold old-fashioned ideas, not even if they are relations, unless the governess chosen to carry out the scheme of education is present. I was certainly fortunate in finding one so up to date, so anti-clerical, I may say so anti-religious, as Mademoiselle to superintend Germaine's upbringing. Fancy nuns thinking that they could ever produce such a model as my Germaine! She is a living proof of the superiority of an independent, Rationalistic education—'

His reflections were interrupted by a gentle tap at the door; and, in answer to his permission to come in, the heavy curtain was raised, showing a girlish figure standing on the threshold. It was Germaine. Certainly any father would have reason to be proud of such a daughter. Tall and fair, slender and very graceful, her simple tailor-made gown fitted her to perfection, and its severity was softened by the ruffles of real lace upon her blouse. Her small head and delicately formed hands and feet were an inheritance from her dead mother; and, though outwardly there was no likeness to her father, those who knew her were not long in realising that she possessed no mean share of his talents.

When entering the room, she had turned on the electric light; and, drawing forward a low footstool, she seated herself beside the armchair.

'How late you are, father!' she said. 'You must be tired after such a long day's work. Don't say that I am selfish, but I hope you are tired, because I want you to say "Not at home" to visitors, and let me have you all to myself just for one night.'

'What is this sudden fancy for solitude?' said her father, smiling. 'Or are you trying to flatter me by pretending that you don't know which of us more than half our visitors come to see? Seriously, dear, I should often ask nothing better than to have a quiet evening; but, now that