

THE GREAT ASCENT

where that meeting took place. Yes, just about there!

Hullo! Something seen out of the corner of his eye drew his head round. Was it a bird? No—it was an arm of a support, arrived at before he was aware. Down ducked his head. He must not be so easy about it all. He must not try to pick out objects. A pretty position to be sight-seeing in!

As he passed over the bunk-houses of the Fraser Mine a man came out of one of the doors, saw him, called over his shoulder into the black interior and was joined by someone else, perhaps the cashier. It looked like his shape. Both shouted to him, but what they said he could not hear. Both pointed ahead, made unintelligible gestures. If they had only run up-hill, nearer to him, he might have heard the words, but they did not trouble to do so. They merely shouted and pointed. Yet when he looked in the direction they indicated he could see nothing to cause the excitement. The wires swung on to the next crest; that was all.

Perhaps they were only trying to tell him that he would be met at his journey's end by an irate boss. Perhaps they were warning him of the gulch ahead—that he had not seen but, as we know, of which he had heard. No matter. He was impelled to this escapade. Not all the irate bosses in the world were of any moment. The sudden falling away of the hill below him, in the other direction from the sweep he had met mounting, cautioned a reconstruction of his mental balances. He said to himself yet