

door, and the third lay on the ground. It was, however, pretty long odds for Mackintosh, and at any moment Grand might join in—unless he had slunk off when Red issued from the hut. The youngster could not understand his absence, and in any case there was little time to ponder over that, for Mackintosh needed help. Hal gave him what he could—gave him the assistance of a strong right arm that knew how to wield an axe, and wield it well, as one of the Sioux found to his cost.

The fellow had been facing Mackintosh, but the great factor had swooped for him, and missed him, so agile was the Indian. Then another had come for Red—who promptly attended to him. That would have been to his cost, but for the fact that Hal had been at hand. The Sioux who had slipped away, leaving the field for his fellow, had at the moment that Hal finished with his first, got to the rear of Mackintosh. With hand upraised ready for the blow, he got the full force of Hal's weapon; his own axe went to earth, and the man, his arm numbed by the blow that had only caught his axe, was at the mercy of young Newlands. What he would have done then Hal did not know afterwards. What he felt at the moment was that he could not strike, to mortal intent, at a man who seemed defenceless—for the red man had evidently placed his weapons somewhere while they were engaged in hacking at the door, and had had no time to recover them. The youngster was saved from the dilemma by Red Mackintosh, who, fortunately, had