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Author: George W. Orton

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Bob Hunt in Canada

By
George W. Orton, Ph.D.

Graduate Coach of Track and Cross Country Teams
University of Pennsylvania, Joint Manager of
Camp Tecumseh, N. H., and author of
"Bob Hunt at Camp Pontiac,"
and "Bob Hunt, Senior
Camper."

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Bob Hunt In Canada

OFF TO CANADA

"Hey there, Pud. Come here," yelled Bill Williams one day late in May to Pud Jones, as the latter sauntered across the athletic field.

"I'm coming," said Pud, as he rushed across, and grabbing Bill by the shoulders slammed him up against the fence around the track.

"What do you think this is?" asked Bill. "A football game, or do you take me for a tackling dummy?"

"Well, some kind of a dummy," replied Pud, as he held Bill so firmly that he could not get at him to punch his head.

"That'll do, you big rhinoceros," said Bill, as Pud released him.

"What's the news?" said Pud.

"I've just had a letter from Bob Hunt and he wants us to go up to Canada with him to a fishing and hunting camp there," said Bill.

"That would be fun but I don't know whether my father would let me go or not. He's been talking about having me work this summer," said Pud.

"Well, you see what you can do with your father and I'll get after mine," replied Bill. "I rather think that I won't have much trouble as father was saying just the other day that he thought the open air life was the only thing for a boy in the summer."

"All fathers think that, but some of them want to have us around during the summer," said Pud, rather gloomily for him.

"Yes, I've noticed that oftentimes they make cheap chauffeurs out of us," said Bill. "They tell us they cannot spare us during the summer and then make us drive them around at all hours. That's quite a snap for them, I think, but it doesn't get us any place."

"You're right," assented Pud. "I had a very poor time last summer for my family was always having me drive them some place where I did not want to go. They couldn't see that I would much rather get out on a lot in the hot sun and have a game of ball than take the finest drive there is."

"You ought to have been at Pontiac last year. We had a great time. There was something doing every minute," said Bill.

"Yes, I heard that you had a great summer," said Pud. "How did you get along without Bob as a pitcher?"

"We certainly missed him as he was a whole team by himself," said Bill. "That's one reason why I would like to go to Canada with Bob, for I haven't seen him since two summers now, and I would like to spend another summer with him."

"So would I," said Pud. "Whereabouts in Canada does Bob want to go?"

"Wait," said Bill, pulling a letter out of his pocket. "I'll read you what he says. Here it is: 'Father

wants me to go up to a camp in Canada called Camp Tadousac. It is situated east of the Saguenay River and there is some wonderful fishing to be had there. I've decided to go and I hope that your father will let you come along. It will be a new experience for us. This camp has no permanent quarters but the members go from one part of the country to the other and live out of doors all the time. They use shelter tents sometimes but often they will be away for a week with only one's pack and sleeping bag as protection against the weather. I'm eager to try it for father says that it is fine sport. He's been up in that country and says it is a sportsman's paradise. He was farther west in the Lake St. John region, but it should be even better farther east. So, Bill, get busy. Talk it up with father and write me that you'll be with me.' That sounds good, don't it?" concluded Bill. 9

"It 'listens' very well," said Pud. "But, don't you let Professor Gary hear you say 'Don't it' again or you'll get into trouble."

"Doesn't it. Doesn't it, you boob," said Bill impatiently. "Mr. Shields told us a good one this morning about a boy who would write 'I have wrote' instead of 'I have written.' The teacher kept him in after school one day and made him write it out one hundred times. The teacher was called from the room and the boy got through his task. He waited a few minutes but as the teacher did not return, the boy wrote a note as follows. 'Dear Teacher, I have wrote "I have written" one hundred times. You have not came back so I have went home.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Pud. "That's a good one, but to get down to cases, are you really going up to Canada with Bob?"

"I am if I can get father and mother to let me go," replied Bill.

"Well, I'll see what I can do, for I think that a month or six weeks up in those Canadian woods would make me real husky."

"You, real husky," said Bill in a commiserating tone. "I suppose that you're not as hard as nails and nearly two hundred pounds in weight. Now, don't get in wrong at home by telling them that you would like to go to Canada to get husky. That would be no reason at all for you to go there. Tell them anything you like but that." 10

"I'll see them to-night and let you know to-morrow," said Pud.

The two boys then separated, Pud to go in to get his baseball suit and Bill to go out to the diamond, as he already had his suit on. Both boys were members of the school team. Bill was now the best player in the school, having made quite a reputation in scholastic circles as a pitcher. He was the captain of the team, which shows better than anything else how he had developed since first we met at Camp Pontiac's Junior camp.

Pud was waiting for Bill the next morning at the school gate.

"I'm going, I'm going!" cried Pud, as soon as Bill appeared.

"That's fine," said Bill in rather a gloomy tone.

"What's the matter?" asked Pud. "Don't they want you to go?"

"I'm not sure," said Bill. "Father is willing, but mother is making a big fuss. She's almost as bad as she was before I went to Pontiac."

"Gee, that's bad. I don't think they'll let me go unless you go," said Pud, and he too looked as if he had just lost his best friend.

"I'll just bet that your father persuades your mother to let you go," said Pud. "He did the other time, you know."

"Yes, that's so, but he told me as we walked down to school this morning that there really was some danger in such a trip as we planned and that he did not feel that he should persuade mother to let me go. He said that if he did and then something happened that he wouldn't have an excuse," said Bill.

"That's so," said Pud in a hopeless voice. "I guess it's all off, then, and I was counting on having such a fine summer." 11

"It's not all off. I'll have a chance to talk to mother this afternoon and I'll show her why she should let me go," said Bill.

"It's not so dangerous, is it?" asked Pud.

"No, of course not," replied Bill. "Mr. Waterman, the head of the camp, told me that he was always careful and that unless one got careless or foolhardy that there was little real danger. He said that they got tipped over now and then and were sometimes temporarily lost, but that these things only lent spice to the summer and were the things remembered in after years."

"He's right," said Pud. "Well, I hope that you can get your mother on your side for my parents did not raise any objections."

"It's going to help me tell mother that you're going and that your father and mother are contented about it. I'll bring her round all right."

"I hope you do," said Pud, as they separated to go to their classes.

The next morning, Bill was waiting for Pud at the school gate. There was such a light in Bill's eye that Pud exclaimed on seeing him.

"Don't tell me. Don't tell me, Bill. I can see in your eyes that you're going to Canada."

"You bet I am," said Bill, swelling up his chest. "I talked mother over and she even got enthusiastic before I got through. Father was all right as soon as mother felt satisfied."

"Let's write Bob to-day that we'll be with him," said Pud.

"Don't worry," said Bill, with a twinkle in his eye. "I did that last night and I'm going round to see Mr. Waterman to-night to find out what I'll have to get for the trip."

"I'll go with you," said Pud. "We'll both need the same kit, for I have never been to a real fishing camp before, nor have you."

"That's right," said Bill. "We'll have to get a whole lot of things we didn't have to get for Camp Pontiac; dunnage bags, sleeping bags, tump lines, fishing tackle, a lot of flies—"

"A lot of flies,—why, you dummy, we'll have to take some stuff along to get rid of the flies, from all I hear."

"You big dub, don't you know that they fish with flies?" said Bill in a disgusted tone.

"How do you catch them?" asked Pud.

"Say, what are you driving at?" asked Bill. "Do you really mean that you do not know that they fish with artificial flies?"

"Oh, artificial flies," said Pud. "Yes, I've heard of that, but I never saw any. My father's not a fisherman like yours."

"I should think not," said Bill.

"Well, don't swell up and bust because you know more about artificial flies than I do," said Pud, digging Bill in the ribs. "Before we come back, I'll be telling you a few things."

"Stop your kidding, you small giant," said Bill. "You can't be even sure of going until you see Mr. Waterman. I would not be surprised if they charge you two prices, for they will surely have to get an extra guide to carry the big canoe they'll have to have for you and another extra man to carry extra grub."

"Now, Bill, stop kidding and let me know if you really are going around to see Mr. Waterman to-night, for if you are, I'll go along," said Pud in a serious tone.

"Yes, I'm going," said Bill. "For heaven's sake, don't let on to Mr. Waterman that you've never seen an artificial fly or he'll be disgusted. Thank goodness, you learned to paddle a canoe well and to swim well as Camp Pontiac, for those two accomplishments are really necessary for such a trip."

"I'll be all right in that way," said Pud.

"Well, don't boast, for though you can probably swim better than any guide we may see, they'll show you a few things about handling a canoe that you never dreamed of. Father says that the Lake St. John guides are wonders and we'll be only a little farther east, so our guides should be just as clever," said Bill enthusiastically.

"Gee, it's going to be some summer," said Pud. "I wouldn't miss it for the world."

Two weeks later, Bob Hunt, Pud Jones and Bill Williams left Broad Street Station for Canada. They were going to travel to Tadousac at the mouth of the Saguenay River, where they would be met by Mr. Waterman or one of his men. All three boys were big enough to make such a journey alone. The boys had their dunnage bags with them and had practically no other baggage excepting a suitcase. Mr. Waterman had told them to take their dunnage bags right along with them so they would run no risk of having them held up in the Custom House at Quebec. They were all provided with passports, as the big European war was going on and they might have use for this means of identification.

The boys arrived in New York without any unusual happenings, but Pud got separated from them at the Big Pennsylvania Railroad Station and they were worried until they saw his big good-natured form looming up at the train gate at the Grand Central Station.

"Where have you been?" asked Bill.

"Gee, I'm glad I found you," said Pud. "How did you get lost?"

"We get lost, you big duffer," said Bill. "Why, you were the one that got lost. We've been looking all over for you."

"That's rich," said Pud, breaking out into a big laugh. "I thought that you were lost. I know New York like a book."

"You remind me of a little boy," said Bob. "A policeman found him wandering round the

Pennsylvania Railroad Station and on going up to him, the little boy said, 'Have you seen my muvver. I think she's got losted. I can't find her any place.'"

"Ha! ha! Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Pud. "That's good, but I don't see how you can liken me to a little boy."

"All aboard! all aboard for the Montreal and Eastern Canada Express!" yelled the crier.

"That means us, fellows," said Bob. "Let's hustle."

The three boys went through the gate and were soon sitting in the Pullman bound for Quebec.

"That was some idea of father's to get us this drawing-room," said Bill. "We'll certainly enjoy life on this trip."

"You bet," said Pud.

They certainly were traveling in style. They tossed up to see who would get the lower berth or the sofa. Pud was the one left over and he got the upper berth, whereupon Bill, who had the lower, said that he would not take any chances but would take the upper berth himself. A good-natured, argument followed and the result was that Bob took the lower berth, Pud the sofa and Bill went upstairs. They awoke in the morning to find themselves at Sherbrooke and to get their first taste of the Canadian habitant. When they got down to stretch their legs before breakfast, they found most of the Canadians speaking French.

"Here's a chance to spout your French, Bob," said Bill.

"Who told you that I talked French?" asked Bob.

"Father told me some time ago," answered Bill. "He said that you could talk it like a native."

"I could a few years ago, but I'm rusty now, as I haven't talked French for at least five years," replied Bob.

"They don't talk real French here anyway," said Pud.

"Oh, yes, they do," said Bill. "It's a kind of dialect, but father tells me that it is much easier to understand a French-Canadian than many of the French people from Paris."

"That's very true," said Bob. "My father, as I've told you before, has been up in the Lake St. John region, and he says that he gets along quite well with the inhabitants. He says that they have some peculiar expressions, but that it is quite easy to talk to them as they speak a pretty pure dialect of French."

They were soon off again, now headed for Quebec. They got a seat in the dining-car and watched the scenery as they rode along. They found the quaint little Canadian cottages of the habitants much like the farmers' homes in New England. The land was rolling and, as usual, they followed the course of some river. As they went along, they heard less and less English and Bob was often called on to translate the cries that were heard at the different stations.

"I'll soon get my French back up here," said Bob. "They seem to talk pretty good French. I can understand them quite easily."

About ten o'clock, they came into a hilly country and found evidences of mining being carried on. On Bob's inquiring, they found that they were asbestos mines and that it was practically a new industry for this part of Canada. They also noted that many new farms were being cleared by the young Frenchmen and that much lumber was being transported both by the rivers and the railroad. The look of the people was quite foreign by this time and the boys felt that they were indeed in a foreign land.

"Have you ever been in Toronto?" suddenly asked Bill.

"No," said Pud.

"Well, that is certainly different from this part of Canada," said Bill. "You can hardly tell that you are out of the United States when you are there."

"I should think that the French talk would make it seem foreign anyway," said Pud.

"That's it," said Bob. "You don't hear any more French there than you do in Chicago, Philadelphia or any other American city. I remember that I was up there to the great Toronto Fair and I hardly knew that I was in Canada."

"This is certainly different," said Bill.

"Many people that visit only Quebec and Montreal have an entirely wrong impression of Canada. They think there are just as many French all over as they find in those cities. The fact is that outside of the province of Quebec, Canada is just as much an English-speaking country as the United States.

"Is that so?" said Pud. "Why didn't we go, then, to some place where they talk sense? I'm going to have a fine time getting along with these fellows. I can't talk French."

"Get busy and you'll learn a lot this summer," said Bob. "Mr. Waterman told me that two of the

guides talk English a little, so we'll get along all right."

"I'm glad they talk English," said Bill. "All the French I know you could put in your eye tooth."

A short time later, they arrived at Levis and saw the majestic heights of Quebec opposite.

"This St. Lawrence is some river," said Pud.

"I should think it is," said Bob. "The biggest ocean liners can come up this far, while there is a twenty-seven-foot channel all the way up to Montreal."

"You don't say so," said Pud. "Well, there is one thing sure that I'm learning some geography at first hand this morning."

"When do we leave for Tadousac?" asked Bill.

"We go down to-morrow on the boat," said Bob.

"That's fine," said Pud. "We can see the town this afternoon."

"You bet we will," said Bill.

"Where are we staying?" asked Pud. 17

"At the Chateau Frontenac," said Bob. "It's that building up on the cliff there."

"That's some hotel," said Pud.

"You'll think so before to-morrow," said Bill.

"Say, let's go up to the Plains of Isaac and see where John Paul Jones fell when he captured Quebec from the English," said Pud.

At this, Bill and Bob just curled up and laughed until they nearly fell off their chairs.

"What's the matter?" asked Pud. "Isn't that the real place to see in Quebec?"

"You need some history lessons as well as geography," said Bill.

"Well, let's have it," said Pud. "I know I'm always getting things fatally twisted."

"You mean the Plains of Abraham," said Bob.

"Oh, Abraham, Jacob or Isaac, it's all the same, isn't it?" said Pud, apparently rather disgusted that they had blamed him for such a natural mistake.

"And, who ever heard of John Paul Jones taking Quebec?" asked Bill, looking at Bob.

"Well, who was it?" said Pud. "Those historical names always get me."

"It was Wolfe, the famous young English general. He was killed in the moment of victory, and the French general, Montcalm, also was killed," said Bob.

"Well, let's go out there and see the place," said Pud. "It must be interesting."

By this time, they were across the St. Lawrence and at the mercy of about a hundred cab drivers. Bob led the way and they were soon going up the hill to the Chateau. In the dining-hall, they heard practically nothing but English spoken as the Chateau was the place where most of the tourists stayed. After an excellent lunch, they sauntered out to see the sights. They were again 18 mobbed by the cabbies.

"Let's take one of those funny-looking cabs," said Pud.

"That's just what I was looking for," said Bob. "Father told me to be sure and have a ride in a 'caleche,' as he called it."

They got into the 'caleche,' which is just like a hansom cab except that the old-fashioned leather springs were used, and instead of the driver sitting behind, he rode in front on a sort of wide dashboard. Away they went and the driver plied the whip. The horse was not large but proved strong and wiry. In a short time, the boys were out on the Plains of Abraham, looking at the various monuments marking the great battle which meant the end of the French dominion in Canada. They saw the monuments to Wolfe and Montcalm and enjoyed the view far south into the United States. Their guide showed them the path up which Wolfe climbed with his soldiers to surprise the French that memorable morning. After seeing the sights there, they drove back and went through part of the citadel. This proved to be one of the strongest forts in America, and its strength, the number of British Tommies about, the guns of large caliber that could be seen, so impressed the boys that Bob at last broke out.

"This is some fort. It would take a real siege gun to make much of an impression on those walls and ramparts while I guess those big cannon would do a little talking themselves."

"I should think so," said Pud.

"Wait a minute," said Bill. "I'd like to get some photos."

Thereupon, he pulled out a little pocket kodak he had, and got ready to focus on a big gun set in

an embrasure of the walls. Before he could move almost, a soldier was at his side and said,

"You are under arrest. It is forbidden to bring kodaks or cameras of any kind within these walls." 19

"I didn't know that," said Bill. "I simply wanted to take a few photos of the place."

"You'll have to explain all that to the Commandant," said the Tommie, as he led the way.

The whole thing had happened so suddenly that neither Bob nor Pud had time to say a word before they saw Bill turn to follow the soldier.

"May we not go with our friend?" asked Bob of the Tommie.

"I was about to ask that you accompany us, for though you are not under arrest, I'll have to bring you along as witnesses."

"Don't worry, Pud," said Bob. "It'll be all right. We're not at war and we were not doing anything very wrong."

"That's all very well," said Pud also in a low tone. "They may take us for spies and keep us locked up here all summer."

"Oh, Tommyrot," said Bob, though at heart he did not know just what was liable to happen.

In the meantime, the party went along the walk until they came to a big door. They entered and soon were asked to seat themselves in a large room in which there were many desks with officers seated and busily writing. Gold lace, silver spurs, bright officer's swords, red caps, and the air of discipline and business that characterized the whole room did not fail to have its effect on the boys. Nor did they fail to notice that each of the doors was guarded by soldiers with fixed bayonets standing at attention. The Tommy who was escorting them took them up to one of the desks and said,

"Captain Davidson, I have here under arrest, this young man with these two others as witnesses."

"Of what are they accused?" asked the officer, as he glanced sharply at the three of them.

"Of espionage," said the soldier. 20

"Of espionage?" said the officer. "That is a serious offense."

"I know it is but that is the term under which the offense comes," replied the soldier.

"This must be taken up by the Commandant himself," said the Captain, as he touched a bell at his side. Immediately a young officer appeared.

"Captain Abercrombie, tell Major-General Norris, the Commandant, that we have here a prisoner accused of espionage."

The orderly saluted and was soon lost to view behind a door at one end of the hall. He was back in a few minutes. During that time, our three adventurers stood and watched with interest the varied scene that was taking-place before them.

"This is some lark," said Bill to Bob in a low tone.

"No communication between the prisoner and witnesses," said the Tommy at once, as he moved nearer as if to enforce his demands. Pud looked over at Bill with a sort of reproach in his eyes, for he had heard the remark. Bob kept his eyes front for he was very much interested in the comings and goings of the officers, orderlies and soldiers that came and went throughout the hall.

"Captain Davidson," said the orderly as he returned, "the Commandant requests that you send in the prisoner and witnesses to him at once.'

"Very well," said the Captain. "Here they are and I hand them over to you together with Private Watkins, who arrested them."

They were then marched into the next room where they found a big white-haired man sitting at a desk busily engaged. The orderly stopped his charges at a respectful distance. The Commandant kept on writing for a few minutes but suddenly he turned around and gave a sharp and piercing look at the young Americans. 21

"Americans," said he, in rather a relieved tone. "Captain Abercrombie, let me know the gist of this affair."

"Major-General Norris, I shall have to ask Private Watson to give you the details at first hand, for as yet I know nothing about the matter, except that one of these young men is accused of being a spy."

"Private Watson, give me the details of the matter."

"Your Excellency," said Private Watson, "I know nothing more than that as I stood at my post on the Ramparts, near Gun No. 145, I saw this young man (pointing to Bill) suddenly produce one of those very small German cameras and try to take a photo of the gun and its location."

"Young man, is this so?" asked the Commandant in a serious voice.

"It is so, except that I did not intend to do any harm; the gun seemed very picturesque to me and I wanted a photo of it," said Bill.

"Were you not told that you should leave cameras of all kinds with the gateman?" asked the Commandant.

"No," said Bill. "We came in a carriage and nothing was said to us."

"Then, you were given a card and asked to read it, were you not?" continued the Commandant.

"Yes," said Bill, "but to tell the truth, I didn't read it carefully."

"Where is that card?" was the next question.

Bill fumbled in his pocket and in a moment held it out.

"Private Watson, kindly show the prisoner the order relating to cameras," said the Commandant.

Private Watson then came forward and, taking the card, he showed Bill the paragraph stating that all cameras must be left at the gate.

"I am very sorry, sir, that I was so careless," said Bill. "I did not think that anything I could do would get me into trouble here and I didn't think it necessary to read the card. There were so many things to see that I just put it in my pocket." 22

"That is not much of an excuse," said the Commandant in a stern voice. "You must remember that you are here in a military fortress and that we can't be too strict in some matters."

"I recognize that now, but I assure you that I had no motive whatever in taking the picture except to get a unique photo," said Bill humbly.

The Commandant for the next ten minutes put the three boys through a regular third degree examination. They told him who they were, where they came from, who their parents were, what business they were in, and a hundred other questions.

"Boys," said the Commandant, "I'm afraid that I'll have to detain you until Captain Abercrombie here can verify some of your statements."

Then, turning to the orderly, he said,

"Captain Abercrombie, call up the Chateau and see if these three are registered there as they state. Send Private Watson out to the West Gate to get the driver who took them to the Plains of Abraham this afternoon. Call up the Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Company's office and see if passage is booked for to-morrow for three in the name of Hunt. Look through their luggage at the Chateau and report as soon as possible."

"Very well, your Excellency," said the Captain, and saluting, he vanished.

"Private Watson," said the Commandant.

"At your orders, sir," said the private, clicking his heels as he saluted.

"Take these young gentlemen to the guard-house and remain with them until I send Captain Abercrombie to you with orders for their release."

"Very well, your Excellency," said Private Watson, as he led the way out of the room. 23

The boys followed him through the big room, out into the air and along a path until they came to a smaller building with iron bars at the windows. Private Watson had to stop and tell the nature of the errand to the soldier at the door, who finally saluted and let them in. They found themselves in a rather large antechamber. After a talk with the Captain in charge, the boys were led to a bright airy room on the second floor.

"I've brought you here, boys," said Private Watson, "because you can look out of the windows and find something to interest yourselves with. I can tell by the way in which Major-General Norris spoke that he thinks you are all right, so I'll give you the benefit of the doubt. When you get tired of seeing the scenery, take a look at those old guns in the cases over there."

Thereupon, their escort left them and could be seen pacing in front of the door.

"You're a fine specimen," said Pud, as soon as the door was closed.

"Ah, what's the matter?" said Bill. "I suppose you think that I brought the camera along just to get us into trouble."

"You didn't seem to think it was serious a little while ago," replied Pud. "Then, you said it was a lark. This is a fine lark. If we're kept here, we'll miss our boat to-morrow and that will make us miss the other boat to Escoumains and then Mr. Waterman won't know where we are and it will ball everything up."

"Dry up, you old tear-bag," said Bob. "This isn't very serious. I can see why it's only right that they should be very careful around a fortress and any trouble we're in is our own fault, but Captain Abercrombie will find everything straight and we'll be out of here just in time to have a good dinner and to talk over our experience with gusto."

"I hope so, I hope so," said Pud, in such a dejected tone that even Bill had to laugh at him. 24

"Gee, I'm sorry, Bob, to get you two into all this trouble," said Bill to Bob.

"Don't worry. Things will be all right."

The boys then busied themselves watching the boats ply to and fro on the broad St. Lawrence. The people seemed like small flies far down on the esplanade near the Chateau Frontenac, while further down on the wharves, they could see a jumbled mass of people, carriages, carts, wagons, etc., all indicating how busy things were in Quebec. They found plenty to interest them, but at last they turned and began to examine the old muskets and arms in the cases by the walls.

