

peril of being swept away, beneath the dripping rock, flung up a hand. His voice rang harsh and exultant through the sinking roar of the beaten river.

"We've cut the last ledge clean away," he said.

A great shout went up, and Nasmyth held out his hand to Laura.

"I owe it all to you," he said with a curious gleam in his eyes.

The men trooped about them both, and, though they were not as a rule effusive, some of them thumped Nasmyth's shoulder and some wrung his hand. Half an hour had slipped by before he was free of them.

He and Laura went slowly back up the climbing gully. It was growing dark, but a light still streamed down between the pines, and Nasmyth, who pointed to a tree that had fallen, stood close by, looking down upon the girl.

"I will ride back with you presently, but you must rest first; and I have something to say, though if we had not beaten the river I think I should never have had courage enough," he said. "When you found me lying in the snow, you took me in; you nursed me back to life, gave me a purpose, and set me on my feet again."

He paused for a moment. A flush dyed his worn face, and his voice was strained when he went on again.

"One result was that I went back to the world I once belonged to—it was really you who sent me—and you know what befell me there," he said. "I don't think I quite forgot what I owed to you, but I was carried away. Still, she recognized her folly and discarded me."

He stopped again, and Laura looked at him steadily with a tinge of colour in her face.

"Well," he continued, "that was when I commenced to understand exactly what you had been all along to me. I don't know what came upon me at Bonavista; but though the thing must seem preposterous, I believe I was in love with you then. Now I have nothing to bring