

Some of the boys are now getting a big supper ready to celebrate the occasion, but if you hadn't brought us the warning, it's scarcely likely that any of us would have felt much inclined for festivity. In all probability, those strangers are bringing an order to restrain me from going any further. Once it was in my hands, I could not have fired the shot. All we have done would have been thrown away."

"Ah!" cried Laura, "that would be intolerable!"

Nasmyth laughed significantly.

"Any way," he declared, "until the papers are served on me, my charter stands. We'll have scattered the last strip of rock when those men ride in."

He made her a grave little bow. "You set us to work," he said. "It is only fitting that you should once more hold the firing battery."

He moved away abruptly from her and crawled into the heading. It was half an hour later when he came back, and almost every man who had a share in the undertaking gathered upon the strip of shingle. Nobody spoke, however, and there was tense expectancy in the bronzed faces. Nasmyth beckoned to Laura and moved forward with Gordon, and Wheeler, who carried the battery. Nasmyth swung his battered hat off as he held out his hand, and Laura, clinging to him, climbed to a shelf of rock where she stood still a moment or two, looking about her.

In front the white spray of the fall whirled beneath the tremendous wall of rock, and about her stood groups of hard-handed men, who had driven the heading with strenuous, insistent toil. She knew what the work had cost them, and could understand the look in their steady eyes. They had faced the river in the depths of the tremendous rift, borne with the icy winter, and patiently grappled with obstacle after obstacle. Their money had not sufficed to purchase them costly machines. They had