

CHAPTER II

BESIEGED !

HAL NEWLANDS, tired out from the long trail across the snow, the journey back, and the nerve tension of the moment when Pierre le Grand had tried to convince Red Mackintosh of his right to the paper for which Radley had died, was nothing loath to accept Red's invitation to take the first spot of sleep while Mackintosh himself kept watch lest Grand and his red comrades should attempt to force a way in and secure the precious document.

"You'll take the paper, Red?" Hal queried, as he got upon his own pallet and looked across at the still form on Red's bed.

"All right, lad," the man replied. "But I'm—not in a hurry," and Hal felt reproved. He himself had been as anxious as any healthy, imaginative youngster might be to see the paper and the Indian writing on it that had brought about the drama of the wilds which had resulted in the death of Radley, and given Mackintosh a legacy that evidently was not likely to prove altogether beneficial. Yet, because Red was willing to wait, Hal was also content to bide the due time to inspect the paper. He dropped off to sleep—his last