

THE END OF THE JOURNEY

men who pushed round them for the honour of grasping the hands of adventurers. Then Marsden turned to Sam.

"I suppose you don't mind hitting the road with me, Haig?" he asked gloomily, and in a tone for Sam's ear alone.

"Not at all," said Sam. "A pleasure."

"Good!" growled Marsden, and led off on the wagon-road, where they turned to wave to the platform man who had played masseur to them.

"Ain't you going down this way?" he hailed, beaming upon them. "All the buckets ain't full."

They shook their heads, laughing.

"No, thanks!" cried Marsden.

"Once will do," said Sam. "It might get monotonous."

Away they plunged, left, right, left, right, on the uneven road.

Sam was deep in thought; Marsden too; but when the latter spoke it was only to make expression of relishing these high altitudes, not to say aught of his mad prank or the cause of it.

"Say, it seems good to me up here," he rumbled.

It was good. There was no doubt it was good. Summit after summit, range after range, marched away into distance, slashed and sculptured by the ages, with high lonely cliffs staring blankly at the passage of the seasons, unexpected upland valleys with their foaming creeks and scattered boulders. Ragged summits of their own particular mountain were close above them, awesome, compelling, with