

The Man from the Wastes

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what seemed a slow pace. Mackintosh, at any rate, was not deceived by that illusion and, calling to Hal, swept forward, increasing his speed. He increased it still more when, suddenly, the foremost dot, that had seemed to be moving at a pitifully slow rate, went down.

"He's all in!" rapped Red, who told himself that this was the man who was being hunted. But Mackintosh was mistaken as far as his first exclamation was concerned; the man was not all in. What he had done—as the would-be succouring party realized instantly—was to drop on to his knee and open fire. Two of the other black dots dropped too, but they did not rise again to use their weapons, neither did they do what the marksman did immediately after; he got upon his feet again and began to move forward once more.

"Plucked, by gum!" breathed Red. "Say, Hal, what about takin' a pot shot, eh?"

"What about waiting to find out who's in the wrong?" came the panting answer from Newlands. "We don't know, Red, and——"

"By gee, you're right, Hal!" said Mackintosh. "Hurry, then!"

Hurry they did; and the half-mile or so which was all that separated them from the foremost man was soon covered. They brought up within a few yards of him, while, for his part, the man halted in his snowshoes a little earlier, and, incidentally, the other men, of whom the new-comers had counted half a dozen, had shown signs of perturbation at their