

II

J. Wesley Cræsus

MEASURED even by the rather exacting standards of the mining and cattle country, Brouillard was not what the West calls "jumpy." Four years of field-work, government or other, count for something; and the man who has proved powder-shy in any stage of his grapple with the Land of Short Notice is customarily a dead man.

In spite of his training, however, the young chief of construction, making an early morning exploration of the site for the new dam at the mouth of the outlet gorge while the rank and file of the pioneer force were building the permanent camp half-way between the foot-hills and the river, winced handsomely when the shock of a distance-muffled explosion trembled upon the crisp morning air, coming, as it seemed, from some point near the lower end of the canyon.

The dull rumble of the explosion and the little start for which it was accountable were disconcerting in more ways than one. As an industry captain busy with the preliminaries of what promised