"Gee, here's a good one," said Bill. "It's a musket that used to belong to old Count Frontenac. What do you think of that?"

"Who was Fronty?" asked Pud.

"Count Frontenac was one of the greatest governors that Canada ever had in the time of the French regime."

"He was a great man, as our forefathers found out in the time of the French and Indian wars," said Bob. "There are so many stories told, showing what a wonderful man he was. It's like a touch of the past to look at a gun that such a famous man once used."

"That's all right," said Pud, "but it don't help us any in getting out of here."

"Don't get impatient," said Bob. "It will take some time to look up the various things about us."

"That's so, but it's commencing to get dark and I'm getting hungry," said Pud.

"I thought so," said Bob. "I thought it had something to do with your stomach."

"It's too bad that I got into this," said Bill.

"Cut it out, Bill," said Bob. "I've really enjoyed myself so far, for when you come to think of it, we're not in the slightest danger. At the worst, we can call for aid on the American consul here 25
and make him straighten out the matter."

"That's so," said Pud. "I never thought of that."

"Of course, you didn't, you big puddenhead," said Bob. "At your time of life, you have difficulty in thinking of anything but your stomach."

A little later, Captain Abercrombie came to the door. The boys rushed over to hear what he had to say.

"I am instructed by Major-General Norris, the Commandant, to say to you that he regrets the inconvenience to which you have been put. He finds that the information given him is correct in every particular, and he feels that there was no idea of spying on your part. At the same time, he desires to recommend to all of you that in future, on going into a fortress, whether here or elsewhere, that when given a card of instructions, you read and act according to the same. He desires that you be set at liberty at once and has a military carriage at the West Gate to drive you to the Chateau. Private Watson, will you kindly see the gentlemen to the West Gate, where you will find the carriage ready? With your permission, I shall also accompany you as far as the Commandant's office."

"Hurray," said Pud. "I knew it would be all right."

"I'm sorry to have put you to all this trouble, Captain," said Bill. "I'm sure that I'll be more careful in the future."

"It was no bother. I am glad that you got off so easily. We have to be careful here at all times, for this is, you know, the strongest fortress in His Majesty's great Dominion, and its secrets must be guarded."

On arriving at the Commandant's office the captain left them, and it was not long afterwards that they were sitting around a table at the Chateau Frontenac, chatting and laughing and having a good feed, as Pud expressed it.

"That experience of ours seems just like a dream to me," said Bob, as the waiter left to get the dessert. 26

"It was no dream," said Pud. "If that old Major-General Norris had not been such a thoroughbred, he might have given us a peck of trouble."

"Never again for me," said Bill. "If ever I go into a public place and they give me directions, I'm going to listen and do what's ordered."

"What's doing to-night?" asked Pud, who was always looking for fun in some form or other.

"Nothing much," replied Bob. "I understand that there's a band concert by the Highland Regiment band on the Esplanade this evening. We can listen to that for a while and then get to bed. We must be up early as the boat leaves for Tadousac at seven o'clock to-morrow morning."

"I'll never make it," said Pud.

"You'll make it, all right," said Bob. "We're all sleeping in the same room and I have a call in for five-thirty. That will give us time to get up and have a decent breakfast before going."

The boys enjoyed the band concert after their dinner. On the broad-walk on the river side of the Chateau, a large crowd gathered and sauntered up and down listening to the excellent music. The scene was interesting to the boys mainly because of the many kinds of military dress that was sprinkled throughout the crowd. The military men gave a touch of the Old World to the scene that was different from anything that the boys had ever noted in the United States. In good time they turned in, and five-thirty saw Bob out of bed and on top of Pud, who said that he could not get awake.

"I'll waken you up, you lazy dog," said Bob, as he jumped on Pud's bed. This action thoroughly aroused Pud, and a five minutes' wrestling match resulted in Bob's being finally buried beneath the covers.

"Help, Bill," yelled Bob. "This big elephant will crush the life out of me if you do not come to my assistance." 27

Bill, thereupon, rushed over and grabbed Pud by the shoulders with such a force that he finally had to cry quits.

"Oh, all right," said Pud, "but it takes two of you to do it."

"Let's hurry," said Bob. "I have ordered oatmeal, buckwheat cakes and maple sirup, poached eggs on toast, chops—"

"Stop, stop," yelled Pud. "My mouth's watering now. I'll beat you all to the dining room."

Ten minutes later they were having their last breakfast in Quebec for many a long day. A little later, they drove down to the wharf and were soon on board. They found the boat large and roomy and filled with tourists, taking the Saguenay trip, that is, the trip from Quebec to Murray Bay, to Tadousac and up the far-famed Saguenay to Chicoutimi. The scenery is noted all over the world as this is one of the big sight-seeing trips of the Western continent. It was not long until they swung out into the stream and headed for the Ile d'Orleans which lies just below Quebec. Further along, they looked over to the northern bank of the river and saw the famous Montmorency Falls.

"I was going to suggest yesterday that we go down to Montmorency for dinner last night," said Bob. "Father told me to do this, but our adventure at the Citadel made this out of the question."

"That's too bad," said Bill.

"That was some business," said Pud. "I thought it was all over with us for awhile. I was dreaming of dungeons deep for weeks to come."

"Don't exaggerate, Pud," said Bob. "We might have had a lot of trouble. I wonder what that fine church over there is."

"That's the well known St. Ann de Beaupre cathedral," said an Englishman or Canadian standing nearby.

"I never heard of it," said Bill. 28

"It's easily seen that you're not a Roman Catholic," said the stranger. "I can't imagine a Catholic ever coming to Quebec without knowing of the virtues and miracles of St. Ann."

"I must confess my ignorance too," said Bob.

"Well, St. Ann de Beaupre is the patron saint of this particular parish and for many, many years she had been doing miracles in that little town over yonder. That magnificent church is a tribute donated by the hundreds that have been blessed by her ministrations."

"In what special field does the gracious Saint consent to show her power?" asked Bob, with his best manner.

"Towards the crippled," said the stranger. "Hundreds of crutches have been left in that church as proof of the divine powers of St. Ann."

"Is that so?" said Pud.

"Yes, and there really seems to be some miraculous influence at work."

"We must go there when we are coming home," said Bob.

"It will pay you," said the stranger, "for you will see there some things to be seen in no other part of North America except in Mexico."

As they went down the river it gradually broadened, until they were steaming along on what looked more like an inland sea than a river. In due time, they came to the famous northern watering place, Murray Bay. The ship stopped there for some time and the boys had a chance to hire a carriage and go up into the town. They saw some nice hotels and evidences of fashionable country places. It was getting dark as they came off the mouth of the Saguenay River, and the high rocks on either side as they moved on gave one the impression of great depth. This

impression was correct, as the river flows along a cleft in the strata rather than along any bed that has been made by the action of the waters themselves. They moved into a wharf that merely jutted out from the rocky shore. Everything was confusion, for there did not seem to be any one but Frenchmen on the wharf. The boys got off and waited in the glare of a big torch light, made after the fashion of the lights used by itinerant showmen. No Mr. Waterman appeared.

"What was the name of that hotel?" asked Bob of Bill.

"I can't remember it, but I have it in my notebook," said Bill.

"Look it up, for if Mr. Waterman does not come soon, we'll go up there as he directed us. Let's get our baggage."

They collected this and were just on the point of making a start when Bill was slapped on the back and turned to see Mr. Waterman standing before them, dressed for the woods.

"How are you boys?" asked Mr. Waterman, as he turned to Bob and Pud.

"Fine as silk," said Pud. "We were just going to try to find that little hotel you wrote us about."

"We'll go up there to-night anyway and take the early boat down the river in the morning. I've engaged rooms for you there and an early breakfast."

"Oh, Lord!" said Pud. "Early breakfast again. I'll be a 'shadder' of my former self if this early rising stunt is to be my regular medicine."

"Get used to it," said Mr. Waterman, "for you'll be up early from now on, only some days it will be earlier than others. But I'll guarantee that you'll get all the sleep that's good for you."

"All right, I'm game," said Pud. "I came up here to have a good time and get into condition. You're the doctor and I'll not kick on taking the medicine."

"It will be the sweetest medicine you ever had," said Mr. Waterman. "Why, boy, we're going to have a real man's time this summer and you'll be the first one to say so six weeks from now."

CHAPTER II

UP THE ESCOUMAINS

About five o'clock the next morning, Bob was awakened by what sounded like a parade under his windows. He got up and saw a lot of women and men coming from the little church on the opposite corner. Bob's action and noise in opening the window had awakened the others, as they were all sleeping in a sort of dormitory.

"What the deuce is going on outside?" asked Bill Williams. "Has the circus come to town or why this procession so early in the morning?"

"You must remember that you are in a real Catholic country and that the Roman Catholic religion plays a very big part in the life of the people here. The so-called procession you will hear any morning as it is merely the good souls of the parish returning from the mass or the matin service," said Mr. Waterman.

"Well, let's get up now that we're all awake," said Bill.

"Not all," said Bob, pointing to Pud, who slept on, totally unconscious of all that had aroused the others. "Little Lord Fauntleroy is still peacefully sleeping."

"Not so loud," said Mr. Waterman. "You'll wake him up."

"No fear of that," said Bill. "What's the answer, Bob? Shall we merely mob him or what shall it be?"

"Let's dump him on the floor and have some fun with him," said Bob.

The two boys then went over and with a mighty shove, they dumped Pud on the floor and turned cot and mattress over him. They both climbed on top and only smothered sounds could be heard from beneath the pile. Then like Goliath in his wrath, Pud arose, cot, mattress, blankets, two yelling boys, and all, and shook himself. He made a bull-like rush at Bob but Bill got him from behind and for five minutes there was some pretty rough-house work in that room.

"Ye gods! I'm hot," at last cried Bob, stepping back for a breathing spell.

"Same here," said Pud, sitting down on a cot and wiping off the sweat with a pajama top that had gotten separated from its master during the melee.

"Let's get dressed and get some breakfast," said Bill.

"Is this the regular setting up exercises that this little company of mild-eyed anarchists have every morning?" asked Mr. Waterman in his quiet way. "If so, I am afraid that I cannot recommend it for persons nervously disposed."

"Oh, this is nothing," said Bob. "This will just give us an appetite."

"Well, I hear Madame Colombe busy getting breakfast ready, so we'll just be in time," said Mr. Waterman.

Ten minutes later, the party was seated around a table in the dining room eating a breakfast of oatmeal, milk, ham and eggs, hot biscuits and coffee.

"The boat leaves at six-thirty so we haven't much time to lose," said Mr. Waterman.

"We'll be with you in a minute," said Bob.

The boys hurried upstairs and came down with their dunnage bags. They had expected to carry these down to the boat, but a little hotel cart came along and took them down. They had a few minutes to spare as they arrived at the wharf, so they went out to the little observation house in the middle of the pond right near the wharf. This pond was used by the Government as a Fishery Station and there were scores of magnificent salmon in the pond. The boys were much interested in watching these wonderful game fish. They could see them swimming around and occasionally 32
one of them would jump clear out of the water after a fly or some other insect.

"We'll have to catch a few like those this summer," said Mr. Waterman with a glistening eye.

"Will we really have a chance to catch salmon as large as those?" asked Bob.

"Oh, yes, on our Portneuf River trip, we should get some salmon just as fine as these," said Mr. Waterman.

"What do you catch them with? I'm sure I have nothing big enough to hold a fish like that," said Pud.

"We catch them with the regular rod and fly," replied their leader.

"Don't say 'we'; say 'I' catch them, for I should think it would have to be a real fisherman that could land such a big fish with such a small line and rod," said Pud.

"That's why we're coming up here," said Bill Williams. "My ambition is to get one of those salmon and I don't want it unless I can catch it with my regular tackle."

"That's talking like a real fisherman and sportsman," said Mr. Waterman. "Boys, this fishing is or should be considered a sport. That being so, we must make it a matching of our wits against that of the fish. It should not be merely our strength against theirs. We, as sportsmen, should give them a chance."

"That's the idea," said Bob. "Well, I'll consider that I am developing into a real fisherman when I am able to land one of those big fellows."

Just then the boat whistle was heard and the boys hurried on board. The vessel that was to take them to Escoumains was an old side-wheel steamer apparently of the vintage of about 1812. It did some wheezing and puffing before it got straightened out for the trip. The boys looked over the boat with interest, paying special attention to the people who were on board. They were greatly interested in the talk and gestures of the Frenchmen that composed the crew and most of the passengers. A little old Frenchman with a fiddle also attracted their attention. A few pennies 33
soon had him playing away for dear life and calling off the figures in French in a singsong voice.

On their way down the river, the boat stopped at two places, at both of which lumbering seemed to be the main industry. At last, the boat put in for Escoumains. Two large tramp steamers were anchored off the town loading lumber from big barges. The steamers drew too much water to get into the town wharf, thus requiring two handlings of the lumber. Quite a few people were on the wharf. Mr. Anderson, one of Mr. Waterman's men, was awaiting them. As soon as they were off the boat, he had a carriage ready and they were off for the little village a half mile away. They stopped at Madame LaBlanche's boarding house, where Mr. Waterman had made arrangements for keeping their "store" clothes while they were out in the woods. They were shown upstairs and in a short time, the boys were getting into their real wool suits. Mr. Waterman brought in the shoepacks that he had made for them according to the measurements he had taken previously. All fitted nicely, though Mr. Waterman looked over them carefully.

"It pays to be sure that your shoepacks are right," said Mr. Waterman, "for they are the real boots for use in canoeing trips. They should be comfortable."

"Are these waterproof?" asked Bob. "Father told me that his shoepacks were tight as a drum and that he stepped right out of the canoe into the water whenever he wanted to."

"That's right," replied Mr. Anderson. "It is possible that they may leak just a little the first two days until the seams swell, but after that they will be just as dry as rubber boots."

This information caused Bill and Pud to look at their shoepacks with more care. They were both anxious to try them out. Finally, they were ready for the woods, with everything unnecessary put away at Madame LaBlanche's. Their sleeping bags, extra shirts, moccasins, etc., were in their 34

dunnage bags and all of these were piled outside the door on the porch.

"We still have about a half hour before lunch so let us go over to the store, as I want you all to meet Sandy MacPherson, the owner," said Mr. Waterman. "Sandy is the big man of this village. He runs the big saw mill, owns the store and manages scores of lumbermen in the winter when the trees are cut many miles up the valleys. He's a good man to know as everybody here does as he says. In addition, he talks English and that helps when one cannot talk French very well."

They all went over to the store and found it the center of male society at least for the village. Several men were gathered there while others came and went, buying things in the store, which was quite a large store for such a small village. Sandy seemed delighted to meet the boys.

"I'm delighted to meet you, boys," said he. "You're in for a fine time if you're going into the woods with Mr. Waterman. If you get in trouble, just call on me."

The boys thanked him for his good wishes and after taking a look at the big saw mill, they went back to the boarding house.

"Fill up, boys, as this is the last meal you'll eat in a house for some time," said Mr. Anderson.

"That's all right, but I wager that they'll enjoy some of the meals we're going to have on Lac Parent or Corbeau more than any they have had in a long time," said Mr. Waterman.

Madame LaBlanche outdid herself at this lunch for she had a very good chicken dinner for the boys, with pie, cake, preserved raspberries and crabapples for dessert.

"This is a fine meal to start one off for the woods," said Pud. "I couldn't walk a step if you paid me five dollars."

"You won't have to walk for some time," said Mr. Anderson. "We're going to drive in about sixteen miles and I'll wager that this dinner will be pretty well digested by the time we get there. We're 35
going in on an old wood road so you will hardly find it like the macadamized roads you have in the park in Philadelphia."

A short time later they were off. Two carriages were to take them into the woods, each drawn by a hardy looking though rather small French-Canadian horse and driven by a habitant. Bob was in the front seat with the driver, with Pud and Mr. Waterman in the back seat. Bill and Mr. Anderson were in the other buggy.

"Well, here's a chance to begin talking French," said Mr. Waterman to Bob. "Bill tells me that you spout it quite well."

"Bill is exaggerating," said Bob. "I used to talk French rather well and I hope to pick it up soon again."

"You will," said Mr. Waterman. "You will also find that these habitants speak a pretty good dialect of French. In no time, Bob, you will be able to talk just like the natives."

"Allons, Gi-may," cried the driver to the horse as he touched him with the whip. The horse responded nobly and they bowled along right merrily. Bob tried to think what "Allons, Gi-may" meant. He got the first word all right. That meant "Giddap or Go-along" in the vernacular but what that "Gi-may" meant he could not think. He did not want to ask Mr. Waterman so soon for information. Taking the bull by the horns, Bob began a conversation with the driver. To be sure it was very limited, for Bob had his troubles, but after a little while he got along very well. He was soon asking the driver for the names of the various trees they noted along the road. Bob thought that this would be valuable in the woods. All the habitants in such a place as Escoumains are woodsmen, and the driver, as such, knew the names of everything in the woods. But, every once in a while, he would cry out "Allons, Gi-may" and Bob would wonder what that word "Gi-may" meant. Soon the road led by a small farmhouse that had about two acres cleared around it. 36

"That's the last house you'll see," said the driver to Bob. Bob asked Mr. Waterman if this was right.

"That's right," said Mr. Waterman, "and you will soon know that it is so, for the road gets worse from now on."

This proved correct and Pud was bounced around so that he had no trouble digesting his dinner.

"This is some road," said Pud.

"All the same, we must keep going for we want to ford the river before dark," said Mr. Waterman.

"What river?" asked Pud.

"The Escoumains," said Mr. Waterman. "That is the name of the river at the little village from which we started. The village is called after the river. You will get to know this river well before the summer is over, for we'll run down it to the village some time."

"Are there any rapids?" asked Bob.

"You can't find any river in this country without fast water here and there," said Mr. Waterman. "The only difference is that some rivers have faster water than others. After I have seen you on the lakes awhile and have had the guides teach you a few things we'll take a try at some fast

water and you'll think that there is no better sport than shooting a rapid."

"It must be great fun," said Bob.

Shortly afterwards, they struck the river and the road led up along the bank. It followed the windings of the river and it was slow work. Every now and then the driver yelled "Allons, Gi-may," and Bob racked his brain to think what "Gi-may" meant. At last it came to him in a flash. He turned to the driver and asked in French,

"Is the horse named Gi-may?"

"Oh, yes," said the driver. "He belongs to Monsieur MacPherson and he calls him Gi-may."

"Oh, you mean Jimmy," said Bob. 37

"But, yes, Gi-may," said the driver, and Bob had solved the riddle. He then told Mr. Waterman how he had tried to think what "Gi-may" meant, thinking at first that it meant something like "Allons" but that he had found out it was the horse's name.

It was getting dark when they came to the ford. Mr. Anderson yelled like an Indian and his call was answered by a real Indian yell. A moment later, two men appeared on the opposite bank.

"That's Joe and Pierre," said Mr. Waterman.

"How are we going to get across?" asked Pud.

"That's easy," said Mr. Waterman.

The driver answered Pud by driving the horse down the bank into the water. The stream ran swiftly and the horse put his head down sniffing the water as if frightened. The driver used the whip and the horse proceeded.

"The river's pretty high," yelled Mr. Waterman to Mr. Anderson. "You had better put those dunnage bags on the seat. That buggy of yours is lower than this one."

"All right," came back the cry, almost drowned by the noise of the carriage as it bumped on the rocks at the bottom of the river, the swish of the water and the noise of the horse's hoofs. Each took his dunnage bag on his lap and in the center of the river they had to lift up their feet as the water came into the body of the buggy. It almost seemed that they would be swept down the river. Bob looked at the driver and at Mr. Waterman. Both had a look of unconcern on their faces so Bob felt that things were all right. This turned out to be the case, for five minutes later the horse came out on a sort of sand bar. The driver drove down stream a little and then, putting the whip to the horse, they tore up a steep bank and along a wood road. They had gone only a little distance before they came to an opening where they found Joe and Pierre busy about a fire. The other buggy came up in a moment and everything was dumped out on the side of the road. Mr. 38
Waterman had bought a lot of supplies and this was the real reason why the two guides had met them for they were needed to get the stuff back into the camp where they planned to stay for a week or more. After paying off the drivers, the latter turned and drove back.

"Are they going all the way back to Escoumains to-night?" asked Bob.

"Yes," said Mr. Anderson. "They will go back as far as that logging camp we passed about four miles away. There they will give their horses a little grain and as soon as the moon comes up they will be off, and back in Escoumains about midnight. Those little Canadian horses are very strong and can stand a lot of hard work."

Bob, Pud, and Bill stood around watching the guides and the two men as they busied themselves about the fire.

"Let's have supper first," said Mr. Waterman. "Afterwards we'll pack up the stores we have brought in and get them ready to carry so that we can make a real early start and get to our camp in Lac Parent in time for breakfast."

This was voted a good scheme by the others. Pierre was the guide that was most noticed by the boys. He was a full blooded Montagnais Indian and could not speak a word of English, though he talked French and his own Indian tongue. He was straight as an arrow and moved with the litheness and silence of the real Indian. Though his expression never changed, the boys could see that he missed nothing that went on about him. Joe was a little Frenchman. He could talk a little English and was very proud of that fact.

"The dinnaire is prepair," said he to Bob with a smile.

"Ah, that's the kind of French I can understand," said Pud, as he moved over towards the fire.

"Now be prepared to shout," said Mr. Anderson. "Here's some real trout caught within the hour and cooked as only Joe can cook them." 39

He gave each of the boys a whole trout out of the frying pan and this, with bread, butter, prunes and coffee, was their supper. The trout was hot and all three boys stated that they had never tasted anything better in their lives. They all meant it too. At their praise, Joe's face lighted up, for he was proud of his cooking. They formed a real woodsman picture as they sat or squatted around the fire eating their supper without the use of plates or a table. The picture was rather out of harmony, for the Indian and the Frenchman were the typical woodsmen, the two older men

hardened fishermen, but even the merest novice could see that the three boys were unused to the woods and their present surroundings.

But, in any case, the scene was not lost on the boys. The bright light cast by the fire on the faces of the men and the dark shadows of the woods formed a contrast that was fascinating to the boys. They could not keep their eyes off Pierre with his silent but speedy movements, and his impassive face, nor from Joe, who formed such a contrast with his animation and gestures, his good-natured talk and his smile. Mr. Waterman and Mr. Anderson sat to the side talking in low tones, and the boys felt that these were two men worthy of their confidence. They looked as though they would be ready for any emergency that might arise. They were startled by a splash in the river. Pierre seemed to vanish as if by magic into the trees on the side towards the river. Though he went with great speed, the boys listened in vain to hear him tearing through the bushes. All ears were tensed but not a sound was heard.

"Pierre will let us know what it is," said Mr. Waterman in a matter-of-fact tone, as he motioned the boys to sit down again. "Don't worry, there's nothing up here to do us much harm. Even the bears run from us and it's necessary to hunt them carefully if you want to see one, though we see traces of them every day."

As they were talking, Pierre came back almost as quickly and silently as he had gone. He sat down by the fire and said about three words to Mr. Waterman and relapsed into silence again. 40

"'Big fish,' he says," translated Mr. Waterman.

"It sounded like a deer to me," said Mr. Anderson.

"We'll look for tracks in the morning before we leave," said Mr. Waterman.

He then turned to Pierre and talked to him in French.

"'No deer. Big fish,' he says," said Mr. Waterman as he turned around.

"Well, if he's sure of it, he's right," said Mr. Anderson. "They have ways of knowing some of these wood matters that seem uncanny to us."

"Well, let's get to bed," said Mr. Waterman.

They all turned to their dunnage bags and got out their sleeping bags. Pierre and Joe had only a blanket and they lay down by the fire, wrapping the blanket around their shoulders but otherwise making no further preparation.

"Is that the way they sleep all the time?" said Bob.

"No, they probably did not want to burden themselves with anything extra, as they have lots to carry to-morrow."

