Treddleford sat in an easeful arm-chair in front of a slumberous fire, with a volume of verse in his hand and the comfortable consciousness that outside the club windows the rain was dirpping and pattering with persistent puroose. A chill, wet October afternoon was merging into a bleak, wet October evening, and the club smoking-room seemed warmer and cosier by contrast. It was an afternoon on which to be wafted away from one’s climatic surroundings, and “The Golden journey to Samarkadns” promised to bear Treddleford well and bravely into other lands and under other skides. He had already migrated from London the rain-swept to Bagdad the Beautiful, and stood by the Sun Gate in the olden time when an icy breath of imminent annoyance seemed to creep between the book and himself. Amblecope, the man with the restless, prominent eyes and the mouth ready mobilized for conversational openings, had planted himself in a neighbouring arm-chair. For a twelvemonth and some odd weeks Treddleford has skillfully avoided making the acquaintance of his relentless record of tedious