

level surface the wind whirled the snow in sheets. The path was in places entirely obliterated, and the horses floundered through the shallow drifts to reach again, on the other side, the tracks that were not yet covered. At last he reached the edge of the ice and soon entered the thick woods. Sheltered somewhat from the wind by the great snow-laden pines and hemlocks, Caleb did not realize how fiercely, the gale was raging, and the exertions of loading prevented him from being cold. By the time he started from the woods daylight was fading into darkness—not the heavy darkness of the forest when all is black; but the gray, empty darkness of a white snow-covered wilderness. The path had now entirely vanished and the driving snow hid from sight objects but a few yards away; still the man feared no danger for the way was familiar.

Caleb drove on to the lake and started on the three mile drive in the gathering darkness. As he left the shore everything except the team and the surrounding snow disappeared from sight. The wind seemed to come from all directions at once and drove the sharp cutting particles of ice first this way and then that, in hissing, blinding clouds. The cold was intense and penetrated to every bone. For a short time he made good progress, but as he advanced the drifts became larger and often times slight detours were made in order to avoid them. At last the sleds stuck fast in the snow and the tired horses were not able to pull them through. There was no way but to leave the load where it was for the night, so he climbed down from the sleds and attempted to unhitch the horses. But the buckles were frozen to the straps and his numbed hands were not able to loosen them, so he cut the traces and started on with the horses. He soon lost all knowledge of direction and only followed the horses, trusting to their instinct to lead them to shelter. The weary animals plunged slowly through the snow and Caleb followed in their tracks until it seemed as though they