The guides had cut down some boughs and the boys soon had a fine bed ready. They were stretched out looking up at the stars in a very few moments and Bob felt that this was just the beginning of what promised to be a most interesting summer. For some time he lay there, watching lazily the fire as it occasionally threw into relief the green branches of the trees, or made the shadows deeper and more mysterious. It was not long, however, that he lay thus undisturbed, for the gnats, "les moustiques" as the guides called them, began to buzz around and made his life miserable. Over the fire, Bob had not been much bothered by this pest but further away they soon became unbearable.

"Ye gods!" said Pud, as he sat up in his blankets. "I'm getting eaten alive." 41

"Let's make a smudge," said Bob. "That will help some."

The two boys got up and soon had a real smudge throwing out a sickly smoke over their blankets. All this time Bill slept peacefully. It seemed that with his head buried in his blankets he was able to stand the gnats, but the smoke got him. Evidently a good puff got under his blankets, for he woke up suddenly and said in a choked voice,

"What in sin's going on? I'm choking. What's the idea?"

Just then a swarm of gnats enveloped his head and he ducked under his blankets. No more was said, for Bill knew why the smoke was there. All three covered up their heads and were soon asleep. It got real cold in the middle of the night and the gnats became too torpid to move. The boys slept like logs for they were tired. It could not have been more than four o'clock when the cheery voice of Mr. Waterman was heard calling them up.

"Out of your blankets, boys. We're going all the way to Lac Parent before breakfast and that will take some hiking."

In a few minutes, the camp was a scene of the greatest activity. The guides filled large dunnage bags with the provisions that had been brought in. This was soon done and the boys had also packed their blankets in their bags.

"Is everything ready?" asked Mr. Waterman.

"I think so," said Mr. Anderson. "You boys will have about all you can handle to carry in your dunnage bags. We'll manage the rest all right, I guess."

The guides led off after loading themselves with two large bags. Each of them carried at least one hundred and fifty pounds. The Indian seemed to handle his load with the greatest ease. He looked back and helped the boys adjust their bags more comfortably, or so that they would carry more easily. They had gone only a half mile when they came to a small lake. It was only a quarter mile across it, but the guides had canoes there. The loads were soon in the boats and they got the other side very quickly. Then to the surprise of the boys, the Indian and Mr. Waterman got the packs on their backs and then, lifting the canoes, they got them over their shoulders and away they went.

"Gee whizz!" said Bill. "I thought you two had a big load on before but you walk away with those canoes with ease."

"There's a great knack in carrying canoes," said Mr. Waterman.

"That's all right," said Pud. "But those two men must have at least two hundred pounds on their backs and they are going right along."

"I'll admit," said Mr. Anderson, "that they have a larger load than usual, but they are not going far and we'll relieve them on the next portage."

The way led up across a ridge. Part of it was rather steep and the boys found themselves panting as they got to the top and began the descent to the next little lake beyond. They found Mr. Waterman and Pierre already there and with the canoes in the water.

"That was some pull," said Mr. Waterman. "Pierre is in better condition than I am. He doesn't seem to mind it a bit, but I found that a little heavy before breakfast."

"We'll help with the dunnage on the next portage," said Bob. "My bag does not feel very heavy. Let me try the canoe."

"I'll let you have the canoe," said Mr. Waterman, "but I'll take your stuff."

This was done. Mr. Waterman showed Bob how to arrange the paddles so that they would rest on his shoulders. He also showed him the use of the small rope that Bob had noticed along the middle stay of the canoe. This was put over the head so that when the canoe was rightly placed Bob was carrying it on his shoulders, his forearms and also his head. He found the weight well distributed and he walked away like a veteran. He found it awkward work at first to keep to the trail and to avoid bumping the canoe into the trees. He soon got used to this and went along finely. He had no trouble until they got to the top of the little divide between the two lakes and started down. They had gone down only a little piece before he stepped on a piece of slippery moss, his feet flew out from under him, and down he came with the canoe on top of him. Rather crestfallen, he got up and began to arrange the paddles, etc., in place again.

"Had a tumble?" said Mr. Waterman. "That was because you didn't have the weight well balanced coming down the hill. You'll soon learn. Do you need any help with the canoe?"

"No, I think that I can manage," said Bob.

He then caught hold of the gunwales of the canoe and started to lift it over his head, but he plunged forward and down came the canoe again.

"Let me help you this time," said Mr. Waterman. "When we get to camp and get rid of these packs, I'll show you just how to do it. It's easy when you know how."

Bob once more had the canoe on his shoulders and arrived at the next lake without further mishap. They found every one waiting for them. They were soon across and after one more portage, they reached Lac Parent. Far down the lake, they saw smoke rising.

"Jean is waiting for us," said Mr. Anderson to Mr. Waterman.

"Is there another guide?" asked Bob.

"Oh, yes," replied Mr. Waterman. "We have Pierre's son with us. He was told to have breakfast ready for us at six o'clock and I'll bet he's been waiting for some time, as it has taken us a little longer than I expected to get here."

The two canoes sped down the lake. The boys looked around with much interest. There was a real mountain on the far shore of the lake, part of which came down to the water very precipitously. The small islands in the lake made it more picturesque. They soon rounded a point of land and came full on the camp lying before them. With its line of tents, the smoke curling up from the fire, and the beauty of the forests in the background, it made a scene that would rejoice any fisherman's eye. As they came to the shore, Jean came running down. He was a big fellow for his age, seventeen. He had very regular features like his father, and was remarkably well built.

The boys landed and one and all felt that at last they were fairly in the woods and ready for whatever might befall.

CHAPTER III

CAMP AT LAKE PARENT

No sooner had they landed than Jean announced that breakfast was ready.

"Let's get something into our stomachs before we think of anything else," said Mr. Waterman.

"That suits me," said Pud, and all the others joined in so that the motion was carried unanimously.

The party went across a little stream and sat down at a table made of logs that had been split fairly in two. The middle sides of the logs were up, thus making a smooth surface, but this was really made a fact by big strips of birch bark that covered the top. A long seat at each side of the table was also made out of a split log, while a sawed-off stump made a special seat for Mr. Waterman at the head of the table. This table was under a big tent fly. Jean had set the table with tin plates and cups and a goodly portion of prunes was on each plate. They set to at once and after the prunes, some good oatmeal was brought on. To the surprise of the boys, they had milk.

"Where do you get milk up here?" asked Bill.

"Oh, we get it from the mountain goats," said Mr. Anderson, with a wink to Mr. Waterman.

"We're lucky," said the latter. "We now have four mountain goats that are getting real tame, though it takes some time to round them up each morning."

"Why this tastes like real milk to me," said Pud.

"Of course," said Mr. Anderson. "Very few people can tell the difference between goat's milk and the ordinary cow's milk."

"I'll have to watch you milk them," said Pud. "It must be interesting."

"It is interesting," said Mr. Waterman. "I really think that we'll soon have another goat around here."

At this, Mr. Anderson laughed heartily, and Pud saw that the laugh was on him.

"I'm easy," said Pud; "I know I'm easy. But seriously speaking, where do you get this milk? It's a little thin but otherwise it's O.K."

"It's evaporated milk," said Mr. Waterman. "It comes in cans and is easy to make, as it requires only the proper quantity of water to make it fairly good. You'll get a lot of it this summer for that's the only kind one can have in the woods."

"We're having ham and eggs this morning," said Mr. Anderson. "We're going to let you have the pleasure of getting your own fish for dinner."

"Oh, Heavens," said Pud. "I'm afraid that I'll go hungry, for I've never cast a line in my life."

"Well, the lake is full of them, and even a very poor fisherman is sure to catch a few," said Mr. Waterman.

"That's good news," said Bill. "I'm a novice at the game, but I certainly am anxious to see what I can do and to try my hand."

"That's the spirit," said Mr. Anderson. "It won't take long for you boys to learn. As soon as we get things settled a bit here, we'll go after the shiny beauties."

After their breakfast, the boys had a chance to look around. They were delighted with the site of the camp. It was on a level spot at the shore and the camp was divided by a little stream. On the far side of the stream was the tent for the guides, the cook tent, and the dining tent, which consisted of the table described before with the big tent fly over it. Looking across the little stream, the layout was not only very picturesque, but it also served to divide the camp very well from what might be called the social standpoint. The guides had put quite a little time on clearing up the shore so that there was a very nicely cleared spot in front of the five shelter tents, all of which faced the lake. They made a very fine appearance. The view from the front of the tents was very good. The lake opened out, and right opposite there was a big bluff that shot straight down into the lake from a height of at least three hundred feet. The whole camp, including the tents for the guides, stretched along the water front for about one hundred yards.

There was one other feature of the camp which proved especially interesting to the boys. The guides had broadened this stream which divided the camp into a sort of pool near the edge of the lake, with a little log bridge at each end of the pool. Into this pool, they had put any unusually fine trout they had caught, and already there were nearly a hundred speckled beauties swimming around in the clear water. Each end of the pool had been fixed with crossed willow wands so that the fish could not get out. This pond had proved a never-ending source of pleasure to the boys, for it must be remembered, that they had practically never seen a trout before.

"When do you expect Jack back?" Mr. Waterman inquired of Mr. Anderson.

"He said he'd be back some time to-day," replied the latter.

"Who's Jack?" asked Pud.

"He's one of the guides," said Mr. Waterman. "He's a corker. He's been up in through to Lac Corbeau trimming up some of the portages."

"You'll find Jack the best fellow in the world," said Mr. Anderson. "He knows the woods like a book and he can cook very well. We won't know what real grub is until he gets back."

"Can he talk English?" asked Bill. 48

"Sure," said Mr. Waterman. "He's a Yankee. I brought him up here the first year so I would be sure to have one dependable guide."

"Well, let's go fishing," said Pud, as if that was all there was about it.

"All right," said Mr. Waterman, "but first of all, you'll have to be initiated into the ABC's of fishing, namely, getting your rods and lines ready."

"What's hard about that?" asked Pud.

"Oh, nothing much if you know how, but quite a little if you have never set up a rod and line," said Mr. Waterman.

"Get your tackle and come over to the table," said Mr. Anderson.

They were all soon there and under the skillful tutelage of Mr. Waterman and Mr. Anderson, the boys soon had their rods in readiness. Pud was much surprised at the care taken by Mr. Waterman in seeing that everything was ship-shape before he would pass the tackle as perfect. Pud learned more about reels, lines, leaders and flies than he had ever heard tell of before. At last they were all ready.

"I'll paddle, Bob. You, Mr. Anderson, take Bill and I'll have Joe look after Pud," said Mr. Waterman.

"What's the idea?" asked Bill.

"Fishing in this lake, two generally go together, one paddling and the other casting," said Mr. Waterman.

"That would be the best way to-day in any case," said Mr. Anderson. "We can each show the boys how to cast and, in fact, give them a lesson in the art of trout fishing. When you see Joe here, or Jack or Mr. Waterman casting, boys, you will agree with me that real trout fishing is an art."

"We'll need the instruction," said Bob.

They were soon out on the water.

"Let's have your rod a minute, Bob," said Mr. Waterman. Bob handed it over and his tutor showed him how to cast. Bob was awkward at first but he was soon casting very nicely. Bob was so 49
interested trying to get the knack of casting that he wholly forgot that he was on a lake full of trout. He was therefore very much surprised to feel his fly snatched away like an arrow.

"You've got one," called Mr. Waterman.

Bob pulled in quickly and his rod bent almost double.

"Give him line, give him line," cried Mr. Waterman.

Bob let out his line and all at once the tension ceased.

"I believe he's got away," said Bob.

"Reel in, reel in!" cried Mr. Waterman.

Bob did so, and the fish made another rush. This time Bob let out his line and when the trout stopped he began to reel in. He soon saw the trout near the canoe and tried to pull him out of the water into the canoe with a motion as fast as he had often done when fishing for catfish on the banks of a river. He got the trout out of the water, but with a mighty wiggle, the trout hopped off the hook and disappeared like a silver streak in the water.

"I didn't think you were going to do that," said Mr. Waterman. "I wasn't looking, as I was just getting the net ready. The next time, pull him easily to the side of the canoe and I'll get him with the landing net."

"I'm sorry," said Bob.

"That's all right," said Mr. Waterman. "It was really my fault. The novice does just what you did nine times out of ten, and I should have remembered that and warned you."

"I'll remember the next time," said Bob, emphatically.

"I wonder how the others are getting on," said Bob, as he looked around. Bill was down the lake

casting in good fashion. Pud was close by, and looked very awkward.

"Watch out," said Joe to him, "or you will catch me in the eye." 50

"Don't worry," replied Pud, "I'm much more likely to take off one of my own ears."

"Do it like you crack de whip," suggested Joe.

"All right," said Pud.

He gave the line a mighty heave but the fly flew too low and caught him in the back. It must have stuck in a little, for Pud gave a lurch forward and, in spite of Joe's frantic efforts with his paddle, over went the canoe.

"Hold on to your rod," yelled Mr. Waterman, when he saw Pud go sprawling into the water. That was the last thing Pud thought of for he cast the rod away and turned to the canoe. Joe was already there. With an expert twirl, he righted the canoe with but little water in it. In another moment he was in the back seat, giving Pud directions how to climb in without upsetting the canoe. Three different times Pud upset the canoe before he got in. As they started to row back to the camp Pud felt something sticking him in the back. He felt and it was the fly which had remained fastened to him.

"Stay quiet, Pud," yelled Bob. "We'll come over and see if we can't save your rod."

Pud stopped paddling and they soon fished up his rod from the bottom of the lake.

"You're lucky," said Mr. Waterman. "Remember that rods do not grow on bushes up here. If you're tipped over again, hold on to your rod. Paste that right in your hat and remember it."

"I won't forget it," said Pud. "I'll be back again when I get some dry clothes on. I'm going to catch a fish this morning if I have to dive for one."

"You dive enough already," said Joe in his serious way.

Bob and Mr. Waterman paddled off and it was not long before Bob had landed his first trout. It was a beauty, about eighteen inches long and weighing about two pounds. In another hour he had seven in his basket and was getting more skillful each time. 51

"Suppose you paddle and let me fish for a while," said Mr. Waterman at last.

"Good," said Bob. "I'll be glad to see you do it."

"You won't see anything extraordinary," said Mr. Waterman. "I just want to show you a few things though. We've kept out in open water. Well, the best place for trout is near the shore, under overhanging branches, near rocks or trees that have fallen into the lake. If I had brought you to such places at first you would probably have lost half your tackle. But, to be a good fisherman, you must not only know how to cast, but you must be able to cast accurately."

Bob then followed Mr. Waterman's directions and paddled close to the shore. With unerring aim, Mr. Waterman cast the fly almost to the desired inch. It seemed uncanny to Bob, but trout after trout was hooked and played with a master hand. Only one got away, due to no fault of Mr. Waterman.

"We've caught plenty," said Mr. Waterman at last. "I guess we won't starve for a couple of days."

"I should think not," said Bob, as he looked in his basket and saw the mass of speckled beauties.

Their fishing had brought them down to the far end of the lake.

"That's quite a mountain there," said Bob, pointing to the far shore.

"Yes, the whole country here is filled with just such mountains with lakes on at least three sides. It is a curious formation, but this makes it very fine for hunting and fishing."

The paddle back to camp was soon over. They found Bill and Pud also just getting out of their canoes.

"That's some sport," said Bill. "I have nearly two dozen fine trout. I hope to be able to cast well before long and then I'll do better."

"How did you get along, Pud?" asked Bob. 52

"Oh, pretty well. It took me some time to get the knack of it, but Joe at last said that I was improving. I knew I was, because after a while he stopped dodging every time I cast."

The boys got out of the canoes and made for their tents.

"Wait a minute, wait a minute," said Mr. Anderson. "We all clean our own fish at this camp, so come along."

The boys followed him, and under his direction they soon got so they could clean a trout in no time at all. They then made for their tents, got stripped and had a good swim.

Mr. Waterman and Mr. Anderson watched the boys from the shore.

"Well, it's fine to have the boys with us again, isn't it?" said Mr. Waterman.

"You bet," said Mr. Anderson. "They are a fine trio. I only hope that those who come later will be as agreeable."

"I like that Bob Hunt," said Mr. Waterman. "He's very keen. He took to casting in no time. He'll be an expert in a month."

"Williams is a fine boy and Pud is awkward, but I'm no judge of character if he isn't as big-hearted as they make them," said Mr. Anderson.

"He's a card. It certainly was funny to see him casting. Every time he cast Joe would duck, and at last he caught himself in the back so hard that he tipped over the canoe."

"Is that so?" said Mr. Anderson.

Mr. Waterman then had to tell him about the upset and they laughed heartily.

"He's a good swimmer, so there wasn't any danger," said Mr. Waterman in conclusion.

"He's good and strong and should make a good man for the carries," remarked Mr. Anderson, as he noted Pud's bulky form as he came out of the water.

"Yes, some good portaging will take off about ten pounds of fat and make him as hard as nails," said Mr. Waterman. 53

"What's that you say?" asked Pud, as he turned towards them.

"I was just saying," said Mr. Waterman, "that some good portaging would take ten pounds or so off you and make you as hard as nails."

"Lead me to it. I'm game," replied Pud. "I came up here not only to learn how to fish, but mainly to get hardened up for football in the fall."

"Don't worry then," said Mr. Anderson. "Anybody that charges you next October will think that he has run into a stone wall."

"How long before dinner?" asked Pud, as he looked longingly across the little stream where Jean was busily engaged around the fire.

"Not very long," said Mr. Waterman. "Let's go over and see if we can hurry things along."

"All right," said Pud. "Just give me a minute to slip into my clothes."

Mr. Waterman went over to the fire and he was joined there in a few minutes by all three boys. They were set at peeling potatoes and onions, for Joe had three partridges the previous day and they were going to have a stew. The boys' task was soon through and it was not long until the smell of the partridge stew and the fresh trout on the fire fairly made the boys' mouths water. They soon set the table and then went off to try and get a look at a woodpecker they heard hammering away in the woods. They had just gotten under the big old tree on which the woodpecker was busy and were watching his diligent operations when they heard a welcome call and they broke for the camp. They arrived with Pud bringing up the rear, puffing and blowing. They then sat down to what all the boys afterwards stated seemed to them the best meal they had ever tasted. Partridge stew, fresh trout, hot bread cooked in an oven that stood before the fire and caught the heat in that way, plenty of tea and a dessert of stewed apricots formed the menu. It was indeed a merry party that sat around the table with Mr. Waterman at the head. The guides 54 were the waiters and they were kept busy bringing the trout hot and sizzling from the fire to the table.

"I take it all back," said Bill Williams, "I said I didn't like fish. I meant the kind we get in the city. But—this trout is fit for the gods. It is certainly good."

"You're right," said Pud. "I didn't think that any fish could taste so good."

"My sentiments, too," said Bob, "and as for this partridge stew, there's only one thing the matter with it and that there isn't enough of it."

"That's something we don't have every day, but we have the fish always and we never get tired of it," said Mr. Anderson.

At last, filled to repletion, they leaned back and began a general conversation.

"I know one thing," said Pud, with a sigh.

"What's that?" asked Bill.

"I'll never take off any weight here. I've just eaten enough to feed a family."

"Don't worry," said Mr. Waterman. "You'll need all the food you get when you're carrying a canoe across some of the portages we'll be on this summer."

"We'll take it easy for an hour, and then let us all get busy and get out balsam boughs for our beds. Mr. Waterman and I have a pretty good lot already, but a little more will help. We've left you the privilege of making your own beds as all good campers insist on doing."

"That's a good idea," said Mr. Waterman. "That will take some time. There's a lot of cleaning up to do along the shore front also, so that we'll put in a little time each day on that. We'll kill two

birds with one stone, as we'll get out a lot of firewood at the same time. That will leave the guides free to make us a landing."

"Where will you get the boards?" asked Bill.

"Leave it to Joe," said Mr. Anderson. "He'll have as nice a landing out there in a day or two as you would care to see, and there won't be a nail in it and it will be made entirely with his axe." 55

"I'll watch them do it," said Pud, with an air of unbelief.

They all then went to their tents and for an hour they lounged around, dozing and talking. Mr. Anderson then roused them out. They got their short axes and went into the woods. Each had a big bag and it was not very long until they returned laden with the fragrant tips. More than one trip was necessary, but at last all had downy balsam beds on which to lay their blankets. They made up their blankets for the night and did various other things around the tents.

"Let's go for a paddle," at last said Bob.

This was agreed to eagerly, and they all got into a canoe and went on an exploring expedition. First they went opposite and started to climb the bluff. They found it a harder task than they had supposed, as finally they had to go back some distance before they could get to the top. At last they came out on the edge and brought Mr. Waterman and Mr. Anderson down to the edge of the opposite shore by their shouts. They waved to the boys and then slowly disappeared in the trees.

"This is some little mountain, isn't it?" said Bob.

"It certainly is," said Bill.

"Let's roll down one of these big bowlders and see what happens," said Pud.

The front of the bluff was rather crumbly, with big rocks near the edge looking as if they had been left there by the frost, or rather as if the frost had pried away their brothers to let them crash down into the lake. They soon found a big rock that looked as if it would move easily. Pud found a small tree that had fallen down, and with this as a lever they loosened the rock and it started down the cliff. It moved slowly at first and the boys drew close to the edge to watch its course. Down it dashed, gathering momentum and finally taking along with it into the water a 56
small tree that grew out from the mountain about half way down. In their eagerness to see the splash they went too near to the edge, and the ground began to give way beneath them. Bob, as usual, was the first to act. He bumped Bill back with his shoulder and then caught Pud's coat just as it was disappearing. Bill, quick-witted also, rushed to his assistance, and between them they hauled Pud back, though all three were on the ground and nearly over the edge before the two could stop the heavy Pud. A yell from the opposite shore told them that Mr. Waterman and Mr. Anderson had seen their predicament. Bob and Bill held on and slowly pulled Pud up to them. When all three at last arose, probably only a minute later, they were bathed in perspiration, as they had all been under a terrible physical strain.

"That was a close shave," said Pud, as he walked over to the edge to look down.

"Come back, you crazy Indian. Don't you know that it was your weight that caused the trouble before, and there you are, trying to tempt fate again," said Bob.

"You're right, fellows. I'm some ungrateful cuss. I've not even thanked you for saving my precious neck."

"Don't thank me. Thank Bob," said Bill. "He pushed me back and then caught you just as you were preparing to take a high dive that would have made Steve Brodie look like a piker. Thank Bob. He's always there with the presence of mind stuff when it's needed."

"Not a bit of it, Pud," said Bob. "Bill is too modest. If he hadn't caught me in time, you would have pulled me over the edge, so you see we both owe our lives to him."

"I guess it's up to me to do all the thanking, for if you had not grabbed my coat, you would not have been in any danger yourself."

"Well, let's forget it, fellows," said Bob.

Just then they heard a voice from the water, and they looked down to see their two leaders in a canoe. 57

"We're all right," yelled Pud.

"Don't go near the edge," yelled Mr. Waterman. "It's dangerous."

"All right," yelled Bob. "We're coming right down, so don't worry."

They found the two men waiting for them when they reached their canoe at the bottom of the cliff. Explanations were in order.

"We saw it all," said Mr. Waterman, "for when that rock started down that cliff it made such a racket that we rushed down to the shore. We felt like yelling at you to get back, but just as the thought occurred to us, we saw the rock under your feet giving way. Then Bob knocked Bill back and caught Pud's coat. We thought it was all over with the two of you, but Bill recovered his balance just in time to grab Bob and, I tell you, we sweat some while you were tugging to get Pud

back, for it was a wonder that the rock under you did not give way and let you all down."

"You're a plucky lot of boys," said Mr. Anderson. "You will have to remember not to go too near to the edge of these cliffs up here, for the frost has made the face of some of them very brittle."

"We certainly won't forget it," said Bill.

"We've had enough excitement for one day," said Bob. "Let's go back to camp and take it easy for the rest of the afternoon."

"I'll take it back. I'll take it back," said Pud, as he held up his hands in mock terror.

