

NEVER BEATEN!

CHAPTER I.

THE VOICE THAT CALLED HIM AWAY.

FINISHED at last. The night-sorting work of the Meadhill Post Office was done, and Jack Stanhope wearily wended his way homeward. For two years he had been engaged day and night alternately in uncongenial labour, but he had never complained, or had entertained a thought of doing so, but he had long resolved that it should not be the work of his life, for the "voice of Canada" was calling him away. It had resounded in his ears by day and he had heard it in his dreams by night.

He was seventeen years of age, and for some time past had been a dreamer with a purpose, not a dreamer of idle dreams of wealth suddenly acquired and a subsequent life of ease. He aimed at prosperity, and he was willing to toil to earn it.

It was a cheerless March morning with heavy clouds hiding the stars and prolonging the darkness of the night. A moon just entering its second quarter had gone down hours earlier, and as Jack strode along, a clock of a church close by struck four. No other sound but that of the moaning wind broke the stillness.

The deserted streets were wrapped in a deep gloom, for at Meadhill the professed need of "keeping down the rates," which are never kept down, though corporations may be