

had been in the country for a while, seemed to have heard of it already.

So the Old-timer worried a big corner of the tobacco-cake which was handed to him, and spat in the fire, and opened out—

“There was a whole crowd of us was wintering in Yale that year, so as to be ready for a start in the spring’s soon’s ever there was any signs of a chance of getting through again, and late one afternoon we heard yellin’ that someone was comin’ out of the Canon, and all ran down to the river just in time to see Tom Aigle swing ‘em the lariat. He was a fine hand with a rope was Tom, and it fell fair across ‘em, and one of ‘em managed to give it a bend round the pick-shaft that he lay grippin’ to, and that swerved ‘em out of the stream and in-shore in no time. It was a day or two before they got fit enough to tell us all about it, and we didn’t know where they’d come from, but we knew anyhow that they’d done the pluckiest thing since Noah, and so we shouted till the old Canon growled with it as we carried ‘em up to the houses.

“Seems these two Scotchmen had worked a barren claim up in the back country all the summer, gettin’ never a colour out of it, but, of course, always first-rate prospects, better and better every day—same as we all do—and so they stuck to it, ‘just one day more,’ and so on, till by ‘m-bye when they did draw out they were dead broke in every sense, and the winter as good as on them.

“They had a h—— of a trail before ‘em, and four weeks of it in the best of weather. But it was certain starvation to stay were they were, which was somewhere in the Chilcotin country, west of Cariboo.