"What's that you'll take back?" asked Bob.

"That I was bound to put on flesh up here. To get thrown out of a canoe in the morning and to come within an ace of making a three hundred foot dive in the afternoon is just about enough excitement to make any one lose weight. I bet I lost five pounds in that minute and a half when Bob had me by the coat, and I was wondering whether he could hold on to my elephantine form; 58
whether the rock would not give way, and whether I could get back to safety. I sweat like a bull."

"It certainly made me sweat too," said Bob.

"That was because you were under terrific physical and nervous tension. A minute or even half a minute under such conditions will exhaust one more than half a day's hard work," said Mr. Waterman.

"Gee, I don't dare write home my full experiences of my first day at camp," said Pud. "That mamma of mine would be up here taking me home."

"Yes, I guess we had both better let this story wait until we are home, for it would only worry them," said Bob.

"That's the sensible thing to do, for it is very unlikely that you will be exposed to such danger a second time," said Mr. Anderson.

The two canoes started across the lake. They noticed the small tree dislodged by the bowlder. It was floating near the base of the cliff and had been snapped off like a pipe stem.

In spite of the excitement of the day, the boys had a good appetite for their supper. Afterwards they sat around the camp fire that had been made in front of Mr. Waterman's tent and talked of many things. The guides could be seen lying back on their balsam boughs before the fire, talking and gesticulating.

"We'll have to go over and talk to the guides some time," said Bob. "They seem to have a lot to tell each other."

"Yes, they are talkative to-night. Generally they have not much to say unless you get them telling some of their experiences," said Mr. Anderson.

"What do you say to a taste of portaging to-morrow?" asked Mr. Waterman of the boys.

"That's fine," said Bob, answering for the others. "Where shall we go?" 59

"We'll go up north to a little lake where the water always seems a little warmer than it is here, probably because it's shallower. We'll catch some fish, climb a mountain and have a good swim."

"That 'listens' fine," said Pud.

"We'll take a lunch along and make a day of it," said Mr. Anderson. "For one, I'm going to turn in, as I have been up since four o'clock this morning, and I'm dead for sleep."

"That's a good idea," said Mr. Waterman.

In a short time, the boys were sound asleep and only the glowing coals told the starry sky that there human beings were to be found.

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CHAPTER IV

ACROSS THE PORTAGE

Six o'clock the next morning found every one up and ready for a dip. Mr. Anderson, having heard of the fact that Pud was bound to have his morning dip no matter how cold the water, thought to have some sport with him.

"Pud, have you seen our famous shower bath?" asked Mr. Anderson quietly.

"No. Where is it?" said Pud.

"It's just up this little stream. It's a little cold for me, but they tell me that you like cold water in the morning."

"Oh, yes," said Bill, "Pud has to have his cold shower every morning, winter or summer."

"Lead us to it," said Bob.

Mr. Anderson then led the boys up a path which finally came out right under a fifteen-foot waterfall. It certainly looked like a natural shower bath, for the water was broken in its fall by the jutting rocks. Bill put his hand into the water and pulled it back with a jerk.

"Some cold," said he.

Bob did the same.

"Me for the lake. That's too cold for my blood," was Bob's remark.

It was certainly up to Pud. He tried the water and could hardly restrain himself from pulling back.

"Fine, fine," said Pud, as he pushed under the down-rushing water and stood there for a minute. He came out almost breathless because of the contraction of his muscles by the cold water.

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"Won't you indulge?" asked Mr. Anderson, turning to Bill and Bob.

"No, thank you," said Bill. "To tell the truth, I really prefer the lake."

"Well, I'll beat you to it," said Bob, and off they dashed down the path. In a moment Mr. Anderson and Pud heard them splash as they plunged into the lake.

"That's some cold shower," said Pud.

"I thought that you would like it," said Mr. Anderson seriously.

Pud looked at him said nothing as they went down the path. As they came out at the lake, Mr. Waterman said,

"Pierre objects to our using the stream for bathing purposes, as we use it for our drinking and cooking."

"I didn't think of that," said Mr. Anderson.

"Neither did I until he spoke to me about it," said Mr. Waterman.

"That's too bad," said Pud. "I thought I was going to have a real cold shower every morning."

He said it so seriously that neither Mr. Waterman nor Mr. Anderson knew whether he really meant it or not. To Bob later, Pud stated that the intervention of Pierre was providential for he had never been under such a real icy shower before.

After their swim they all sat down to breakfast and enjoyed every bit of it. After breakfast they spent some time cleaning up the camp. They got everything ship-shape in their tents first and then they cleared up a part of the beach. The boys enjoyed this as the experience of wielding an axe was new to then. They also had cause for wonder at the way in which their two leaders used the axes. They went at things very strenuously and seemed to be able to hit just where they wished. Bob commented on their skill, but they both stated that they were mere beginners in comparison with the guides.

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About nine o'clock Mr. Waterman called a halt, and they got ready for their little journey. They took along just a loaf of bread and a small tin in which butter, salt and pepper were packed. The boys took along their rods and Mr. Waterman carried a small rifle. In explanation of the latter he said that they might have a shot at a duck or a partridge. They took two canoes. Bob went with Mr. Waterman, while Pud and Bill carried Mr. Anderson as a passenger. To their surprise, Mr. Waterman led the way just around the bend and then to the opposite shore. The boys had not noticed a path, but on landing they could see a trail leading off along a little stream that emptied into the lake at this place. On landing, Mr. Waterman fixed the paddles in the right way, took up the canoe and was off. Bob carried his gun, and he had all he could do to keep up with his leader. Mr. Anderson also wished to make the first portage, but Pud prevailed, and after a little trouble, they started off. Pud was soon puffing and blowing, for the path was steep. Mr. Anderson led the way for the other two had been lost to view even before the second party got started.

"This isn't so easy as it looks," said Pud to Bill.

"If you're getting tired, I'll take it," answered Bill.

"Not on your life. I've got to learn the knack of this portaging, for I mean to do a lot of it this summer, and I might just as well get used to it now as any time," said Pud, between his puffs.

"Let the weight rest on forearms, head and shoulders and you won't mind it," said Mr. Anderson. "As you say, there's a knack to it. Also, it takes muscles that we don't use right along, and for that reason it's rather tiring at first."

By this time they had topped the little divide between the two lakes and they began to descend. Pud began to have his troubles, for like all novices, he carried the canoe poorly. He came near to

falling several times, and it was with a sigh of relief that he came out on the shore of a small lake. Bob and Mr. Waterman were in their canoe off the shore, evidently waiting for them. 63

"How's the portaging?" yelled Bob, as soon as Pud came in sight.

"Fine," said Pud. "But I have a crease here in the back of my neck that will be sore for a week."

They were soon off again, with Bob leading. The lake opened out and they found themselves in a stretch that gleamed a good mile ahead of them. All at once Bob slowed down and Mr. Anderson called on the boys to stop paddling.

"He sees something," said Mr. Anderson.

All eyes were on Mr. Waterman as he got his gun ready. Over to the left the boys saw three ducks swimming, and they knew that this was the reason for their stop. "Bang!" went the gun, and one of the ducks toppled over, but the other two disappeared as if by magic.

"Pick up the bird," yelled Mr. Waterman to Mr. Anderson.

"All right," replied the latter.

Mr. Waterman looked around carefully, and a minute later the two ducks arose to the surface some distance farther on. Bob and he took up their paddles and tried to get within a reasonable distance again. They had scared the birds so that they kept swimming away, keeping out of distance. At last Mr. Waterman laid down his paddle and got his rifle again. This time he missed, for it must be remembered that he was shooting with a rifle and not with a shotgun. It was only after three more trials that he bagged his second duck and it took a good hour longer to get the other one. For some reason the birds did not want to leave the lake and they were all three finally in Mr. Anderson's canoe.

"That will make another fine pot-pie," said Bill.

"We haven't any pot to make it in," said Pud.

"We'll have it back at camp," said Mr. Anderson. "These ducks, with some dumplings and flour gravy, will be some dish." 64

They made for the far end of the lake and then got out. By this time it was nearly twelve o'clock, and they debated whether to climb the mountain then or wait until they had had something to eat.

"I tell you what to do," said Anderson. "You fellows go and climb this mountain. I'll stay here, catch a few fish, then build a fire and have everything ready for you when you return."

This was considered a good plan, so the three boys and Mr. Waterman set out. There was no trail this time, but Mr. Waterman strode ahead with confidence.

"Have you been over here before?" asked Bob.

"Oh, yes," replied Mr. Waterman. "I want to come here again several times before the summer is over, for when we get to the top of this mountain you will see something that very few city dwellers have ever seen, namely, a real primeval forest."

"I thought that this was all primeval, way up here," said Bob.

"No," was the reply. "The big lumber companies see to it that there is but little first growth any place where they can get the lumber to tide water."

"Well, how is it that we'll see first growth up here, then?" asked Bill.

"You'll see when we get there," replied Mr. Waterman.

He walked on and they followed. Pud was saying nothing, but he was having his troubles keeping up. He looked ahead at Mr. Waterman, who was apparently sauntering along, and he wondered how he did it. Fortunately for him, Mr. Waterman was very observant, for he noted Pud's distress and slackened his pace or stopped to point out some great pine tree or other object worth noting.

"Do you smell him?" suddenly said Mr. Waterman, as he stopped and looked around carefully.

"Smell whom?" asked Pud, stopping in his tracks. 65

"The bear," said Mr. Waterman. "Can't you smell something in the air? I can. A bear has been here not very long ago. Ah, there are his tracks." He pointed to an old pine stump, which had been clawed recently. The boys looked at the stump, but they saw no tracks.

"Come here," said Mr. Waterman, as he strode over the stump. "Bears like grubs, ants, and things of that kind, so you will often know that bears are around by noting stumps, hollow trees, etc., when they have clawed at them."

The boys came over. Bob looked at the stump and then down at the ground.

"There's a track," said Bob, as he pointed at a rather big print in the soft earth on the lower side of the stump. Sure enough, they could plainly see the footprint of the bear.

"Will he come after us?" inquired Pud, looking around rather anxiously, with his eyes resting

finally on Mr. Waterman's rifle.

"I'll answer your unasked question first," replied Mr. Waterman. "No, this gun would be worse than nothing for a bear. It would only wound him, and that would only make sure of an attack. As for your real question, there is not one chance in a hundred that the bear will come for us. The bears in this part of the country are well-known black bears and they have hardly ever been known to attack men unless wounded or backed into a corner. Judging by the fact that I smelt this bear even before I noticed this stump, I would guess that we disturbed him and that as soon as he smelt us, away he went, and he's probably a mile away by this time."

They then went on, and after a good climb they came out on the top of the mountain. Mr. Waterman first led them to the southern side. The slope fell quite abruptly to a little lake far below.

"Do you see the St. Lawrence?" asked Mr. Waterman.

"No. Where?" asked Bob. 66

Mr. Waterman then pointed to the south, and about fifteen miles away they could see the broad St. Lawrence stretching as far as the eye could reach.

"I thought that was a cloud," said Bill. "I see now that it is water, and away off there to the right I can see a big steamer making for Quebec."

Mr. Waterman then pointed out several lakes, giving them names and telling them that they would visit practically all of them before the summer was over. He told them that Lac Parent, on which they were camping, was hidden from view by the mountains next to the one on which they stood. It was a fine day and Bill thought that he could distinguish the Andirondack Mountains far off to the south in the United States. Mr. Waterman stated that this might be true, as they had been seen from this vicinity on very clear days. After thoroughly enjoying the view to the south, Mr. Waterman turned away and they went in a northeasterly direction. In a little while they came to another side of the mountain. In a short time Mr. Waterman led them out onto a bold rocky precipice that stood out from the mountain. They looked down into a gulch hundreds of feet below. They gazed at an immense coliseum, the sides of which were lined with giant trees. It was the wildest bit of scenery that the boys had ever looked on.

"That looks just like some of the mining camps in the Rockies," said Bob. "I've seen pictures of several that look just like this."

"That's just what struck me when I first looked down from this rock," said Mr. Waterman. "It certainly does look as if there might be some kind of mineral down there. As yet, I have not been able to find time to go down to the bottom. Those trees interest me. They are the finest I have ever seen. I can't see any lake down there, but there must be some outlet for the water."

"Why not come over here some time and go down there and investigate?" said Bill. 67

"We'll do that, and I'll bring you along. Let's go down the gulch a bit so you can get a look at some of these great tamaracks and cedars. You won't see them any place else."

They followed their leader, who gave them another hour of hard climbing, though he finally brought them out, half way down the mountain.

"Ye gods!" cried Mr. Waterman, as he looked at his watch. "It's after two o'clock. Let's hurry, for Mr. Anderson will think that we are lost."

Suiting action to the word, he plowed along, and though the boys were not sure in what direction they were going, they soon came out on a lake. Mr. Waterman gave a cry, which was answered immediately, not far off.

In another moment they saw Mr. Anderson putting off in a canoe. They all got in, though it brought the gunwale of the canoe down pretty close to the water. Paddling carefully, they soon landed, to find a fire burning, several fish all ready cleaned and ready for the fire, and bread all ready buttered.

"We forgot the frying pan," said Pud. "How are we going to cook the fish?"

"That's easy," said Bob. "Haven't you ever cooked fish on a stick over the fire?"

"Never," replied Pud.

"Well, you have something to learn, then," said Mr. Anderson. "You'll find pointed sticks all ready, so get busy, as it's getting late and we must be on our way."

The boys found the sticks all ready prepared, and it was not long before they were all sitting around the fire, eating fish with one hand and holding another trout over the fire with the other. The two men had often cooked fish this way and they did theirs to a turn, but the boys more often than not had theirs burned outside and half raw within. But their exercise had given them such appetites that the fish disappeared as if by magic. They stopped when there was no more bread nor fish. 68

"You boys are some feeders," said Mr. Anderson. "I thought I had more fish than we could eat."

"I'm just getting into action," said Pud, as he licked off his fingers and looked around for more.

But more there was not, so they got into their canoes and were off down the lake. When they came to the portage Bob took the canoe and marched off into the bushes followed by Mr. Waterman carrying rod and gun. Bill insisted on carrying the canoe back, and he did very well considering that it was his first experience. He also found the going down hill rather difficult, but he soon balanced the canoe properly and had no more trouble. When they got to the end of the trail they saw Bob and Mr. Waterman just rounding the point for camp. They set out after them, but by the time they arrived, they found them already stripped and in the water.

"Come on in, the water's fine," yelled Bob.

"We'll be with you in a minute," said Bill.

On getting out of the canoe they found that the guides had already been busy with the landing. Four logs had been split in two and were ready at the chosen place. Mr. Anderson carried the ducks to the cook tent and he came back to assure the boys that they were in for a rare treat for supper.

"Jack's back, and he said that he would see to this pot-pie himself."

The boys turned at once to note the new guide. They found a rather old man, sharp of feature and eye but not very strong-looking.

"I thought he was a big fellow," said Bob.

"Oh, no," replied Mr. Waterman. "Jack's not very big, but he can tote quite a load over the hardest kind of portage. He's a wonder with the axe, and he can cook like a French chef. You'll find that out to-night."

After a fine swim and bath the boys were quite content to lie around their tents until they heard the welcome call to supper.

"I feel as empty as a barrel," said Pud, as he walked over to the table. "Gee, I'm stiff. I won't be able to get out of my blankets to-morrow."

"That just shows how soft you are," said Bob. "I'm a little stiff myself, but not very much. The back of my neck is sore."

"So is mine," said Bill.

"That's where you rest the canoe when portaging," said Mr. Anderson, who had heard the remark. "You'll get a real callous there before the summer is over. Just for curiosity, feel Pierre's neck some time. He has been at this all his life, and he has a regular muscle there."

What those hungry fellows did to that pot-pie would be a shame to tell. It disappeared very quickly, while the biscuits that Jack made tasted even better than those that mother used to bake. Even the big dish of prunes that topped off the meal was relished.

"Take me to my little bed," said Pud as, with a sigh, he saw the last prune disappear from his plate.

"Impossible, impossible," said Bob. "I think after that meal that you'll have to go around and not dare to cross the bridge over the trout pond. You'll break through."

"Not an extra step," said Pud. "In fact, I've been wondering for the last five minutes if I can get to my tent. I'm so stiff I can hardly move." It was indeed only with difficulty that Pud could navigate, for he had put in a hard day for a fat boy.

"If I survive the summer," said Pud, with a twinkle in his eye, "just watch me tear that old line to pieces this fall. This life should put the stuff into anybody."

"Yes," said Mr. Waterman, as he winked at Bob, "this was a rather easy day. Later we'll do some real work and cover some ground. I wanted to break you in easily at first."

"Now, what do you think of that?" queried Pud of Bill, as they crossed the trout pond to their tent. "He says this is an easy day. I wonder what he thinks of doing when he gets real strenuous?"

"I guess he was joking," replied Bob. "Personally, I think that we had just about all the exercise to-day that we need."

"Jack's some cook, isn't he?" queried Bill, as they sat before the fire a short time later.

"We're all agreed on that," said Bob. "I never tasted a better supper than we had."

"If we can get some duck and partridge now and then, we'll certainly live high," said Pud. "I could get along with the trout alone, for I have never tasted anything better than that."

"I was going over and make the guides tell me some of their experiences to-night," said Bob. "To tell the truth, I'm tired, and I think I'll get to bed early. Anyway, I think I'd better wait a while until I get back my French again. They talk pretty good French. It's a sort of dialect, but I can understand them pretty well. I am told that it is easier to understand their patois or dialect than many of the dialects in France itself."

Shortly after night had fallen the boys turned in, and they were soon fast asleep, all weary after their strenuous day.

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CHAPTER V

THE SHORT TRAIL TO ESCOUMAINS

They were awakened the next morning by a rifle shot. The boys, as if with one accord, rose up on their elbows and looked around with startled glances.

"What was that?" asked Bob.

"A rifle shot," answered Bill.

Their discussion was cut short by another shot, and they heard voices down at the lake. They hurried down to the water and they found Mr. Waterman and Pierre there, the latter with a smoking gun in his hand.

"It's a loon," said Mr. Waterman, as they came up. "Let me have a try," he said, turning to Pierre and reaching for the gun. Pierre handed it over and Mr. Waterman scanned the waterfront closely. In about a minute, a big bird rose to the surface about one hundred yards away and looked around carelessly.

"No use. Too far away," said Pierre.

Mr. Waterman took careful aim and blazed away, but the loon disappeared and the bullet was seen to hit the water right where the bird had been the previous moment. It looked too fast to be true. The stories that the boys had heard of the wonderful quickness of loons were proven to them right then and there.

"I'll get him next time," said Mr. Waterman, as he jumped in another shell. "That blame loon is crazy. He thinks I can't hit him."

"He's right," said Pierre. "I go help fix breakfast," said the Indian, as he walked away. 72

Sure enough, in a short time up came the loon, and swam around apparently defying fate. Once more Mr. Waterman took steady aim, but the result was just the same.

"That beats the Dutch," said Mr. Waterman. "I thought I had him that time."

"What!" said Mr. Anderson, as he came up. "Trying to hit that loon again. If you get that bird you lose anyway, for you've already shot off more lead than he's worth."

"All right," said Mr. Waterman. "Let's have a plunge before breakfast. We'll just have time."

They all hurried back to their tents, and were still in the water when they heard Jack's cheery halloo calling them to the table. They were hungry and enjoyed the fare set before them.

"We'll have another fishing lesson to-day," said Mr. Waterman, after they had eaten. "I think you had better take it easy after yesterday's strenuousness, so we'll all start out together at ten o'clock and see which boy gets the most fish by twelve."

This was agreed on, and until the hour set, the boys busied themselves around their tents, helped to clear up more of the beach or watched the guides as they worked on the landing. The latter was a very interesting operation. They had three logs cut in half. It was easy to cut the ends of the logs so that they rested on a short piece on the shore and on the top of two small pieces that were driven in at the right distance from the shore. The whole was kept together by wooden spikes driven into place through holes made by fire in the logs. When the first section was completed, it was as solid as possible, making a landing over two feet wide and nearly twenty feet long. The guides planned to put in another section of the same length, and they expected to have more trouble with it. This extra section was being put in more for swimming and diving purposes than for any real need. Mr. Waterman made such a remark to Jack, who said that it would be just the thing for him when the rest of the party were away on trips. 73

"I'll just get out on the end of that little landing and I'll bet you I get just about as many trout as the rest of you," said Jack.

"I wouldn't be surprised if you would, you old wizard," said Mr. Anderson. "I think you must have some special bait, for those trout just come to your hook like flies to honey."

The boys paired off about ten o'clock, and when they came back shortly before one o'clock, it was found that Bill had had the best luck, with Bob next and Pud last. Bill had twenty-six fine trout in his bag, Bob twenty-one and Pud fifteen.

Jack looked them over as they brought them to him.

"Well, I guess we won't starve for another day or two anyway," he said. "I'm glad to see that you can catch enough fish to supply yourselves. A fisherman is no good at all until he can do that."

"You don't need to be much of a fisherman to do that up here," said Bob.

"Yes, fortunately, that's so," replied Jack, as he went on with his work.

Several days sped on and it became necessary to go out to Escoumains to get the letters and some more grub. Mr. Waterman made this known one evening, stating that he thought that he would go out through an old Indian trail that had not been used for some years.

"This trail is much shorter than by the road, and, if we can open it up, it will be a fine thing for us."

"Yes, and it will be a fine thing for the habitants at Escoumains," said Mr. Anderson.

"I hadn't thought of that," said Mr. Waterman reflectively. "If we get too good a road in here they will be coming in themselves and bringing their friends."

"You bet they will," said Jack. "We don't want that bunch in here, so keep to the old road." 74

"It would be a good thing to know this old trail. It is so much shorter," said Mr. Waterman. "Then if we had need for speed we could get out, or Pierre's cousin could bring in any important mail to us."

"I'll go out that way anyway, and we'll not make any real improvements to the trail," said Mr. Waterman.

"Do you want any one to go with you?" asked Bob.

"I don't need any one, but I'll be glad to have you if you want to come. That stands for all of you," added Mr. Waterman, as the other boys looked up.

The next morning they were up very early. The three boys, Mr. Waterman and Jean were going into the village. Joe, Jack and Pierre were going along part of the way to bring back the canoes, for they were going to portage through two lakes on the way. As they were coming back by the road, they would not be able to get the canoes back themselves. After a hurried breakfast they got in their canoes. Much to the surprise of the boys, Mr. Waterman led them down the lake, around the bend and then into a cove on the same side of the lake from which they had started. They got out at what was evidently a very old trail. This led up very steeply. Fast time was made, as Pierre and Mr. Waterman carried the canoes and the others were going light. Up they went, and came to a lake that must have been at least one hundred feet higher than their own lake.

"It would be easy to drain that lake into ours," said Bob, when he saw the new stretch of water.

"Yes," said Mr. Anderson. "The lake is just like a big reservoir on a hill. It could easily be drained into Lac Parent, but it is so high up that no water would be left. Let's leave it as it is, for it will serve us well this morning."

They set off across the lake with Mr. Waterman, Bob and Jean in the first canoe. On they went with strong strokes, so that Pierre and Mr. Anderson, with four in their canoe, had to work hard to keep them in sight. The lake was not very long, and soon they were on the trail again. This 75
time the portage was at least a mile long, and it led down a gradual slope. So far there was no trouble following the trail and the party went ahead without a stop. Once more the canoes were launched, and this time they paddled through two lakes connected by a small stream. At the far end of the second lake the canoes were beached and the party landed. Here they separated. At first they had no trouble following the trail, which led along a brook that evidently drained the two lakes over which they had just come. Straight ahead they went, with Mr. Waterman leading.

