

shook hands and laughed as we came together, and how Mrs. Challenger kissed us all in her emotion, before she finally threw herself into the bear-hug of her husband !

“ But they could not have been asleep ! ” cried Lord John. “ Dash it all, Challenger, you don’t mean me to believe that those folk were asleep with their staring eyes and stiff limbs, and that awful death-grin on their faces ! ”

“ It can only have been the condition that is called catalepsy,” said Challenger. “ It has been a rare phenomenon in the past and has constantly been mistaken for death. While it endures the temperature falls, the respiration disappears, the heart-beat is indistinguishable—in fact, it *is* death, save that it is evanescent. Even the most comprehensive mind ”—here he closed his eyes and^o simpered—“ could hardly conceive a universal outbreak of it in this fashion.”

“ You may label it catalepsy,” remarked Summerlee, “ but, after all, that is only a