

smooth, while that on the other side, though ragged and broken, appeared unscalable.

"It opens up lower down!" cried Brodie. "We want to get there—first!"

Carteret had no doubt whatever that they did. He understood now that an overwhelming rush of snow or soil and frost-split rock was charging down the coulée, and it seemed eminently desirable that they should climb out of the latter before the mass overtook them. In another moment he was running his hardest down the slope, tearing savagely at the deerhide packstraps, and failing to get them loose. Then he thought of his hunting knife, but he stumbled as he snatched it out of its sheath, and it flew out of his hand. He could not see just where it fell, and he dare not stop to look for it, for the memory of the smashed forest which he had skirted a few days earlier was horribly distinct.

In the meanwhile the roar behind him had swelled into a cataclysm of sound. The rocks seemed to ring with it, and the tremendous resonance became bewildering. He fancied that he could hear great stones and climbing pines smash and crumple before the mad downward rush of thousands of tons of rock and snow. The sweat of tense effort dripped from him, his pack grew horribly heavy and promised to overbalance him, and he gasped with distress as he ran. A dozen yards away Brodie was staggering and stumbling among the stones ahead of him, but at last he swung around and ran straight toward one almost upright ascent.

"We have got to get up—and do it now!" he gasped.

Carteret was beside him in a moment or two, and though he recognized the need for haste he swept a careful glance along the wall of rock in front of him. Although he was not accustomed to running for his life among sliding stones, he was a good climber, and he fancied that he could get up.

"Get your foot in that cranny, and work up slant-