After they had gone steadily a little over a mile, Jean called to Mr. Waterman and a halt was made. Jean jointed off into the woods and after a consultation Mr. Waterman concluded that the young Indian was right, and they turned off. The trail soon became very hard to distinguish, but each time that Mr. Waterman hesitated, the Indian went by him, leading the way without a halt. As they were passing through some thick undergrowth Mr. Waterman halted and pointed to a partridge seated on a limb on a nearby tree, only twelve or fifteen feet from the trail. The bird, evidently trusting to its protective coloring, sat on the limb without moving a muscle. Mr. Waterman had just begun to explain to the boys that the bird was undoubtedly trusting to its instinct in remaining in quiet when, with a flutter of the wings, down fell the partridge from the tree to be grabbed almost instantly by the Indian.

Jean had noted the bird just as quickly as Mr. Waterman, but he had followed his natural bent by swiftly dodging off the trail, cutting a stout little club from a hardwood tree, rushing back to the trail and with unerring aim knocking over the partridge with his improvised weapon. The boys could see that Mr. Waterman was put out, but he evidently knew that the Indian would not be able to see his point of view, so he said nothing. The Indian, with a gleam in his eye, walked ahead, having tied the bird to his belt. The boys were all sorry that the partridge had met such an 76
untimely end, but they could not help admiring the woodcraft shown by the young Indian.

The only other excitement they had on the way was furnished by Pud. About half way to the village they came to a little stream that was rather deep. They looked about and at last found a big tree that had fallen across the stream. All of the party except Pud walked across the log without any trouble. He got about half way across when he lost his balance. He felt himself going, so he threw himself on the log and encircled it with his arms and legs. His weight proved too much for the bark, which had been loosened by the water, and it began to come off. It moved

around the trunk in a body and Pud followed it. In spite of his efforts, he gradually disappeared in the dark water. He tried in vain to get up on the log, but he could not make it and finally had to pull his body along in the water until he got to the other side. Pud's acrobatic performance had brought peals of laughter from Bob and Bill. Even the Indian had a smile on his face as Pud got out of the water.

"What are you laughing at?" asked Pud, as he got ashore, evidently sore at the joke on him.

"Oh, nothing," said Bob. "Only you reminded me of a fat monkey on a stick."

"I'll 'fat monkey' you, letting me drown without so much as putting out your hand," said Pud.

"Letting you drown," said Bill. "You fat porpoise, don't you know that you couldn't sink if you tried?"

"I bet he was just trying to practice walking the greasy pole so he could show us how to do that stunt," said Bob.

"That old tree has all the greasy poles you ever saw beaten to death," said Pud with disgust.

"Perhaps that was a slippery elm tree," said Bill. "What do you say, Pud? Did you taste it?" 77

"No, I didn't taste it. I'll give you both a taste if you don't stop standing there laughing like two old women," said Pud, as he dashed for them. He was evidently up to mischief, so they ran up the trail. Pud soon gave up the chase, and as they came out at a habitant's farm shortly afterwards, he forgot all about his troubles and regained his habitual cheerfulness.

Just before they started down a hill on the outskirts of Escoumains, they all stopped to empty out their shoepacks. All of them had at one time or other gotten into some hole filled with water and all had wet feet. They wrung out their socks and then put on their footgear again.

"Holy smoke," said Bill, "if mother saw me do that little stunt she would call me back home at once."

"What's that?" asked Mr. Waterman, who had thought nothing of the matter.

"Why, wringing out my socks and then putting them on again," said Bill. "Mother would be sure that that would mean pneumonia at least."

"Don't worry," said Mr. Anderson. "Before we get home you will probably have your feet quite dry again and then much wetter. A little water will not do any one any harm when one is living out in the open air this way. Of course, in the winter time, it would be different. Then it would be serious to get one's feet so wet."

"Why so?" asked Pud.

"Because then, wet feet unless one can get to the fire right away, generally mean frosted or frozen feet, and that always means trouble in the woods in the winter time."

Down they all trooped to Escoumains. They stopped in at Madame LaBlanche's boarding house to let her know that they would be there for lunch.

"Make us up some of those good biscuits of yours," said Mr. Waterman to her in French.

She promised to do so and also said that her son would be ready at one o'clock to drive them all back to the woods. 78

"Are we going to drive back?" asked Bob.

"Yes," said Mr. Anderson. "We'll take in quite a supply of grub, for we do not expect to come out except for mail for at least a month. We'll have to go in via the ford, as we did the first time, and you know that that is some sixteen miles away."

The boys all received letters and busied themselves reading them and writing others. They spent the morning very pleasantly and were at the boarding house in good time. They presented quite a different appearance from the trim young city fellows that had eaten there on their arrival such a short time before. Now they were clothed for the woods, with blue shirts, mackinaws, heavy trousers and shoe packs. At a distance, one could hardly distinguish them from the numerous woodsmen that were to be seen around the village. They brought back from the woods great appetites, and the famous LaBlanche biscuits disappeared by the plateful. Chicken was once more the center of the meal, and it was thoroughly enjoyed.

"Thank Heaven," said Pud, as they got up from the table, "we don't have to walk back. I'm so full I couldn't walk if I tried."

"You'll do some walking," said Mr. Waterman. "We have only one pair of horses and a wagon. We'll all walk on the hills."

Soon they were off, Mr. Waterman and Mr. Anderson on the front seat with the driver, and the boys seated on the bags that were stowed behind. The little Canadian horses set off at a sharp trot. The boys nodded at every one they met as they went through the village, not forgetting even the vivacious, petite, dark-haired and dark-eyed French Canadian misses that did not fail to come to many of the windows or doors as the wagon rattled by. It was a fine day and they were happy

as the gods. They laughed and talked and sang and asked innumerable questions. Their two leaders were also full of good spirits and gave them all the information they had. For the first five miles the horses went along famously. Then the roads got poorer and the pace slackened. They soon struck a steep hill and they all got out except the driver. At the top of the hill, the wagon stopped and all got on but Pud. He was slow as usual so the driver made believe that his horses had run away and Pud ran along after them for nearly a mile. Finally the horses were stopped and Pud at last came up puffing, blowing and sweating. Mr. Waterman had cautioned every one to be quite serious and not give the joke away.

"Sacre," said the driver. "Dese horse, he not get drive enough. He run away."

"How's the running, Pud?" asked Bill.

"Never you mind. Just let me in. I'm done out. I'm no runner like Bob there," replied Pud.

"Possibly your life was saved for when these horses ran away, we could hardly keep on this load," said Bob, as he winked at Mr. Anderson.

"Yes, if you're born to be hanged you'll never get killed in a runaway, Pud," said Bill solemnly.

"What's that?" said Pud, who was having too much cleverness thrust at him to take it all in.

Away they went, and as the way was down hill, the driver once more gave the reins to his little horses and they started so fast that Pud nearly went out over the back of the wagon. Bill caught him and Pud held on like grim death as the wagon bumped and rattled along the rough road. Bill and Bob laughed until they could hardly hold on themselves, for Pud's face was a study. He knew that they had put something over on him but he could not exactly figure it out.

In spite of the speed shown by the horses in the runaway, it was already four o'clock when they reached the ford. The driver drove right in and when he got to the other side he drove up such a steep part of the bank with such a rush that he spilled out not only the three boys but also about half his load. No one was hurt and the grub was soon on the wagon again. He drove for at least half a mile until the road could be followed no longer. The food was then dumped out on the ground, and with cheery good-by the driver was soon out of sight on the back trail.

"Let's get busy right away," said Mr. Waterman. "We want to get to camp to-night so we'll have to hustle."

"I wonder where Pierre, Joe and Jack are," said Mr. Anderson.

"They'll be along right away, I'll bet," said Mr. Waterman.

Sure enough, before the boys had been loaded for the walk to the first lake, the three men hove in sight. It was really wonderful to see what they piled on each other. It is enough to tell, that when all were loaded down, they had taken care of everything that had been brought in the wagon.

"When we get to the canoes, we can make this stuff more easily handled," said Jack. "I did not think you were going to bring too much but I brought along some dunnage bags and tump lines."

"That's the stuff," said Mr. Waterman.

They moved off Indian file, and though the boys carried only half that borne by the guides and their leaders, they had difficulty in keeping up with the procession. They soon came to the first lake to find three canoes there. In twenty minutes, the baggage was put into the dunnage bags and they were off across the lake. The boys were given a light bag and a canoe to carry and the men carried the rest. In this way, they soon got to the next lake, and a short time later they were on their own lake, making for their camp.

"Just carry everything over to the cook tent and leave it there for the present," said Mr. Waterman. "Jack will put things in order to-morrow."

This was done, and the guides at once set to work to get supper. It was a hurried meal but it was relished by all. The night had set in by the time the meal was cooked and they ate by the light of the fire, which was kept brightly going by one of the guides. Bob thought as he looked at the lights and shades cast by the fire, the ruddy face here, the countenance half in shadow there, the greenness of the leaves that were lighted up by the fire, the solemn avenues of the trees stretching back into the woods, the animated movements of the guides and the whiteness of the tents as the light on them came and went, that he had never seen anything quite so close to nature, quite so picturesque.

CHAPTER VI

PIERRE'S BEAR STORY

The boys slept a little later the next morning, though when they did get up it was evident that Jack had been long busy. The entire stock of grub gotten the day before had been put away neatly and carefully and the dunnage bags and tump lines were piled in a heap at one end of the table. They spent the day quietly, fishing, swimming and fixing up things around the camp. They had an early supper and were down by their fire talking and joking. The guides were soon up in their tent, talking and showing much more life than usual. This gave Bob an idea, and he proposed that they would go and visit the guides. This seemed good to all and they went over to the guides' tent. They were welcomed solemnly and quietly. It was evident that they considered their tent as their part of the camp.

For the time being, they were the hosts and they were evidently flattered by the visit from the boys. Jack soon had the attention of Pud and Bill and it was with a merry twinkle in his eye that he told of many incidents in his life either in hunting or in the lumber camps. Bob being the only boy to understand French was soon in animated discussion with Joe and Pierre. The Indian under the questioning of the boy forsook his usual taciturnity, and in the most casual way told Bob of exploits in hunting and fishing that would make most interesting reading. To the Indian, they were events likely to happen to any one that goes out in the dead of winter to trap and hunt. Bob was a most interested listener and it was not until he had been called to twice by Bill that he awoke to the fact that it was nearly ten o'clock. 83

"Mr. Waterman says that we had better not keep the guides up too long or they will not want to be visited again," said Bill.

"I didn't think we had been here so long," replied Bob.

They said "Good Night" to the guides and were soon fast asleep.

The next day was another quiet one. The boys fished in the morning and they had very good luck. It was a good day for fishing and but few of the speckled beauties got away from the boys, who were becoming more expert every day. Even Pud had caught the hang of casting and promised to be the best fisherman of the lot.

In the afternoon, Bob proposed another visit to the mountain opposite, the same one where they had so nearly come to grief before.

"Go ahead," said Mr. Anderson, "but for your own sake, be careful."

"We'll promise not to get into trouble," said Pud. "We just need a little exercise and that climb will about fill the bill."

They started off and in a short time Mr. Waterman and Mr. Anderson, who were busy down on the water front putting the finishing touches to the landing place, saw them seated in the lee of a big rock looking out over the country. There they sat and for nearly two hours they could be seen with heads close together, evidently very much interested in their conversation. The fact of the matter was that Pud and Bill had asked Bob to tell them what the guides had told him the previous evening. As they sat up on the mountain, they looked far off to the south and saw the mighty St. Lawrence dividing the country as if with a giant silver knife.

"The Indians have had lots of experiences up north of here, hunting and trapping in the winter time," Bob began. 84

"What did Pierre tell you?" asked Pud. "Has he ever scalped any one?"

"You big dub," said Bill. "Indians don't go on scalping expeditions any more."

"Well, I thought that maybe some other Indian tribe might have tried to attack them," said Pud.

"Don't be foolish," said Bob. "There are few Indians up in this country and I guess from what Pierre tells me that they have enough troubles fighting for their lives against the forces of nature to keep them from thinking of fighting one another. In addition, the Canadian Government would soon put a stop to that. Anyway, these Indians are just as peace loving as any white man."

"I suppose you're right," said Pud. "All the same, I like to think of an Indian with tomahawk in hand having a fierce fight for his life with some other Indians or with the pale faces."

"You've been brought up on Nick Carter," laughed Bill. "Get that foolish rot out of your mind. Indians are just ordinary human beings and that is all."

"I don't know about that," said Pud. "That young Jean is some boy for his age. He can follow a trail just like the Indians we read of, and he knows all about the woods, animals, birds and all that. He's certainly like the Indians we read of in history."

"Yes," said Bob. "Jean is a fine specimen. He has all the good points of our ancestors, the real aborigines, without their failings."

"But what about Pierre? You were talking a long time with him, Bob," said Bill. "What was so interesting?"

"He was telling me of his winter hunting trips and he has had some thrilling experiences. He says that every year he gets ready just as soon as the snow flies in the fall. This generally means about the middle of November in this country. As soon as the earth is blanketed with snow, he gets his dogs and sleds ready and starts out with provisions to last for three months. Since his boy has 85

grown up he takes him with him. Sometimes they make up a small party of three or four. It is always better to have two or three companions because Pierre says that it is not well to go alone into this wild, lonely region, for then a simple accident might mean death. He told me of several incidents where his life was in danger and only his quickness and presence of mind saved his life.

"Once, early in the spring, he had stayed too long in the woods. The trapping had been good and he had hated to leave while the skins were heaping up. At last a real thaw came and he had to start for Escoumains. He was about sixty miles north of here, he said, and he rushed along with his dogs wallowing in the snow at every step. When he came to the Port Neuf River, he found the ice just ready to go out. As he got in the middle of the river, it started to break up. He feverishly drove ahead and though he lost part of his load, he got to the other side. His son was not so fortunate, for on looking back, he saw him on a big ice float that had become separated from the shore. He yelled to Jean, who was then only fifteen years of age, and directed him what to do. The ice suddenly began to break up, and he followed his son down the river nearly a mile before he could get to land, and then he was on the wrong side of the river.

"Signing to him to stay where he was, Pierre had to retrace his steps to get his dogs and sleigh. He found them nearly frozen to death, for with the going down of the sun, it began to get very cold. He at last roused them and started down the river. He could see the water steadily rising and knew that it would be only a short time until he would have to get back to higher ground. By hurrying, he reached a point opposite to where Jean was. He yelled across and his cry was answered. He then started down the river, hoping that in some place the ice would still be holding. After going about two miles, the river narrowed and the ice had piled up into a jam. It was threshing around, munching and crunching like some giant monster. He stopped there and 86
waited for the moon to rise.

"The night had become cold and the fore part of the jam seemed frozen into a solid mass. He determined to risk a crossing. Strapping everything tightly on the sleigh, he called to the dogs. They were frightened and he had to lick them to get them started. Four or five times on the way across he thought they were lost, but they finally got to the other side. Everything was drenched and he found himself in great danger of freezing to death, and he found Jean in almost as bad shape. Their first care was to find some rising ground. After slipping into several pools of icy water, they at last got to a small hill. With frost-bitten fingers and frozen feet, they both were almost helpless. By exercising the greatest determination, they at last succeeded in making a fire and they gradually warmed themselves.

"So far, their experience had been very disheartening. They had lost one load of furs, together with the sled and the dogs. In addition, two of Pierre's five dogs died before morning from their exposure to the icy waters. The next morning, they found themselves marooned on their little hill. The jam could be seen still holding and the waters had been backed up far over the banks. There was nothing to do except to wait for the jam to break. This it did that afternoon and the waters went out with a mighty roar, no doubt carrying devastation down through the valley. This made it possible for them to leave their refuge, but they did not dare do so at once for the thaw had continued all that day and it would have been impossible for the dogs to make any headway.

"After careful deliberation, the father and son determined to make their way if possible down the river about twelve miles to an old lumber camp. They started about midnight to take advantage of the frost that had put a hard surface on the snow. The dogs went along finely for they were not too heavy for the crust on the snow. Time after time, the two men broke through, frequently 87
going up to their hips in water. They kept going and by dawn they had covered about half the distance. They again sought a hillock and once more thawed out their frosted hands and feet. Both suffered intensely because of the hardships they had undergone. They again started a fire going and got a little sleep for the first time in two days.

"They repeated their previous night's experience again and at last arrived at the lumber camp. Their troubles were then nearly over for they found a canoe there. This they determined to confiscate as they had but few provisions since most of their supplies had been lost on the sled that had gone under the ice. They rested up a whole day and then as the ice had practically all gone down the river, they set out. The river was very high and they came near swamping on several occasions but at last they came to the mouth of the river and reached their friends safely. Pierre stated that he lost two toes through the frost on that adventure. He said that it taught him a lesson for if he had not been so greedy for pelts and had come out when he knew he ought to, he would have had no trouble."

"That was an ugly experience," said Bill. "I guess it gets pretty cold up here in the winter time."

"Yes, Pierre says that it often gets to forty below zero," replied Bob. "He says that in such weather, he wears three suits and then can keep warm only by sticking close to the fire or by continual motion when outside."

"Three suits! And I think that one heavy suit is a little too much at times. But did Pierre tell you any more of his experiences?" inquired Pud.

"Yes," said Bob. "He told me a great bear story, but it's getting late now, so don't you think I better tell you that to-night after supper? If we go back to camp now, we can have a swim before supper."

"Sure, that's a go," said Bill. 88

The boys were soon back in camp, and seen splashing around in the cool water. So after supper they sat around the fire that evening filled with the real and lasting content that comes only from living close to nature.

"What were you young fellows so interested in this afternoon over on the mountain?" asked Mr. Anderson, interrupting the peaceful silence. "I saw you up there, for the longest time with your heads together as if you were plotting the destruction of the world."

"Far from that. Bob was telling us some of the experiences that Pierre has had in his winter hunting," replied Bill.

"Pierre has certainly had some interesting experiences. It is rarely that one can get him to talk, but when he does he always has something worth telling," said Mr. Anderson.

"Yes, and he relates incidents of the most desperate character in that same colorless tone, just as if they were the most ordinary routine," said Mr. Waterman.

"Say, Bob, tell us the bear story you promised?" demanded Pud.

"Let's get Pierre to tell it himself," suggested Bob.

"That would be all right for you, but you forget that we do not understand French," said Bill.

"I forgot about that. He's a clever Indian for he talks two languages quite well and can make himself understood in English," said Bob.

"What two languages can he talk?" asked Pud.

"He speaks the Montagnais language," replied Mr. Waterman. "He is a Montagnais Indian of the very same stock as was seen by Jacques Cartier when he first landed at Tadousac when he was going up the St. Lawrence River hoping to discover a new route to China."

"Well, tell us the bear story anyway," said Mr. Anderson.

"We want to hear it."

Scenting a good tale, they all moved closer to the fire, and Bob began. 89

"Pierre says that this experience with the bear happened in the late spring. He had been back from his winter's hunting about a month and the spring had opened up very finely. One day, the call to nature was too insistent. He got out his gun, told his wife to tell Mr. MacPherson at the store that he would not be down to the big saw mill to work for a few days, and he started back into the country. The rivers were rather swollen then, the woods were wet and damp, but there was the rush of life in the trees and in the very air itself. Pierre swung along with Jean by his side, his heart full of happiness. He had had a good winter's hunt and his wife had money for everything necessary. But more than anything else he wanted the golden sunshine, the ripple of the waters in the stream, the curved body of the salmon as they darted out of the water in their eagerness to get up the streams. He told his boy that though they had come out for game, he really just wanted to be in the woods when the buds were coming out and when he could feel the sap driving up from the ground into the furthest shoots of the bushes and trees. Jean's face was just as bright as his own and he raised his head and sniffed the air as if in answer to the voice of spring that reigned everywhere.

"Back they went along the wood road. They stopped for lunch at the foot of a riffle where they very soon caught all the trout they wished to find. They made their whole lunch on the fish, using only a little salt to make it palatable; a simple fare but really good enough for a king. On they went after lunch and they were lucky enough to bag four partridges as they went along. Early in the afternoon, they came to an old lumber camp and they decided to stay there for the night. It can well be imagined that though Pierre and his son said little to each other, they were enjoying themselves just like two boys playing hookey from school. They had spent the winter in the freedom and wildness of the woods and a month of the dreary grind in the saw mill had made them as restive as colts. 90

"They made a fine supper off the partridges and were up early the next morning. The remains of the partridges and some freshly caught trout set them on their way again with well filled stomachs and happy hearts. They had not gone far before Pierre stopped dead. 'I smell bear,' said he to Jean. 'Big black one,' said Jean, as he looked around. How he had known that it was big and black will remain one of the mysteries that distinguish the real Indian from his woodland imitators. They looked around and sure enough they had not gone far before they saw an old hollow tree that had been scratched and torn by the bear's big claws in his eagerness to get the grubs that no doubt were living among the rotting wood. They followed the bear's tracks. Jean in his eagerness went ahead and the father watched his boy with pride as he followed the indistinct tracks with swiftness and sureness. Finally the bear led them up one of the numerous mountains that are a feature of this country, as you know. Soon the tracks could be followed only with the greatest difficulty. Pierre was soon in the van and about noon he stopped dead and pointed off about half a mile where they saw the bear himself busy tearing away at another rotting tree.

"As they were somewhat to the windward side of the bear, they turned off and went down the valley. An hour's swift walking and climbing brought them out on the ridge on which they had seen the bear. Jean in his eagerness had gone ahead again. Just as they rounded a point of rock, the bear rose up almost on top of Jean. He had only a small caliber rifle, but he gave it to the bear

at once. The bullet cut a hole in the beast's shoulder and with a growl of rage he rushed at the boy. Jean gave him another, but it only seemed to enrage the bear the more, for he plunged right on and threw Jean back with a mighty thrust.

"In the meantime, Pierre was in terror, not for himself but for Jean. On the rather narrow ledge, he found his boy right in line with the bear and he did not dare shoot for fear of killing him. When 91
the bullets from the small rifle failed to stop the rush of the wounded bear, Pierre rushed forward, and as the bear thrust Jean back, he stepped over the body of the boy, gave him a bullet from his rifle point blank and throwing away his gun, he plunged his hunting knife into the bear with all his might just as the monster flung him off as though he were a plaything.

"Pierre says that about ten or twenty minutes later, perhaps half an hour, he awoke to consciousness and started up on one elbow half dazed. He felt that he had just narrowly escaped death, but for a moment he could not just remember what had happened. Then the whole thing rushed back to his mind and he got unsteadily to his feet. He found that he had a bad scalp wound and a big bump on the back of his head which he had hit on falling. When he got his dazed eyes to seeing properly, he was at first horror-struck, for the bear lay half over his Jean. The latter was lying on his back with his breast laid bare by the cruel claws of the bear, deathly pale and to all appearances dead. One look at the bear showed Pierre that it was dead. He hauled it with difficulty off his boy's legs and then felt his heart.

"At first, he could distinguish no movement and he was almost overcome by grief, but a slight heart movement galvanized him into action. He at once looked around and seeing a spring a short distance away, he ran, and filling his coonskin cap with water he was back by the side of the boy in a moment. Signs of life finally returned and Jean was soon looking around trying with glazed eyes to come back from the Happy Hunting Grounds to which his soul had just paid such a fleeting visit. In a short time, father and son were fully back to consciousness but it was only after a night spent right there that they felt like real live men again.

"Jean had a very ugly slash across his chest and the father felt sure that at least two of his ribs had been broken by the savage blow the bear had dealt him. Though pretty sore himself, he felt 92
fairly well, though his scalp wound left no doubt that he had come near to death. They camped there that day enjoying the bear steaks and getting off the skin. In fact, it was not until two days later, that they set out on the back trail. Then, though they presented a rather dilapidated appearance, they managed to carry off the skin of the bear and the best portions of the meat. Jean with his broken ribs went light and then had trouble in following his sturdy father, who thought very little of having tackled a bear with his hunting knife. Pierre told me," concluded Bob, "that he found that the death stroke given the bear was dealt by his hunting knife just as the bear closed in on him."

"What a narrow escape! And I guess they think such events are commonplace. Let's go up to their tents and ask them to show us the scars," said Pud.

