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For years the Barbours of the West have applied towels dipped in hot water, to soften the beard BEFORE shaving, and thereby have been giving the best shaves.

Smith's Beard Softener Towellets are for the water by holding the heat to the face and overcomes all tendency toward pulling or irritation.

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"Some sense to a business like that."

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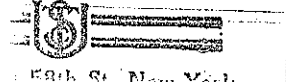
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For car owner cannot hope for better prices than other tires. You find the strength of United States in any other tire. Here in our four famous brands, G & J, Morgan & Wright and others, we have combined the best of all four. In the making of tires brought to bear the skill and peculiar points of which have made famous three others. No other tire could even presume to claim such elements of strength.

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UNITED STATES TIRE COMPANY



"The System"

By JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD

IT WAS not alone the fact that they were lost and that night was rapidly coming on that sent the strange chill into Graham's heart as he looked down from the crest of the ragged little mountain into the strange valley below. He held Hepzibah's little hand tightly in his own, and it was when he looked at her and saw how tenderly beautiful and wonderful she was that his fears struck him hardest. A hundred times since they had left Coulevan's humble cabin early that morning he had upbraided himself for bringing her along. He wished now that, instead of giving his plucky little bride this taste of the Tennessee wilderness, he had left her at home, back in New York.

Ten days before Graham had come down into this wildest and most lawless part of the Tennessee mountains to look over certain timber rights, and that morning Hepzibah had insisted on putting up a lunch at Coulevan's and accompanying him over one of the mountain trails. The first half-dozen miles she had traveled on a mule. Then they had tied the mule and continued their journey afoot. Until an hour before Graham had not told her that they were lost, hopelessly lost; and he kept to himself the fact that it was in that certain part of the mountains where a stranger carried his life in his hands. Three times that day he had seen thin trails of smoke rising from out of hidden places, where moonshiners were at work. Once, from behind a tree, he had caught a glimpse of a black-bearded face spying upon them, and had placed himself quickly between Hepzibah and the tree, so that she would not see. In that district three revenue men had "disappeared" in as many months, and the mountains were full of desperate men.

"If you ever get caught out alone," Coulevan had once told him, "don't stay at any one of the shacks you find in these hazy mountains. Sleep in the woods." And now he had Hepzibah! Unconsciously he held her hand tighter. Under other conditions he would not have worried about himself. He could fight and talk and run. But what if some of those savage men, with neither law nor God, should see the girl at his side? He shuddered and looked down. Never in his life had he seen Hepzibah prettier than at this moment, tired, flushed, her blue eyes almost filled with tears, her disheveled hair clinging in lovely gold and brown curls about her face and neck. Suddenly she looked up and saw the anxiety in his face, and tried to smile through the tears. "Oh, I'm so tired, Tom—and hungry!" He drew her up close to him, and with his lips resting on the crown of her shining head he stared over the valley. Twice, from far down in that menacing gloom, he had heard the bark

silence. The entire family was already turning out to see what had happened. There were four children, ranging in ages from two to seven years, and a short, thick, glum-faced woman, who gave Hepzibah a long questioning stare.

"They-uns is lost, old woman," announced Biggs. "They-uns want somethin' to eat an' a place to sleep."

"Huh!" grunted the woman. She led the way inside, followed first by Graham and Hepzibah, with Biggs, his offspring and three dogs trailing after. The entire cabin was made up of one room, and in that room was one bed. Hepzibah's grip tightened on her husband's arm. In spite of the unpromising appearance of things, Hepzibah never ate so heartily of anything as she did of the meal of corn cakes and bacon that followed. She grew cheerful and tried to make herself at home with her hostess; but to Hepzibah's sweetest smiles and pleasantest words, Mrs. Biggs's only response was, "Huh!" Biggs was as un-talkative as his wife, and the children slouched in the darkest corners. At last the meal was over. Mrs. Biggs shoved back the table and called her two youngest children to her with two snaps of her fingers. Without explanation she undressed them and placed them in the bed.

"Now you-uns go to sleep or Ah'll box yo'r 'eads off!" she said. In the unlighted gloom that now filled the cabin, Hepzibah pouted her pretty lips close to her husband's ear.

