

THE SECRET WITNESS

sprang to the loophole; but the volley that followed spattered harmlessly around him.

He was a good shot with a rifle, and aimed deliberately, dropping the first man that put his foot on the hazardous bridge. Gasping with her exertions Marishka pushed the shorter timber over, but the longer one jammed hopelessly against the gate post.

"Hugh," she cried, "we are lost."

But a strange thing happened then. For as the second man approached the bridge and had even put one foot upon it, a shrill call rang out at the other end of the causeway.

"The retreat!" the officer shouted. "To the rear——"

The look of relief upon the face of the brave fellow who was venturing death upon the precarious timber was reflected in Renwick's own heart, for he spared the man who, with a startled glance over his shoulder, presently caught up with the rapidly vanishing Windt. Renwick rushed out and lifting the dangerous timber hurled it down into the gorge.

Then he caught Marishka by the waist and lifted her.

"We're safe, dear—they've gone——" he cried.

She turned one look up at him and then, slowly closing her eyes, sank back helpless in his arms.

"Marishka! It has been too much——"

The blood flowed from a slight cut upon her cheek where she had been struck by a piece of flying stone, but he saw that it was not deep. He laid her gently upon the flagging, and ran to the Hall for water. There he found Ena, crouched in a corner, more dead than alive. But he commanded her to come and bring water and brandy, and she obeyed.