"Don't you believe Pierre, then?" asked Mr. Anderson.

"Sure," said Pud, "but I would like to see the scars. It would make the whole story more real."

Thereupon the boys went up to the tent and Bob talked to Pierre in French. Pierre then pulled back the hair and showed the boys a white scar across his head and Jean showed them a ragged scar that made Pud's flesh creep.

"Gee," said Pud, "that bear must have given Jean some rip. Ask Pierre how he got that wound to heal."

Bob did so and Pierre explained that he put some healing herbs on the wounds and that they got well very quickly.

"De rib, she no get well queeck," said Pierre, turning to Pud. "She vera sore, some long time."

"You two certainly had a narrow escape," said Mr. Anderson, as the whole party, admiring the wonderful bravery and courage of these Indians, said good-night.

"I wonder if any such thing as that would happen to us?" asked Bill.

"Maybe," said Mr. Waterman aloud, but to Mr. Anderson, "in their sleep I guess." 93

By this time the boys were ready for bed and they were soon lying snugly in their sleeping bags, no doubt dreaming of bears and what they would do if they saw a big black bear come rushing down on them when they were on a narrow ledge.

Some such dream was surely surging through the brains of Pud and Bill, for Bob was awakened by an awful racket and nearly smothered to death by feeling two heavy bodies plunk down on him.

"Hey, there, get up!" yelled Bob.

It seemed that Pud and Bill had dreamt of the bear. Bill in his dream jumped up just as the dream bear was rushing on him, and fell on Pud just as Pud in his dream was set grimly to await the onset of the monster. Bill, though half awake, was sure the bear had him, and Pud was just as sure when Bill grabbed him that he was in the clutches of a mighty black bear. They threshed around a moment and did not really wake up until they fell on Bob and nearly smothered him.

Bob had been too sleepy to dream of bears, but he got up very quickly. After a hearty laugh at their vivid dreams, the boys got into their blankets again and were not disturbed until morning.

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CHAPTER VII

BOB'S CLUE

A week quickly sped with short trips here and there—a restful week for them all, yet a week in which the boys learned more fully the woodman's ways. For one thing they were becoming expert fishers and rapidly improving in portaging. Even the two older men noticed how the boys were so quickly becoming adapted to the rough life.

"I think you boys are getting into good enough shape to warrant a week's trip away from the home camp," said Mr. Waterman one morning.

"I'm game," said Bill.

"So am I," said Bob and Pud together.

"Good! Why not go down then and climb that mountain from which one can see so many lakes?" queried Mr. Anderson.

"All right. That would be a beautiful trip," said Mr. Waterman.

"That sounds fine," said the three boys.

A half hour later, they were off in two canoes, and they paddled down to the far end of the lake.

"Stick together, fellows," said Mr. Waterman. "We are going by the compass and there won't be any trail. It's the easiest thing in the world to get lost here and I can tell you that it's the hardest thing in all creation to find your way back again, for all these mountains look alike."

"I've noticed that," said Pud, as they all got out of their canoes.

The party swung off and made their way through the woods skirting the lower part of the mountain. At last, Mr. Waterman began to climb and the boys soon found that this was quite 95
some mountain they were on. It went up interminably. On they plodded and at last they came to a very steep part just before reaching the summit. Mr. Waterman led the way. In a short time, they were climbing straight up the side of the rocks. It was hard and exciting work and more than once, Mr. Waterman turned and looked around carefully.

"Can we make it here?" asked Mr. Anderson in his quiet tones.

"I think so," replied Mr. Waterman. "I thought that this was the place we came up last summer but evidently it isn't."

Up they climbed.

"That old Mont Blanc hasn't anything on this for steepness," said Bob as they stopped for rest.

"I think I can see the top now," said Mr. Waterman. "We either have to go on or go back to where we started up. I think that we can make it, but be careful."

By this time, they were climbing almost perpendicularly up the cliff. There was no trail and they wound back and forth and at times had to help each other up from rock to rock. As they neared the top, the rocks became more brittle and it was necessary to try the rocks above before trusting their weight to them. Once when they strung out down the mountain for a hundred feet or more, Mr. Waterman, who was leading, broke off a big rock just as he reached a higher altitude. He shouted and every one below ducked. It went right over Mr. Anderson's head and crashed down the side of the mountain.

"Steady, steady," said Mr. Anderson. "Don't kick up such a fuss."

"That was a close call both for you and me," said Mr. Waterman.

Once again before they reached the top they started rocks down the mountain side but no one was hurt. At last they reached the top and the view they had more than repaid them for their 96
exertions. This point was the highest elevation in that part of the country and they could see for many miles the cool, green, yet solemn-looking forests; the many lakes which reflected the clear blue sapphire sky, speckled with fleecy white clouds. They counted over thirty lakes. After enjoying the beauties of the view, they started down again.

"We'll go down the natural slope of the mountain and then work back around the bottom to our lake," said Mr. Waterman.

"Then you can't heave any more rocks at us," laughed Pud.

They walked on for at least an hour and at last Mr. Waterman said:

"We are now in our own valley. The small stream at the bottom of this mountain runs from our lake so if any of you should get lost, just follow the stream and you'll come out all right."

This proved very good advice for after a half hour's walk, Pud fell behind and before Bob knew it, the others were lost ahead. They yelled but there was no reply.

"Let's take a short cut," said Pud.

"How's that?" asked Bob.

"We'll go down the mountain and then follow that stream as Mr. Waterman told us to."

"All right," said Bob.

Down they started and they soon came to the stream. They then had an argument as to whether Mr. Waterman had said that the stream emptied into their lake or ran from it. At last Bob said, "I remember distinctly that Mr. Waterman said that this stream runs out of our lake so I'm going this way."

"All right," said Pud. "I know you're wrong, but if I don't go with you, you'll get lost for good, so lead the way."

The undergrowth near the stream was rank, as might be expected, and the boys made slow progress. After about an hour's walk they stopped, as they felt sure they should have been at the lake. 97

"We should have been there long ago," said Pud.

"I think we ought to be there soon," said Bob.

"We'll never get there going this way," said Pud.

"This is the right way all right for I noticed that we went generally in an easterly direction coming here and we have been going west for some time. Let's hustle on."

They did so and neither spoke a word for some time. At last they both paused, startled, for they heard a crashing in the bushes up the stream. They darted into the woods as quietly as they could and looked out. The crashing continued and came their way. Finally, as they looked out they saw that it was a man and they both gave a shout. This was answered at once by Mr. Anderson's cheery voice. Pud's short cut had proved a very long way home. Bill and the two leaders had gone around the foot of the mountain and had saved a long distance in that way. After reaching the lake they had waited there for some time and at last Mr. Anderson, remembering the instructions that Mr. Waterman had given, had started down the stream to find them. He said that they did not have a very long distance to go.

Mr. Anderson's appearance had acted like a tonic and the boys followed him eagerly. They soon heard voices and in a moment more they saw Mr. Waterman and Bill sitting on a big log by the shore of the lake right near where the stream ran from the lake. Bill kidded Bob and Pud about getting lost.

"I didn't get lost," replied Bob. "Pud thought that by going down into the valley and then up the stream that we would beat you here."

"It was much longer," said Mr. Waterman. "We merely skirted the edge of the mountain and came here almost directly."

"It's a good thing that Bob was with me," said Pud.

"How so?" asked Mr. Anderson. 98

"I got mixed up when I got to the stream and I wanted to go down the stream instead of up," replied Pud.

"Well, why didn't you then?" asked Bill.

"Bob was sure we had to go up stream and he insisted on going in that direction," admitted Pud.

"You have to use your old bean up here," said Bill. "When in doubt, Pud, leave it to Bob. He's full of gray matter whereas—"

"Don't 'whereas' any more, Bill, or I'll give you a ducking," said Pud, as he cornered Bill so that if he rushed him, he would have to go out into the lake.

"All right, all right," said Bill. "I'll keep my further remarks about beans, mentality, cerebellum, etc., until we're ready for the swim."

"You'd better," said Pud strongly.

They all then got into their canoes and got back to camp to find there an air of mystery that was noted at once by their leaders and shortly later by the boys. Joe got Mr. Waterman aside right away and what he had to say made him look very serious. Just then Jack came up and Mr. Waterman listened to him very carefully. Mr. Anderson was called over and the boys saw the four of them talking very seriously together.

"I wonder what's up," said Bob. "Something has gone wrong but I don't see anything the matter with the camp, do you?"

"Not a thing," replied Bill. Pud looked around in his easy-going fashion, just as if nothing could disturb him anyway.

Mr. Anderson and Mr. Waterman did not offer any explanation when they came back to the boys and they soon were in the water having a fine swim. Later on they found that in some mysterious way a bag of flour, a fitch of bacon, a small bag of salt, and a few other small articles had been taken from the cook tent. Mr. Waterman felt sure that he could rely on the honesty of his guides and he was greatly mystified.

"It beats me," said Mr. Waterman. "If an Indian or a stray fisherman really needed grub, he would know that we would be perfectly willing to help him out. No one ever refuses hospitality in the woods."

"I can't make it out either," said Mr. Anderson.

"Perhaps it was a bear," said Pud with one of his great inspirations.

"Why to be sure," said Bill. "These bears up here have regular pouches like the Australian kangaroo and I'll bet if we could see mother bear just now she'd be waddling up some rocky place, her pouch filled with flour, bacon, salt and other dainties for the little cubbies."

Everybody laughed at this but no one had any further suggestion.

"I really can't figure it out," said Mr. Waterman, more seriously. "The worst of it is that this is not the first time this has happened. We have said nothing about it but the same thing happened about ten days ago. Then we scoured the camp and could not find a trace of the thief. Jack tells me that the four of them have been all over the lake to every trail and that they have seen nothing."

"Let's organize a real hunt after lunch," said Bob eagerly.

"That's just what I was thinking of doing," replied Mr. Waterman.

Everything was hurried through. Bob and Pud forgot the weariness they had felt while lost that morning. Four different parties hurried away after they had eaten. Bob and Mr. Waterman went together and they made for the trail that led up north.

"I figure it out," said Mr. Waterman, "that whoever it is that has been at our cook tent came from the north."

"How so?" asked Bob.

"Well, it isn't far to Escoumains and any one in real trouble would find food there. It's probably some stray Indian who is afraid of being arrested for some crime if he goes back to the settlements. I can't figure out anything else."

"Did you bring a gun along?" asked Bob rather anxiously.

"No," said Mr. Waterman. "We won't need any gun if we catch up with this fellow. But first of all let us get some trace of him."

They soon reached the beginning of the portage. They got out and searched carefully. They saw tracks, to be sure, for they had been over there just a few days before. No new tracks were to be seen. At last, Mr. Waterman picked up the canoe and said, "Let's go on over the divide. Keep your eye peeled for recent marks. If he came over here with a canoe, he will probably slip or slide some place. Look for his tracks at the sides of the trail."

They went along at a slow pace. More than once Mr. Waterman stopped and set down the canoe, only to pick it up a moment later and go on along the trail. Just after they had reached the top of the divide in a very steep place, Bob noticed a place near the side of the trail that was trampled down. Mr. Waterman set down the canoe and came back. After carefully looking at the bushes, he said,

"I think that you're right, Bob. He evidently got off his balance here and not wishing to make a bad slide on the trail, has stepped off in the bushes."

"It looks to me as if he had tried to cover this up too," said Bob. "Look at this small branch. It was bent right over and evidently some one has tried to straighten it out."

Mr. Waterman bent over and exclaimed,

"You're right, Bob. This is the way he came."

The two then went on, but though they watched very carefully, they could not find a single further trace of the man they were seeking. They soon came to the little lake they had been on before. Mr. Waterman led the way and they got out at the further end as if both had agreed that the fugitive was heading for the north and would take this course.

"Now if we can get another trace of this son-of-a-gun on this portage, I'll bet some money that I know where he is staying," said Mr. Waterman.

This time Bob carried the canoe and Mr. Waterman went ahead. It was not until they had come almost to the next lake that Mr. Waterman noticed a tree from which a piece of bark had been chipped off.

"That's funny," said he.

"What's funny?" asked Bob, who looked all around but could note nothing out of the way.

"That tree," replied Mr. Waterman. "That piece of bark was knocked off by something out of the ordinary."

"Maybe he bumped into it with his canoe," replied Bob.

"Hardly," replied Mr. Waterman. "A real woodsman does not bump his canoe into trees and other things along the trail. He avoids them by instinct."

"That is probably true," said Bob, "but the only time he could steal those things from camp would be at night, and he might hit a tree then."

"You're right," said Mr. Waterman.

Once more they emerged at a lake. This one was fairly large. They paddled slowly around it but could see no sign of a trail except the one at the far end. This was a long trail over a low divide and Mr. Waterman did not seem to want to start on it.

"I don't want to set out on this trail because it is about five miles long and we could not get home to-night. Anyway, I have a hunch that this fellow has piked off to the north. It's the easiest thing in the world to cover up a trail. Let's go around this north end of the lake again."

They did so but without any success. 102

"I guess we're stumped," said Bob.

"Not on your life," replied Mr. Waterman. "That hunch of mine grows more insistent every minute. I tell you what I'll do. Let me out here. I'll tramp around this north shore and if he has any hidden trail, I'll probably cross it sooner or later."

Bob paddled to the shore of the lake and Mr. Waterman got out. Bob then paddled slowly along the shore. He expecting to keep in touch with Mr. Waterman by the noise he would make as he broke through the bushes. But not so. Mr. Waterman had been schooled for many years by the Indians and he had many of their accomplishments. One of these was his ability to move through the woods with very little noise. The consequence was that the leafy background of the little lake swallowed up Mr. Waterman and not a sound was heard. The stillness seemed oppressive to Bob as he slowly paddled to the other end of the lake. He had been there some time when he was startled by hearing Mr. Waterman say in his usual calm tones,

"I've found it. My hunch was working properly."

"Let's follow it right away," said Bob eagerly.

"No," was the reply. "It will keep. We have just time to get back to camp for a late supper. I'll take Pierre and Jack to-morrow and we'll ferret out this matter."

"Can't I go along too?" asked Bob.

"No, I think that it would be best for just the three of us to go," replied Mr. Waterman.

"I hope you change your mind about that," said Bob. "I really think that I might be of some use. I hardly like to ask you to remember that I was the first to notice his tracks on the portage."

"You're too modest, Bob," replied Mr. Waterman. "You certainly have sharp eyes and know how to use them. I'll think it over and if possible I'll take you with me. I am afraid that there may be some trouble and, of course, I don't want to have anything happen to you." 103

"I'm part Irish," said Bob.

"What's that?" asked Mr. Waterman.

"I said that I was part Irish and you know that a real Irishman always likes to be along when there's likely to be trouble."

"You're part Irish all right," said Mr. Waterman. "I think you've kissed the blarney stone some time."

"That I did," replied Bob, merrily. "I can remember my father holding me down from the tower by my heels to kiss the stone. If there's any virtue in having kissed the famous stone, I ought to have my share, for I skinned both my knee and my nose in doing the stunt."

"I didn't know that you had ever been in Ireland," said Mr. Waterman.

"Oh, yes, my father took me there one summer when I was a little fellow," replied Bob, innocent enough.

In the meantime they had reached the head of the lake. Mr. Waterman made off at once with the canoe as he said that they would be late for supper if they didn't hurry. He kept Bob hustling to

keep up with him, stopping only once on the way. That was on the last portage when they came to the spot where Bob had noted the trampled bushes. Mr. Waterman looked very carefully at the marks and went on apparently satisfied.

"What did you notice this time that you didn't observe before?" asked Bob.

"Not very much," replied Mr. Waterman, "but enough to convince me that there was only one person over the trail."

"Well, if that's the case," said Bob, "surely there won't be much danger in my going with you to-morrow."

"Why not? There might be four or five in this party for all we know," answered Mr. Waterman.

"That's so," said Bob.

"I'm inclined to take you along for you have very good sense about most things, I notice," said Mr. Waterman, half to himself. 104

Bob blushed up to the ears at hearing this praise from his leader.

"I'm sure, I'll try to be useful if you take me along," said Bob.

They were soon down on the shore of their own lake and they could hear the shouts of Bill and Pud as they wallowed in the water.

"The rest of them are back," said Mr. Waterman.

"I wonder if Pud found any traces of his bear thief," laughed Bob.

As they came to the landing, the guides ran down eager to hear the news.

"We found his trail," said Mr. Waterman. "Get the guns ready, Pierre and Jack, and we'll go after the son-of-a-gun to-morrow."

"Did you see him?" asked Jack.

"No," said Mr. Waterman. "We just picked up his trail. I think I know where he is, but you had better put together enough grub to last us a week, for we don't know where he may be."

"All right," replied Jack. "We'll be ready."

Bob had to tell his various experiences to the boys, who listened with bated breath. On their part they had little to relate. They had gone out to the trails agreed on but could find no trace whatever of any stranger. They had arrived only a short time before Bob had shown up.

"Ye gods, but I'm hungry," sighed Pud.

"You haven't anything on me," said Bob. "That Mr. Waterman is some 'moose.' He tears along like a steam engine and never seems to get tired."

"I noticed that the other day," said Pud. "He had me puffing and blowing going up that mountain and he was breathing like a sleeping child."

Just then, tang! tang! tang! tang! went the stick against the wash pan in Jack's hands and the boys made a rush for the table. They did more than justice to the great bill of fare prepared for 105
them by Jack. Trout after trout, hot from the pan, disappeared like magic, not to speak of the hot biscuits and the apricots for dessert.

"How did you get these apricots up here?" asked Pud. "I'd think they would be too heavy to carry."

"They would be if we brought in the canned variety," said Mr. Anderson. "But, thank you, we have plenty of good 'aqua pura' here without bringing in canned pears and such things."

"Well, how do you have them, then?" asked Bill.

"We bring in the dried fruit," replied Mr. Anderson. "This is very light and easily carried. We'll have our share of fruit here this summer all right. The only thing we won't get much of is fresh meat and that you can't get even at Escoumains every day."

"A few partridges now and then will help along the fresh meat problem," said Bob.

"You bet," said Pud, licking his lips. "That partridge stew last week was as fine as anything to be had at the Bellevue-Stratford or Kugler's in Philadelphia."

They had had a very strenuous day and they were all ready for bed. The morrows's expedition had livened their imaginations and they sat around the fire chatting and talking until the moon came out over the edge of the opposite mountain and warned them that it was time to seek their balsam boughs.

CHAPTER VIII

THE WIRELESS IN THE WILDERNESS

The sun had hardly touched with gold the tops of the mountains before Bob felt a light touch on his arm. He opened his eyes to see Mr. Waterman with his hands to his lips in token of silence. He arose quietly and with a surge of pride and joy in his heart, for he felt that he was to be permitted to go on the expedition in search of the thief.

"Bring along your sleeping bag," said Mr. Waterman, when Bob got out of the tent.

"Are we leaving right away?" asked Bob.

"Yes, just as soon as Jack can rustle a cup of coffee and something to eat for us. He'll be ready as soon as we can get our things in shape."

Bob hustled back to the tent and very quietly got his sleeping bag ready for travel. He made a neat pack of it and hurried over to the grub tent. Jack and Pierre were serving Mr. Waterman already so that Bob got a hasty breakfast. He enjoyed it, for there was an atmosphere of suppressed excitement that was altogether new to him. Ten minutes later they were getting into two canoes. When Bob reappeared with his pack and his gun, Mr. Waterman asked,

"What are you going to do with that gun?"

"I don't know," said Bob. "I saw that you all had guns and so I toted mine along."

"Now I know you're excited," said Mr. Waterman. "When a Southerner begins to talk about 'you all' and 'toting' things, he's just plain excited." 107

Bob just laughed quietly, for he knew that Mr. Waterman was right.

They at last got away without waking up the two boys.

"I bet Pud and Bill will be mad as sin when they find me gone with you," said Bob to Mr. Waterman.

"Yes, I suppose that they would like to come, but you know we may run into trouble of some kind and in that case, it will be best not to have too many along," replied Mr. Waterman.

"I can't make this out," said Jack. "There is something amiss, for every one knows that in this country, all one has to do is to ask and any grub that one has will be shared."

"Bad man," said Pierre. "He no have to steal if he not be bad."

"You may be right," said Mr. Waterman.

By this time they were on the first portage. When they came to the place where Bob had noticed the tracks, Pierre and Jack stopped and examined them attentively.

"He no want to be seen," said Pierre.

"He's a corking good woodsman," said Jack.

"You're both right," replied Mr. Waterman. "Later on, we shall see how clever he is in concealing a trail."

When they came to the second lake, Mr. Waterman remarked to Bob that he would paddle down the north end of the lake to see if either Jack or Pierre would notice the trail. This they did and despite the sharp eyes of the two guides, they did not notice any trail starting from the water's edge. Mr. Waterman led them back and taking a line on a very big tamarack tree that he had noted before, they got out of their canoes. They had gone only a few rods to the left when they came to what was evidently a new trail. They had gone only a short distance when Pierre stopped and remarked that he was sure that no canoe had been brought over the trail. When Mr. Waterman heard this, he had the men retrace their steps to the lake. They then began a 108 systematic search for a canoe. In about twenty minutes, Jack's sharp eyes searched out the hiding place and the canoe was pulled out for inspection. They found it to be an ordinary Peterboro, such as were to be found all through the country.

"If he's left his canoe here," said Mr. Waterman, "he can't be very far off."

"That's so," said Pierre.

"We had better go careful," said Jack.

All four then looked to their guns and took the trail, with Mr. Waterman leading. He went along very carefully. In an hour they were over the divide and going down into what seemed like a deep gulch.

"This looks to me like the same gulch we visited the other day," said Mr. Waterman.

"I am sure of it," said Bob. "Then, I noticed that big rock over there."

"What's peculiar about that rock?" asked Jack.

"It looks like a big horse," said Bob. "I am sure that it's the same one."

"It does look like a horse," said Mr. Waterman. "I know the far side of this gulch pretty well, but I did not think that there was any way out of it so easy as the one we have come."

They then proceeded very cautiously. Mr. Waterman gave way to Pierre, who went ahead without any noise. Bob tried to imitate his movements but he felt angry at himself, for he made a great noise as he went along. He now knew why Mr. Waterman had hesitated at bringing him. He did the very best he could and followed along, feeling the excitement tugging at his heart. Mr. Waterman and the two guides moved like shadows before him and only by the sudden gleam in their eyes could he see that they were at all excited. At last Pierre came back a step or two and put his fingers to his lips in token of silence.

"A log cabin not far ahead," said he to Mr. Waterman very quietly.

Mr. Waterman and Jack went ahead very stealthily, and they came back in a moment.

"I guess we've treed our coon," said Mr. Waterman. "Now, how shall we catch him?"

"I go," said Pierre. "I make believe that I'm just an Indian fishing and I come back 'bimby.'"

"That's a pretty good plan," said Mr. Waterman.

They watched Pierre disappear through the bushes and then settled down to wait. In only about twenty minutes Pierre returned. They were all surprised to see him so soon.

"No one at cabin," said Pierre, as he came up.

"How long since has there been some one there?" asked Mr. Waterman.

"Only short time. He come back any time now."

In a few minutes they were all in the house with the exception of Pierre, who stayed outside to keep an eye on things. As soon as they entered Mr. Waterman and Bob at once noticed that this was no Indian's hut nor that of the ordinary woodsman. The room was as neat as a pin. This was rather out of the ordinary for a cabin in the woods. But what attracted the attention of both of them was the sight of several chemical and wireless instruments that both recognized at once.

"What's this?" said Mr. Waterman. "I'm not much on wireless, but I know that this is part of a wireless plant."

"You're right," said Bob. "I have one of them on my aerial for my wireless at home. This is merely for receiving."

"Now, what do you think any one would want with a wireless outfit away back here in the woods?" asked Mr. Waterman, more to himself than to Bob.

"Do you think it has anything to do with the great European war that is raging at this time?" said Bob.

"That's the natural explanation, of course," said Mr. Waterman.