"I'm—I'm afraid—we're not going to have a place—to sleep," she whispered. Half an hour of wordless silence followed. Biggs puffed steadily at his pipe. Mrs. Biggs sat on a box, motionless. Not a whisper came from the two older children. The dogs were snoring in a corner. Finally Mrs. Biggs rose cautiously and went to the bed. She lifted out one of the children and deposited it carefully upon the hard floor near the wall. Then she lifted out the second and placed it alongside the first, without awakening either. She snapped her fingers again, and the two older children came from out of their corners. She placed them in the bed, as she had placed the first pair, and in a low voice Hepzibah heard her say,

"You-uns go to sleep, too, or Ah'll beat out yo'r gizzards!" For the first time Biggs spoke. "Force o' abit," he explained. "Them onery brats wouldn't go to sleep—till mawning if they-uns didn't go to sleep in the bed." Half an hour later Mrs. Biggs went through the same careful performance of laying out her children alongside the wall. "You-uns kin go to bed now if you-uns wants," she announced. Slipping off only her shoes and heavy skirt, Hepzibah



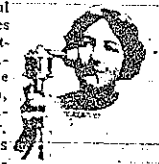
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It will chase away the years like magic. Every nerve, every fibre of your whole body will thoroughly tingle with the force of your own awakened powers. All the keen relish, the pleasure of youth, will fully thrub within you. Rich, red blood will be coursing through your veins and you will realize thoroughly the joy of living. Your self-respect, even, will be increased a hundredfold.

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It has seen thousands of tire... thousands have... of what a great army of other... learned before that it pays... dollars and cents to use... and this year thousands... experimenting for the same... it pays.

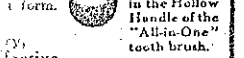
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"Oh, I'm so tired, Tom—and hungry!" He drew her up close to him, and with his lips resting on the crown of her shining head he stared over the valley. Twice, from far down in that menacing gloom, he had heard the barking of a dog. He heard it again now, and made up his mind. In his belt he carried a wicked little Savage automatic, and it gave him confidence.

"There's a cabin somewhere down there," he said. "Can you keep up long enough to reach it, dear?" Hepzibah lifted her head.

"Yes," she whispered, and looked down in the direction of the barking dog. He felt her shivering against him as she asked, "I wonder why people want to live in such a terrible place?" He didn't tell her why. Guided by the occasional barking of the dog, they descended the mountain. It was almost dark when they came into the edge of a little clearing and saw just beyond them a tumble-down shack built of crudely jointed saplings. Hepzibah gave a glad cry of joy. It was followed instantly by an ominous click, and there confronted them a tall, thin man, wearing a black slouch hat, and with a long-barreled rifle in his hands.

"Who's yo'?" he demanded. Graham stepped forward, and explained what had happened to them. "My name is Graham, of the Graham Timber Company," he added. "What is yours?" "Biggs, Biggs," growled the man, looking hard at Hepzibah. "Hungry, eh? Tired, eh? Bin in these parts afore?"

"Never, Mr. Biggs!" exclaimed Hepzibah. "Oh, please, please won't you hurry and get us something to eat?" "Huh!" he grunted, and turned toward the shack. They followed him in

the bed. "Now you-uns go to sleep or Ah'll box yo'r eads off!" she said. In the unlighted gloom that now filled the cabin, Hepzibah pouted her pretty lips close to her husband's ear. "I'm—I'm afraid—we're not going to have a place—to sleep," she whispered. Half an hour of wordless silence followed. Biggs puffed steadily at his pipe. Mrs. Biggs sat on a box, motionless. Not a whisper came from the two older children. The dogs were snoring in a corner. Finally Mrs. Biggs rose cautiously and went to the bed. She lifted out one of the children and deposited it carefully upon the hard floor near the wall. Then she lifted out the second and placed it alongside the first, without awakening either. She snapped her fingers again, and the two older children came from out of their corners. She placed them in the bed, as she had placed the first pair, and in a low voice Hepzibah heard her say, "You-uns go to sleep, too, or Ah'll beat out yo'r gizzards!"

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Half an hour later Mrs. Biggs went through the same careful performance of laying out her children alongside the wall.

"You-uns kin go to bed now if you-uns wants," she announced. Stipping off only her shoes and heavy skirt, Hepzibah lay down. Graham took off only his boots. He was uneasy. His fears grew deeper, and he made up his mind to feign sleep only, with a hand on his automatic. Hardly had Hepzibah's head touched the pillow before she was asleep. For a long time he listened to the medley of breathing. Out of the corner of his eye he could still see the glow of Biggs's pipe. That glow was the last thing he remembered before his own exhaustion overcame him.

A long time afterward he awoke. He was aroused by a sense of danger, a thrilling sense of something already having happened, of a knife poised above his breast. His hand touched something hard. It was not the bed, and a cold chill swept through him. In an instant he guessed what had happened. He had been struck while asleep and dragged to this place, wherever it was, for dead. Where was he? Where was Hepzibah? He reached out, and his hand touched only that same cold surface. He reached for his pistol. It had not been taken from him. He drew it forth, pushed down the safety and rose to a sitting posture. Then a cloud passed out from under the moon, and to his amazement he saw that he was still in the cabin. Along the wall he saw the row of children, then Hepzibah, peacefully stretched out beside them on the hard floor! And he was on the floor, nicely arranged a yard from Hepzibah! Their host and hostess were asleep in the bed! With a grateful sigh he sank back. After this he knew they were safe.

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