

"Who but you?—you heathen!" hissed the engineer.

Now Jaquis, calling up the ghosts of his dead sires, asserted that it was the engineer himself who was "keeping" the Cree. "You bought her—she's yours," said Jaquis, in the presence of the company.

"You ill-bred ——" Smith choked, and reached for a tent prop. The next moment his hand was at the Indian's throat. With a quick twist of his collar band he shut off the Siwash's wind, choking him to the earth.

"What do you mean?" he demanded, and Jaquis, coughing, put up his hands. "I meant no lie," said he. "Did you not give to her mother the camp kettle? She has it, marked G. T. P."

"And what of that?"

"*Voilà*," said Jaquis, "because of that she gave to you the Belle of Athabasca."

Smith dropped his stick, releasing the Indian.

"I did not mean she is sold to you. She is trade—trade for the empty pot, the Belle—the beautiful. From yesterday to this day she followed you, far, very far, to the foot of the Grande