"But what's the use of a wireless up here?" asked Bob in his turn.

"You think that this is only a receiving station. Perhaps this is run by some German spy to discover just when the troop ships are leaving Quebec for England."

"If that's so," said Jack, who had not said a word so far, but who had followed the conversation very closely, "we are likely to run into trouble, for any one that would do a thing of this kind would not hesitate to go to the limit."

"That's very true," said Mr. Waterman reflectively. "At the same time, I hardly see why we should run into danger, as we are Americans."

"I think that we have to get a look at this fellow and let him know that after a certain date we shall be obliged to let the Canadian Government know what is going on. Otherwise, if the Canadian Police run down this fellow, they may find out that we have been here and then arrest us as accomplices," said Bob.

"The boy's right," said Jack. "And it would be a hanging job for us if they proved that we knew what was going on here and did not notify the constable."

Further conversation was cut short by a shot outside, followed almost immediately by another. Hurried footsteps were heard and a big fellow rushed in and closed the door.

"Hands up!" cried Mr. Waterman, as he leveled his gun at the stranger. The latter made a quick movement, but a spurt of flame from Jack's rifle was followed by the clatter of the stranger's rifle as it fell to the floor. Coming in from the outside, the newcomer seemed to be unable to see clearly.

"Disarm him," said Mr. Waterman to Jack, who moved over and removed a revolver from the hip

of the owner of the hut.

"Well, what is it?" asked the man defiantly. "It took you a long time to find out this little place, didn't it?"

"We're Americans," said Mr. Waterman. "It is quite plain to any one of intelligence what you are here for. At the same time, I'm very much mistaken if you're not an American yourself, or at least passed for such until this war broke out. You know too much about the woods to be a native born German."

"You're right," said the man, as he lowered his arms. "I'm from the West, and I'm an American, but in the pay of Germany—and have established my post here."

"You, of course, know that you must get out of here at once," continued Mr. Waterman. "I don't think that it is our duty to take you in, though Pierre, who is just coming, is a Canadian. There is the other door. Here's your gun. We'll hold Pierre for a few minutes and then let him do what he thinks best."

"You're all right, men. I thought that the Canadian police had me, as they probably have my companions."

In a second he was out of the door and away down the trail. The members of the party waited for Pierre. He came in very shortly and looked around with great surprise.

"Where is he?" asked he, as he looked around in astonishment. "I trail him here. You let him go?"

"Yes, we let him go," said Mr. Waterman.

"Why for dat?" asked the Indian. "He bad man. He shoot at me twice but no hit me."

"He was here trying to get news for the Germans," said Mr. Waterman.

"How he get news here? No news here. What news?"

"I could not make you understand," said Mr. Waterman.

"Why not understand?" asked Pierre.

"Have you ever heard that it is possible to speak miles and miles through the air?"

"Yes, Great Spirit speaks to all his children all over," said Pierre devoutly.

"I don't mean the Great Spirit, but men, just like you and I."

"Oh, no, no, that impossible," said Pierre.

"It is done, and this man was here listening, so that he would know things and then tell the enemies of Canada."

"I no understand. What enemies?" asked Pierre.

"Have you not heard that England and Canada are at war with the Germans?" asked Mr. Waterman.

"Oh, yes, but that is far across the Big Water," said Pierre.

"Quite true, but the Germans are over here too. In some places, trying to do harm to Canada," said Mr. Waterman.

"This bad man, a German?" asked Pierre, as his eyes lighted up.

"Yes," replied Bob.

"Where he go?" asked Pierre.

"We, Americans, have no war with Germans. He goes that way," said Mr. Waterman, pointing up the trail. In another moment Pierre was lost to view.

"What do you think of that?" said Jack. "I think I'll tag along behind for fear he gets hurt."

"Things certainly have come with a rush," said Mr. Waterman. "Suppose you follow Pierre, so that if the German gets him that you will be there to lend aid."

"I'll be there," said Jack, as he looked significantly at his rifle. "That skunk fired twice at Pierre already. He may get him the third time. If he does, I'll take only one shot."

"Don't run into trouble, Jack," said Mr. Waterman. "This is not our fight. But follow Pierre and help him if he gets into trouble. Bob and I will get down to Escoumains and report the matter."

The two men shook hands and Jack disappeared after Pierre just as quickly and as silently as the latter had done.

"That will be some chase," said Mr. Waterman. "That German is a real woodsman and he'll lead them a merry chase."

"It's a pity that Jack did not go with Pierre. How is he going to find him?"

"Leave that to him," said Mr. Waterman. "There are few Indians more clever than Jack in following a trail. He'll be up with Pierre by nightfall."

They then looked around and were surprised at the completeness of the outfit. Evidently four or five men had been needed to get all these things into the woods.

"How they ever got all this stuff here without arousing the suspicion of the Canadian Government passes my comprehension," said Mr. Waterman.

Going outside, they noticed a path, and following it, if soon led them to the top of a mountain that was opposite to the one they had climbed but a few short days before. Sure enough, there was the wireless, hidden most cleverly by the trees and branches so that from the opposite hill; nothing out of the ordinary could be seen even with a glass.

"This is rather an old instrument," said Bob. "It is dated 1912."

"That may explain the whole matter," said Mr. Waterman. "It is well known that the Germans have a wonderful spy system. It is possible that all this may have been brought in here four or five years ago for this very purpose."

"I guess that that's the answer," replied Bob, "for it would be absolutely impossible for any party of men to get this stuff in here now."

On returning to the hut they took a good look around and found everything in the best of order. There were supplies of all kinds there except food.

"I guess that the Canadian Government got his mates all right, and that left him stranded here as far as grub was concerned. He had his nerve with him all right, for he was liable to be shot down at any time," said Mr. Waterman. 114

They were soon on their way back. When they came to the lake they found that the German's canoe was gone. Pierre was evidently right on his trail, for one of the two canoes they had brought along was also missing.

"I wonder if Jack has caught up with Pierre so soon," mused Mr. Waterman.

"It looks that way," replied Bob, "for otherwise he would probably have taken our canoe, knowing that we could get back to camp even without a canoe."

"You're right," said Mr. Waterman.

They hurried on and in due time they arrived in camp. By this time it was getting late, so they determined to go into Escoumains the next morning and inform the authorities of their discovery. They found Bill and Pud and Jean quite excited. In a short time they had the story in full.

"You did not see any one around here to-day, did you?" asked Mr. Waterman, addressing the young Indian Jean.

"No," was the reply.

"I am pretty sure that the German is making for the St. Lawrence to try and get out of the country. Let's go over to the old trail, just to see if any one has passed that way to-day," said Mr. Waterman.

All of them went, for the trail was only a few minutes' paddle down the lake around a point of land that almost cut the lake in two. On arrival there it was plain even to the unpracticed eyes of the boys that more than one person had passed that way recently. Mr. Waterman and Jean landed first. Jean had been on land not more than a minute before he pointed to some tracks and said,

"Pierre here, Jack there, other man there."

They boys came over, but though they could see some tracks in the soft trail, they did not see how Jean had identified his father and Jack at once. 115

"You're right," said Mr. Waterman. "Three men have passed this way to-day. It looks as if Pierre and jack are hot on his trail."

They then returned to camp. Bob was compelled to tell his mates all about the trip, and they were greatly excited when they were told of the scene in the hut when it was necessary to hold up the German in self-defense at the point of a rifle.

When Bob and Mr. Waterman arrived in Escouniaias early the next morning-they found things in a great state of excitement. It seems that Pierre and Jack had gotten in about nine o'clock the night before, hot on the trail of the spy. To the chagrin of Sandy MacPherson, an old friend of his named Field, had come into the store and without showing any signs of haste had made arrangements for a launch to take him down the river. This had been done and a half hour later Pierre had arrived. He had tried to explain the situation, but it was not until Jack had given his version of the matter that it dawned on the irate Sandy that the innocent-looking and very friendly Field was the German spy. When Mr. Waterman had told all that he knew about the matter Sandy was angrier than ever.

"That son-of-a-gun has played me for an easy mark for years," said Sandy. "About three years ago he got me to take into the woods a lot of electrical stuff on the pretense that he wanted it in

trying out some ores that he thought were valuable. Then to put me farther off the scent, two years ago he came back with a story that his whole outfit had been burned down and totally destroyed."

"Have the Government agents been here?" asked Mr. Waterman.

"No," was the reply, "but they were up at Tadousac about six weeks ago, and they arrested three men there, though they held them only on suspicion. When I come to think of it, one of them was a Mr. Samson that used to come into the woods with Field. I think that Samson is still held and he'll get his share anyway." 116

The party, having told their end of the story, returned to the woods. Some three weeks later, on returning to Escoumains, they found out that Field had apparently made good his escape. He had landed near Riviere de Loup, and no doubt had gotten over into the United States from there.

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CHAPTER IX

A WEEK ON THE TRAIL

The previous days had been so full of excitement that they had altogether forgotten that they were to go on a week's trip. Mr. Waterman went ahead making preparations. On Sunday evening, after the short devotions they always held on that day, said he:

"Boys, you remember that we are going on an exploring trip this week. So get ready. You will have to carry everything with you, so take those things that are absolutely necessary. In addition, remember that each of you boys is expected to carry his share of the grub for the week."

The boys began to plan and they went to their blankets filled with the idea of taking a real trip under old-time voyageur conditions.

"Supposing it rains?" suggested Pud.

"Well, what of it?" replied Bob. "Do you think that we're sugar and that a little rain will hurt us?"

"Don't worry very much," said Mr. Waterman. "If we have any really bad weather you will be surprised how quickly the guides will make a wood hut out of birch bark, and a few supports quickly cut in the woods."

Very early the next morning they were astir. Bob had to give many suggestions to Pud and Bill, too, but at last they had their duffle all ready so that by means of tump lines they could not only bear their own blankets and sleeping bags, but also their share of the week's supplies.

"We are going north," said Mr. Waterman.

"Let's go to the spy's cabin," said Pud. 118

"Ah, do," chimed in Bill. "You see, Pud and I had no part in that adventure."

"Very well," said Mr. Waterman, "it won't be a bad thing for us to go there and see how much of the place the Government agents have left."

"Have the police been there?" asked Bob.

"You can bet they've been there," said Mr. Waterman. "A party left Escoumains the very day we were there."

They were a picturesque party as they set out. Pierre was the only one left behind. Jean, Jack and Joe were there; Joe with his little pointed hat, mackinaw and shoe pack, looking all the world like the pictures of the old voyageurs that one sees in the illustrations of the early French occupation of Canada. With the three guides, Mr. Waterman, Mr. Anderson, and the three boys, there were eight in the party. Mr. Waterman led the way, taking Bob in his canoe. Jack had Pud with him, Jean was paired with Bill, while Mr. Anderson and Joe brought up the "honorable rear," as they say in Japan. In their blue shirts, khaki trousers, bandanna handkerchiefs around their necks and shoe packs, they looked ready to tackle a journey to James Bay. In fact, Jean and Joe had both made the trip to James Bay and back, over the Great Divide almost due north of Tadousac, going first up the St. John River from Chicoutimi. They would have been quite willing to make the trip again but, no doubt, they would have objected to the presence of the boys on such a trip. Such a canoe journey needs real woodsmen and is not for novices such as the boys were.

They were soon over into the lake from which the path led to the spy's cabin. Mr. Waterman steered straight for the trail. They got out and were soon over the short divide and into the big gulch. They found the cabin still standing and apparently with everything just as it had been left by them. When, however, they came to the wireless on the top of the mountain, they could not find a trace of it. It had been taken away entirely. The boys enjoyed the view from the top of the 119

mountain.

"I almost believe that in clear weather Field and his mates could recognize the ships on the St. Lawrence if they had strong glasses, as they most probably had," said Mr. Waterman.

"Yes, it's so clear to-day," said Mr. Anderson, "that your idea seems not only possible but very probable. This was a very fine place for such a purpose. They could read the wireless messages that were sent from vessels going or coming from Quebec, and if they could get out to the United States now and then they could very easily keep their Government informed as to the movements of the British vessels, at least the most important vessels plying in and out of Quebec."

In a short time they were down the mountain and at the cabin once more.

"I must come in here some time and look for the outlet of this gulch," said Mr. Waterman. "There is quite a big watershed here, and the fact that there is no lake shows that there is a good outlet. Unless this outlet is underground it will lead down to either the Portneuf River or the Escoumains or some lake that empties into one or other of these streams."

"Have we time to look for it now?" asked Mr. Anderson.

"No," was the reply, "I have planned the trip for the week and it will be best to make a day's trip here just for the purpose."

They then went on their way and were soon over into another lake.

"Do you think you can stand another carry?" asked Mr. Waterman, turning to the boys.

"Sure," said Bob.

"Ab-so-lute-el-y," said Bill.

"All right," replied Pud.

"Why so modest?" asked Mr. Anderson. 120

"I find it hard work," said Pud. "I not only have to carry my load but about twenty-five pounds of superfluous flesh. I guess I can stand it if they can. I'm here to get in shape, so go ahead."

"We can stay here just as well and go on to the other lake in the morning. It is only mid-afternoon now, though," said Mr. Waterman, "and we could make the next lake easily. I plan to stay there all day to-morrow."

"Don't mind me," said Pud.

So they went ahead. Bob carried the canoe and a duffle bag full of grub, while Mr. Waterman kept piling on stuff until he had at least one hundred and fifty pounds on his back. With a tump line over his forehead, he moved ahead, apparently little concerned about the weight of his load. Mr. Anderson and the guides were also similarly loaded. Pud elected to carry his bag and the portion of the grub. Jack kept on piling up the stuff with a merry wink to Bob. Finally they moved off. The carry proved to be about a mile and a quarter long. They had to go up a fairly steep hill first. All did very well, though Pud was puffing and blowing like a porpoise and sweating like a foundryman when they stopped at the top of the hill for a short rest. They were soon on their way again. Jack stayed behind with Pud and the others were soon lost to view. Bob and Mr. Waterman walked ahead at a good pace and were soon at the lake, which opened out before them most invitingly. They were all in swimming when at last Jack and Pud hove in sight. Pud was certainty the picture of fatigue.

"Don't overdo it, Jack," said Mr. Waterman. "That was really too big a load for him to carry."

"I guess you're right," replied Jack. "I put it on him more for a joke than anything else, intending to take it myself later. But that kid's game. He would not let me have it, although I thought he would melt away before we got here. I won't overload him again. When he gets back to Philadelphia he'll be hard as a rock. With his gameness and his weight and strength, he should 121 tear things loose on that football team. I don't know much about the game, but they tell me it's rough.

"It is a little rough," said Mr. Waterman, who himself had been a noted player when he went to college. "A little roughness in sport is really necessary for the full development of boys. They must get that personal contact and feel that they have to get the best of the other fellow through their own efforts. If this is done fairly, the roughness will not deteriorate into anything dangerous."

In the meantime Pud prepared for a swim, which was certainly a reward for him after such a long stretch of portage.

"Oh, you water," said Pud, as he luxuriously lay out on his back floating. "That last carry was some hike. It had all the Plattsburg full-equipment hikes beaten to death. I'm just going to load my pater down some day with what I had on my back and then ask him how he would like to tote that over a young mountain."

"You did very well, Pud," said Mr. Waterman. "I did not notice how much Jack was piling on you or I would have taken part of it myself."

"Not on your life," said Pud. "I'm here, and that extra sweat I had will do me good. I told Jack I would switch with him now and then. I did not realize what a load he had. On the previous carries he walked along just as if he was out for a little jaunt. He's getting old, too. I don't see how how he does it."

"They get used to it and know just how to distribute the load so that it will be carried most easily," said Mr. Waterman.

While the boys were enjoying the water, the guides were busy. Already they had cut a couple of poles, and with the aid of two trees they had made a very serviceable fireplace and was getting ready to make biscuits. 122

"Hey, you boys," called Mr. Waterman, "get busy. We'll clear up around here, but you fellows get out and catch us some trout for supper."

"Nothing easier," said Bob, as he came ashore and put on his clothes. In a little while they were all three out on the lake casting like veterans. Bob was in one canoe alone while Pud paddled Bill in the other canoe. In a very short time they had over thirty fine trout, and at a shout from Jack they came back to camp.

"Well, did you have any luck?" asked Jack, as they came to the shore.

"Bully!" said Bob. "This lake is full of trout as fine as I have ever seen."

"No wonder," replied Jack. "There is no one here to catch them, and they keep on increasing."

"Well, I'll reduce the supply if we stay here a few days," said Pud. "I could eat an ox, let alone a few trout."

"You'll get all you want to eat and then some," said Jack.

The fish were soon cleaned, and twenty minutes later they sat around a table made of two big logs with birch bark spread over it. It was not quite so comfortable as in their home camp, where they had a rude bench to sit on, but not one of them even thought of any such luxuries. They had had a strenuous day with but a very small lunch, and they were as hungry as wolves. The way the biscuits, the trout and everything else disappeared was a tribute to Jack's cooking. Even Pud at last drew back from the improvised table fully satisfied.

"The Germans have a proverb to the effect that 'Hunger is the best cook,'" said Mr. Anderson.

"That's true," broke in Pud, "but when you have a fine cook and hunger too, then there is real enjoyment in eating even the most simple fare."

"Well said, old top," remarked Bill. "'But first tell me when you got to be a philosopher." 123

"The best time to philosophize," said Mr. Waterman, "is just after such a meal as we have had. Then there is such a sense of bodily satisfaction that everything else appears to us as if detached from our own selves. The true philosophers are the woodsmen. They have time to think over life and its many chances, and they get to know things at their true worth. That is why men who are brought up near to nature are always such good judges of character either in men, women, or animals."

"Now we are philosophizing," said Mr. Anderson. "I think you're right, though, for practically the only true philosophers that I have ever known are men of the woods. Pierre is a good example of this. His views of life and death would do credit to Dr. Talmage or any other of our great preachers."

"Well, all I can say is this," said Pud, "I'm glad I'm here."

At this everybody laughed, for it was typical of big, hearty, jovial Pud, that any real serious conversation should go over his head, even though his own ideas may have started the talk.

After supper the boys got their sleeping bags ready and everything else so placed that they would not be wet by the dew, which is very heavy in the Saguenay region. Then, like true sons of Nimrod, they once more sought the limpid waters of the little lake in quest of the ever elusive and ever interesting trout. They all had good luck, which guaranteed them a hearty breakfast. As Bob and Pud came back to the camp they found Jack out on a log casting. The woods were back of him and almost directly above him, but in some uncanny way he managed to cast his fly just where and just as far as he wanted to. As they came by he showed them a dozen fine specimens that he had hooked.

"Why go so far from camp?" said he, in his quizzical way. "They bite just as good here." 124

"For you," said Bob. "You're a wizard with the fly, but for a poor novice like myself it is better to seek the fish where they are pretty sure to be found. I'm no Pied Piper of Hamlin to be able to draw fish to my fly as he did rats with his pipe."

The camp fire proved more than usually attractive that evening. All gathered around, even the guides, after they had straightened everything up.

"Well, we don't need to worry much now," said Mr. Waterman. "We'll stay right here to-morrow and have a good day's fishing and possibly hunting."

"What kind of hunting?" asked Pud.

"I was thinking merely of a partridge or two," replied Mr. Waterman.

"Arc you going to use your sleeping bag to-night?" asked Bob.

"Sure thing," replied Mr. Anderson. "We're going to have a fine night, but about four o'clock to-morrow morning you are liable to make the acquaintance of some of those moustiques or gnats that Pierre tells about. If you are in your sleeping bag you can then just pull over the flap and have another snooze."

"It certainly looks like fine weather," said Bill. "I think that I'll get up real early and visit that trout hole I found to-night. They just jumped at the fly. It was almost dark when I struck the place, so I had time only for a 'strike' or two."

"I'm with you," said Pud, with a yawn.

"Swell chance," said Bob. "We won't be able to waken you to-morrow morning until you hear Jack's voice yelling that breakfast is ready."

"Is that so?" replied Pud. "Now, don't you believe it. I've turned over a new leaf, and I'm going to get up promptly from now on."

"The only thing you'll turn over to-morrow at dawn is yourself for another nap," said Bill. 125

"Just try me and you'll see," said Pud.

"You're on," was the reply, "but I warn you that I'll call you just once."

Just then Mr. Waterman broke in by asking Joe if this was not the lake where he had had such an experience with wolves some years before. Joe nodded. The boys immediately wanted to know the story. Bob sat down by Joe and was soon lost as he listened to the vivacious tale of the French habitant.

"That isn't fair," said Bill, to no one in particular.

"What isn't fair?" asked Mr. Anderson.

"Why, Bob knows French, so he is having Joe tell him the wolf story. We'd like to know that too."

"It is really a fairly common occurrence; at least was some years ago in this country," said Mr. Anderson.

"But Bob will tell us, won't you?" said Pud, turning to him.

"Sure." So Bob began the interesting tale.

"Joe was up here with Pierre and another Indian hunting some years ago. The winter had been a very severe one with a wealth of snow. On this account, the wolves had been able to get but little to eat. They were then much more numerous than they are to-day. At that time there was a bounty on wolves and hundreds of heads were turned in to the government each winter and spring. Joe and his party were coming back to Escoumains after a good winter's hunt. They stopped on the next lake at a hunter's shack that was there at that time. As the weather promised to keep cold, they determined to stay there, feeling that if the spring should come with a rush that they would be able to get down to Escoumains, as it was only a week's journey distant.

"They therefore set their traps and went methodically about their business of gathering in the furry harvest made profitable to them through the desires of 'My Lady' in the large cities, whose fair necks must be covered and protected from even the cold autumn's breath. One fine day Joe 126
set out to make the round of the traps. He had good luck and was going home about four o'clock in the afternoon, laden with two foxes and four rabbits. Joe was hurrying on, for there was no moon and the shades of night fall very early in these latitudes even in March. They had heard a wolf occasionally, but had felt no fear of them, so that when Joe heard the long-drawn note, he did not give it even a thought. He was intent on getting back before nightfall, so he failed to note that the howls were rapidly approaching.

"As he reached the surface of the lake, which was of course frozen tightly at that time of year, he was astonished to hear the howl of a wolf, immediately followed by other howls only a short distance in his rear. He hurried on, but before he could get across the lake, he saw several dark forms dash out on the ice behind him. He broke into a run, but the pack rapidly overtook him. Raising his gun to fire, he was thunderstruck to find that in some way he had jammed the trigger and that it would not work.

"He did not have any time to waste, so he threw down two rabbits and hurried on. The wolves stopped only a moment, when they came to the rabbits. He could hear them snarling and quarreling over their small carcasses. He felt his blood run cold and wondered if he was to be torn to pieces in like manner. Once more the pack came on, so he threw another couple of rabbits to them and ran ahead. They got quite near to him the next time, so he dropped the remainder of his load and fled for the shore. He felt that his only chance lay in getting ashore and up a tree. As he ran he tried to fix the trigger of his gun, but he could not get it working. He was quite near the shore now, but the wolves were close behind. With a last desperate rush, he sprang up the steep bank. Turning around, he was just in time to strike down with his clubbed gun a big gray form

that leaped at him with gleaming fangs. This lucky stroke probably saved Joe's life, for the rest of the pack stopped to devour their comrade, thus giving Joe time to get safely into the branches of a tree. The wolves, now with bloody mouths and glaring eyeballs, surrounded the tree and let out howls of such fierceness that they made Joe tremble even though he knew that he was safe for the present. He was only about a mile and a half away from their shack, and he knew that if he did not turn up, that sooner or later Pierre would be out to hunt him.

"But, can you imagine how pleasant it must be to be up in a tree, with broken gun, a dozen hungry wolves beneath you and a cold night coming on? Already Joe began to get very cold, for in his race across the lake through the heavy snow he had broken out into a heavy perspiration. As darkness came down he could feel the cold hand of King Frost, as it were, reaching for him and trying to throw him down to the beasts below. This idea took possession of Joe's mind and he fought it off with all his strength. He tried as best he could in the gathering darkness to fix his gun, but it was hopelessly jammed. At last he gave this up and settled down to wait for the morning, which would surely bring Pierre to his rescue.

"As the cold became greater, his desire to sleep became the stronger. He felt himself nodding several times and once awoke just as he was on the point of falling from the tree. He grabbed a branch lower down, but his feet swung beneath and before he could get back safely on the limb one of the watchful band below by a mighty leap snapped at his leg and took a piece cleanly out of the calf, tearing his trousers leg almost entirely off him. The smell of the blood put the wolves into a frenzy and they tried again and again to reach him by leaping. They seemed maddened by hunger, for when one of their number fell after making a mighty upward bound, the pack was on him in a minute, and before the horrified eyes of Joe, they tore their mate to pieces and in ten minutes there was neither hide nor hair of him to be seen. 128

"Joe now had to bind up his leg as best he could. He bound the rags of his trouser leg around so that it kept out the cold pretty well. This excitement kept him up for some time, but about twelve o'clock Joe felt that the cold was sure to get the better of him if he did not do something. He thereupon undid the leather strap that he used ordinarily to carry his gun over his back when not in use. This strap, together with his belt, made a strap sufficiently long so that he was able to bind himself to the tree. He then felt easier, for he knew that at least, even though he went to sleep, that he would run no risk of falling down as prey for the murderous pack below. He wondered if he would be able to stand the cold night or whether when Pierre came in the morning he might not find him stark and rigid, tied to the branch of the tree.

"He shuddered as he remembered the gruesome sight he had once noted far to the north one day. Then, on one of his fishing expeditions, he had come upon the body of a man hanging in a tree, evidently treed by wolves and then frozen. He wondered if some chance passer-by in after years would find his skeleton in a similar way and would pass on with only a 'Dieu benisse' (May God bless) as he had done, and not even give him decent burial. He commenced to think that his present position was directly due to his haste on this former occasion. He begged God to forgive him and promised to burn a hundred candles for the soul of the unknown if he ever got back to Escoumains.

"At last human strength could hold out no longer and Joe fell asleep, asleep with the cold, that forerunner of death. Joe knew nothing until he awoke in the cabin with Pierre busy about him. It seems that when he did not return Pierre had gotten uneasy. He and his mate had started out. With pine torches they followed his trail, and when they saw the numerous wolf tracks they feared for the worst. They followed across the ice and were themselves attacked by the pack. Their guns soon put them to flight and a few minutes later they found Joe insensible up in the 129 tree. They hurried him back to the hut and in a few days Joe was none the worse for his experience except for the painful wound on his leg made by the champion high jumper of the pack."

"Are there any wolves up here now?" asked Pud, as he looked out into the forest with its dark avenues of trees.

"Not so many," replied Mr. Anderson, "but Sandy, down at Escoumains, told me the other day that they were getting numerous again, and that a bounty had once more been put on their heads."

"Don't be dreaming of wolves and pounce on me again, as you did when dreaming of bears," laughed Bob.

"Yes, to bed, to bed, now," cried Mr. Waterman. "I'm sure we all need the rest, for we have had a great day."

They all agreed with him and were soon warm and cozy in their sleeping bags, sleeping as only tired men can sleep out of doors. The fire died down, the greenness of the nearby branches became gray and then black and were finally merged into the blackness of the surrounding woods, and not a sound told that here under God's own canopy slept human beings enjoying nature as the primeval men of old did.

CHAPTER X

MOCCASINS AS FOOD

Pud made good the next morning, for when Bill woke him he got up at once, plunged into the lake for an eye opener, and was ready with rod and line as soon as Bill. They were soon out on the lake and Bill made at once for the trout hole that he had spotted the night before. They had remarkably good luck and returned in time for breakfast with twenty-five fine trout. These they cleaned and handed to Jack, who soon had them sizzling on the fire and ready for breakfast. Bob and Mr. Waterman had also gone fishing. They did not return until Jack's cheery "Halloo!" brought they in scurrying. After breakfast they divided into parties. Bob and Mr. Waterman elected to go hunting partridges, while the others said that they would go fishing. Bob and Mr. Waterman were soon off. Arriving at the far end of the lake, they left their canoes and were soon lost in the depths of the forest. For some time they went along, but at last Mr. Waterman noted a partridge, and with a clever shot it was his. They wandered around, climbed a mountain and incidentally got three more birds, two of which Bob had the good fortune to bag.

"Well, we'd best be going," said Mr. Waterman. "Lead the way."

Bob said nothing, but started off confidently. Mr. Waterman followed on for a few minutes. He then asked,

"Let's see your compass, Bob."

Bob felt in his pocket, but did not find it there. He then remembered that he had left it in his sleeping bag. He was compelled to confess as much to Mr. Waterman.

"That's bad dope, Bob," said Mr. Waterman. "You should never leave camp without your compass nor without first noting carefully in which direction you are going."

"I know that," said Bob. "I just forgot it."

"Which direction did we take this morning?" queried Mr. Waterman.

"We first went east to the end of the lake, and since then we have been going mainly in a northerly direction."

"That is right," was the reply. "Now, if you can tell me which way is south, we can at least go in the right direction."

"We're going south now, aren't we?" asked Bob.

"No," Mr. Waterman replied. "We are going north, or nearly so."

He then pulled out his compass and showed Bob that this was so.

"Now, supposing we had no compass, how would we be able to tell the points of the compass?" asked Bob.

"By the sun," answered Mr. Waterman, in his usual, quiet way.

"How?" was the query.

"It's quite simple. In this latitude the sun is to the south of us. We therefore turn and face the sun, as it is now near noon, and we are facing south. Behind us is north, to our right, the west and to our left the east."

"A woodsman certainly must be on the lookout," said Bob.

Then they turned around and after quite a tramp they came to their own lake. They reached camp about three o'clock to find it empty. The others were evidently still out fishing. They busied themselves about the camp, finally opening out their sleeping bags and lying down on them. In due time the others returned and showed such a multitude of shining beauties that they were amazed.

"This is one of the best lakes we have ever been on," said Jack, as he went about preparing supper. "The trout are very numerous and of fine size. If we had time it would pay us to stay here a few days and get ready some smoked trout to take out with you when you go back to the city."

"I'd like to do it," said Mr. Waterman, "but I want to carry out my original schedule, so we'll reserve your idea for later on in the season."

Once more they had a fine supper, consisting of partridge stew with dumplings, trout, biscuits and prunes for dessert. They spent another very pleasant evening around the camp fire.

In the morning, after a hearty breakfast, they set out for another lake farther north and a little to the east.

"I want to work over towards the Escoumains River, so that we can come down that stream on

Friday and get our first taste this season of fast water," said Mr. Waterman.

"That will be fine," said Bob. "Father has often told me of the exciting times he has had shooting the rapids in the Lake St. John region."

They were soon ready for their journey. When they came to the first portage Pud was the first man out of the boat. He had his dunnage bag on his back and the canoe on his shoulders, and waited for Jack to show the way. Off they plodded, and in about an hour they came down again to another fine lake. The guides at once began to make camp, while the others looked to their sleeping bags and cleared up for the night. By ten o'clock they were settled for the day, and off they went in their canoes to try their luck on the new lake. They found it just as full of fish as the lake they had just left. When they returned at one o'clock they found that they really had more fish than they could use.

"We'll have to stop fishing for the rest of the day," said Mr. Waterman. "There's no use catching trout merely to throw them back again." 133

"Let's climb some mountain this afternoon and have a good swim afterwards," suggested Mr. Anderson.

After lunch the three boys, with their two mentors, left the camp and made for the opposite shore of the lake, as the mountain rose up sharply there. They scrambled up the sides of the mountain and had gotten nearly to the top when they were startled to see a party of men above them. When they came out on the top they found the strangers there apparently waiting for them. Mr. Waterman greeted them pleasantly, but they gave only gruff answers. They inquired at first very politely what they were doing there. Mr. Anderson gave them civil answers, but they evidently did not think that his answers were full enough, so they threw off all disguise, and the leader said,

"We are Government officials, sent up here to see if there are any more stations such as Field had down near your camp. It looks rather suspicious that you should discover this man Field so opportunely. We already know that food you bought in Escoumains has been found in his cabin."

"Very true," said Mr. Waterman. "As I explained to Mr. MacPherson, that was the reason why we went out looking for the thief. It was on that quest that we found Field and discovered his business. We notified the Government immediately, which proves that we were honest in the matter."

"Perhaps it does and perhaps it doesn't," was the reply.

"What you do not know is that we had ferreted out Field's accomplices, and I have no doubt that we would have gotten him in a short time. It is possible that he knew this and made an arrangement with you to keep him supplied with grub."

"Nothing of the kind," said Mr. Waterman. "You evidently have not read the evidence I left with Mr. MacPherson. There I told him all about the scene at the hut, and if you have read that you must know that we knew nothing of Field or his work. All we know is that he stole some of our 134 grub and showed remarkable skill in doing so. All through, he was about as clever as one could imagine."

"I'll grant that he was clever, and you seem clever yourself," was the reply.

"Don't forget that we'll keep our eye on you the rest of the summer, and that at the first suspicious move, we'll arrest you," said another official.

"You will find that totally unnecessary. We have been coming up into this country for several years, and the delights of nature, the fishing, hunting and adventure are the only things we are after here," said Mr. Waterman.

"I hardly know what to believe," said the spokesman of the party. "That man Field was here on just the same plea that you have stated, and until a few days ago he was just as little suspected as you now actually are. Pardon my questioning, but it seemed necessary. We are camping over on Lac Corbeau for some time, so if you see more of us do not be surprised. For the present we'll assume that things are just as you state they are. I sincerely hope so, for otherwise it will be a very serious matter for you."

The two parties then separated, and Mr. Waterman led the way back down the mountain. They were just in time for a real good swim before supper. Jack had been out and he had gotten four ducks, so that they had a very fine meal. Duck, trout, biscuits hot from the pan, ginger-bread and apricots made up a meal that would have done credit to Delmonico's, let alone a camp far away in the Canadian wilds. They certainly enjoyed it.

The next morning they were up early. They were going to get over to the Escoumains River and this meant that they would have to portage through three lakes.

"We'll have some hard work this morning, boys, so let's get away as early as we can," said Mr. Waterman.

"How many portages have we?" asked Pud.

"Three," was the reply. 135

"It's all the same to me," said Pud. "I'm getting to like the feel of that old canoe on my neck. It certainly does not seem half as heavy as it was ten days ago."

"That's because you know how to distribute its weight so that you carry it with head, neck, and arms," said Mr. Anderson. "These canoes are especially made and they weigh only sixty pounds. You ought to carry the canoes we used the first year of the Saguenay Club. They were just the ordinary canoe and they weighed nearly one hundred pounds and were badly balanced. These canoes not only weigh less than any other canoes you will see in this country, but they are especially balanced so that they are thereby easier to carry."

"I never used any other canoes," said Bob. "Now that I am used to these canoes, I do not mind them very much."

"You must also remember that you boys are getting into the finest kind of physical shape," said Mr. Waterman.

"We ought to up here," said Pud. "I've done more real work here the past two weeks than I would do at home in six months. It certainly puts the muscle on a fellow."

Shortly after breakfast they had all their duffle packed and they were off. They went along from one lake to another without incident and in due time they arrived at the Escoumains River. By this time it was nearly two o'clock, so they had a hurried lunch and then started up the river. Then the boys had a taste of river canoe work that they had never seen before. It was well that for each of the four canoes there was an experienced man, for otherwise there would have been plenty of trouble. Before they started the boys were surprised to see the guides come out of the woods with several long poles nicely trimmed up. These they laid in the canoes.

"What's the idea?" asked Pud.

"Of what?" asked Joe.

"The poles." 136

"We use the pole getting up the rapids. One can go better that way," said Joe.

"I didn't know that one ever used anything but paddles in canoes," said Bill.

"You'll very soon find how much more power you can get out of the pole than out of a paddle when going up a stream," said Mr. Anderson.

The canoes were pretty well loaded down but the party set out bravely. For some time the river was deep and by hard paddling they made progress against the current. Then they came to a rapid. Mr. Waterman got out and went up the stream. In a little while he returned and stated that he thought they could get up all right if they poled. Then the boys saw how this was done. Generally they kept near the shore. The man with the pole stood in the rear and shoved the boat along. It was necessary to be real clever with the pole, as any one can make sure of by trying this manoeuver some time in fast water. Finally they got up the first rapid, though frequently the boys thought that they were due for a wetting. When they came to the next rapids Joe told Mr. Waterman that he knew these rapids well and that it would be necessary to portage. Joe said that it was a full hour's portage, meaning that it was nearly two miles. They landed and were soon headed up the stream, laden with their canoes and duffle bags. It was hard work, though they found a well-beaten trail leading up the river. They got glimpses of the cool waters of the Escoumains as it dashed foaming from rock to rock. They could hardly admire the scenery, for they were all well weighed down with their packs or canoes. At last they came out at the head of the rapids and found a fine sheet of water ahead of them. In fact, as often happens, they found the river broad and slow-flowing for several miles, and they made steady progress.

"Keep your eye out for a good camping place," said Mr. Waterman. Hardly had he said this than they came around a curve of the river and saw before them a little opening in the woods that had been cleared. A little stream ran down into the larger river, forming a sand bar near its mouth. 137

"Here's the place," said Mr. Anderson.

As if by one consent they all steered for the shore and quickened their strokes. In a little while they were practically ready for the night. It was well that they had stopped, for it was now close to six o'clock and they were all getting very hungry.

"Hurry up the grub, Jack," said Mr. Waterman. "I could eat a moccasin."

"I eat moccasin before now," said Joe. "It ees hard to chew."

"When was that?" asked Bill, who scented a story.

"It was many year ago, when I very hungry in dees wood," said Joe.

"Let's have the story after supper," said Mr. Anderson.

"Oh, no, it is too difficile for me to speak Engleesh," replied Joe.

"Well, tell it to me," said Bob, "and I can then tell it to the others."

"All right, all right," said Joe, "but you must not expect big story. It ees only what happened to me one long wintaire."

The boys went in for a swim and they found the water a little colder than the lake on which they had camped the previous weeks. Joe, Jean and Jack kept very busy, and it was not long before the noise of a stick beaten against a tin can made known to all that supper was ready.

"Trout will do us to-night, but to-morrow morning we must have salmon for breakfast," said Mr. Waterman. "An extra dish of prunes for the one who catches the first salmon." 138

This offer does not mean anything to the ordinary person in the city, but on a trip out into the woods where the grub has to be rationed out, fruit of any kind is at a premium. It was almost dark when they got through their supper and were ready for the night. It was quite a cool night in spite of the hot day they had had. The guides piled on the wood and it was very comfortable after their hard day's paddling and portaging, to sit around the fire and talk over the events of the day or whatever happened to come up. Bob soon sneaked away from the fire and went over to the smaller fire which the guides had made close to the little wood hut they had hastily thrown up. It did not take Joe long to plunge into his story, and for quite a while Bob stayed with the guides listening to Joe. When Bob returned to the main party he found them getting ready to seek their blankets. His return was greeted gladly by Bill and Pud, who remembered the story that Bob had promised to get from Joe and then relate to them.

"Well, how did you make out?" asked Bill.

"Did Joe tell you the story?" exclaimed Pud eagerly.

"Yes, he told me the story in his matter-of-fact way. To him his experience was only an ordinary occurrence that may almost be expected by any hunter in a hard winter. I think that I had better keep the story until to-morrow night, as it is getting late," said Bob, looking questioningly at Mr. Waterman.

"Go ahead, Bob," said Mr. Waterman. "We are going to stay here and fish to-morrow, so it won't make much difference if we stay up a little later than usual. I don't think that Joe has ever told us of this experience, has he?" added Mr. Waterman, turning to Mr. Anderson.

"No. Joe has told us a lot of very interesting experiences that he has had, but he never told us of the time he got so hungry that he tried to eat his moccasins," said Mr. Anderson. 139

"Well," said Bob, "though Joe told me the story in his own very laconic fashion, I am sure that it was much more interesting than I can make it. I'll do the best I can, however."

"All right, then," said Bill, "go ahead."

"When Joe was a young man he once came hunting far north of this country in the company of an old Montagnais chief named Howling Wolf. They started out late in November, expecting to get back about Christmas time. They went up the Portneuf River, which was frozen over then, and made good progress. They had very good success from the start. Contrary to what they had generally experienced, the further north they went the better was the hunting. They were led on by this unexpected factor to go much farther north than they had ever been before. They had three dog teams along and were provisioned for a three months' trip. Their good fortune lured them on and it was almost Christmas before they awoke to the fact that they must soon get started home or they might get into serious trouble because of lack of provisions.

"Let's see if we can get some deer meat so that we can stay longer," said Howling Wolf one day. Joe consented and they went out with this idea in view. They were very successful. They both brought in a deer and at the end of a week, they had quite a lot of meat on hand. Things thus went along until shortly after Christmas, as sometimes happens, the game suddenly became scarce. They could not get a deer or even a rabbit. In addition, the winter came on in earnest. One heavy fall of snow was followed by another and they were kept close to their quarters. The heavy weather continued and they determined to make for the south just as soon as it became possible to do so.

"About the tenth of January, they left for the south. They made good progress, though their provisions became lower and lower. At last they were on very short rations and it was under these conditions that Howling Wolf had the misfortune to break his leg. Joe bound up the leg as 140 best he could, but the injured man made progress all the slower. As Joe found that the extra burden slowed down the dogs so much in the heavy snow, he determined to cache one load of pelts, make use of the extra dogs and hurry on. Food was very low and if they should hit a week's storm he could easily see that he would have the greatest difficulty getting out to Escoumains.

"As bad luck would have it, a regular blizzard came on and for four days, Joe and Howling Wolf had to lie low in a rude shelter that Joe had hastily thrown up when overtaken by the blizzard. It was impossible to keep a fire burning as the snow came down in icy particles that made wandering from camp a foolhardy undertaking. Howling Wolf on several occasions begged Joe to leave him there and go on his way. Like the Indian that he was, he felt that the storm gods were against them and he had given up.

"Before they left their improvised shelter, Joe had to sacrifice three of the dogs to furnish food for the other dogs. Joe also stated that he made his first hearty meal for several days on some dog steaks that he had kept for himself and Howling Wolf. At last they got away, but on the very next night they were attacked by a large band of wolves, and though they succeeded in driving them off it was only at the expense of almost their last cartridges and the loss of three more dogs. Joe spoke again of the heroism of Howling Wolf, who sat up in his sledge and shot at the wolves,

though they threatened to overwhelm him and Joe on more than one rush that they made. Joe said nothing of himself but one's imagination can easily picture these two hardy hunters, sheltered only by their sledges, making a fight for life against a large pack of hungry wolves.

"When the storm was over and the wolves had been driven off, there were over a dozen dead wolves lying around. Joe stated that knowing that he could not get the pelts out, he had been compelled to leave the wolves unskinned. In fact, the most vivid impression made on Joe by this 141
fight for his very life seemed to lie in the fact that twelve fine wolf skins had to be left there. The further loss of the dogs made it necessary for Joe to cache all the rest of his pelts. He did this very reluctantly, for he felt that unless he could get back before the winter was over, he would lose all the fine skins they had gotten by their hard work. Then, with hardly any grub and only a few cartridges, one dog team and a big heavy Indian with a broken leg as a load, Joe started off for Escoumains, at least one hundred and twenty miles away.

"When Joe told me this, he did so in just as matter-of-fact a way as if it were the most ordinary occurrence for a man to find himself far to the north in the depth of winter, practically without grub and without ammunition. The latter was really practically useless anyway, for the heavy snow seemed to have sent everything alive into their winter burrows. Joe could not take time to go hunting anyway, but he felt it would be useless, for though he kept his eyes alert, he did not cross a single track. Bad luck seemed to follow their journey out just as good luck had urged them further and further north.

"Another heavy storm came on and for three days Joe was compelled to lie quiet waiting for the weather to break. By this time the grub had entirely disappeared and only two dogs were left. Though the storm stopped in the middle of the night, Joe got his two Eskimo huskies out of their snow beds, hitched himself to the sledge also and started on. By the end of that day they had covered nearly thirty miles, according to Joe's reckoning, and both he and the dogs were practically exhausted. There was no food for man nor beast, so Joe once more had recourse to the dogs. He had to kill one of his favorite dogs. This was the only part of the story in which Joe showed any trace of excitement or sentiment. The killing of that favorite dog was evidently a very hard task for Joe. 142

"After only four hours' rest, Joe and the only dog left took up their burden. By this time Howling Wolf was in a regular delirium, caused by his injured leg and his privations. Joe struggled on all that day and far into the night. According to his calculations, he traveled nearly sixteen hours. In his naive way, Joe excused himself for not keeping on farther by stating that his dog finally gave out completely and he had to stop. With no food again, Joe took to eating the leather straps that had bound the grub on the sled. Then the dog suddenly went mad shortly after midnight and Joe was compelled to shoot him in self-defense. By hard work, he got a fire and made a good stew of dog's meat. A good meal of this also had a very stimulating effect on Howling Wolf, who quieted down and went to sleep. Without waiting for the morning, Joe hurried on, but the snow was deep and he made but very slow progress.

"In the intervals between his delirium, the stoic Indian urged Joe to leave him and hurry on. Joe makes no hero of himself, but he refused to do this, stating that they would either both reach Escoumains or neither of them would get there. In this way, Joe struggled on for two days more, living on the remains of the dog. This at last gave out. Joe now found himself only twenty miles away from Escoumains and he felt that if he could only hold out another day, he might get to some place of safety. Thus, starving, but determinedly dragging his injured friend, Joe staggered on. That night he eased the pangs of hunger by chewing on an old pair of moccasins that he found at the bottom of the sled. Howling Wolf also chewed away and cheered on his friend for, though he did not feel that Joe should still keep on dragging him along, he felt that if he would do it that it was his duty to keep up Joe's spirits. They both slept a few hours that night and long before dawn Joe was toiling away.

"At last, tired and exhausted, nature would have her due. Joe became merely a driveling maniac, urged along by an insane desire to make progress. At times he would wander round and round, 143
but eventually he would head on straight again. It was late that night that Joe saw far ahead a welcome light. This spurred him on and for about half a mile he almost ran. This spurt soon died down and left him so weak that he could hardly move along. Once or twice he fell but he kept on and was soon within hailing distance of the light. He tried to cry out but no sounds came from his exhausted lips. At last, when at the very end of his physical resources, he came to the door and knocked He heard a rustle within, but even before the door was open, he had fallen down in a faint. When he opened his eyes, he was in the cabin of his good friend Antoine Gagnon, who was bathing his head and feet with hot water and gently urging some hot liquid down his throat. Already Howling Wolf was seated by the fire and telling the good wife, Gagnon, what a brave man Joe had been and how he had saved his life. When he lifted his head, the whole family crowded around and praised him for his wonderful endurance. Joe stated that he had to spend a week in that house before he was strong enough to walk. Howling Wolf's leg got all right and Joe was soon as strong as ever.

"Three weeks after his almost fatal trip, he was off to the north again with another Indian and a week or more later returned with the pelts that had been bought almost with his life's blood. 'But,' concluded Joe, 'I would give all the pelts I get in one-two-yessair, three wintaire, if I not kill my dear dog, Marie, I love so well.'"

"Joe must have been some hardy youth twenty years ago," said Mr. Waterman. "I can assure you that everything he told you was true and probably even worse than he depicted it."

Pud and Bill were greatly impressed with Joe's story and sat a long time staring into the fire. Pud, however, soon realized his own troubles, for he exclaimed,

"Gee, boys, I'm sleepy. I'm going to turn in." 144

"I guess you had better, boys. You know, late hours are not on the camper's schedule," said Mr. Anderson.

Ten minutes later, not a sound could have been heard except the distant calling of a loon or the low roaring of the river as it rushed along its rocky bed.

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CHAPTER XI

A RESCUE IN THE RAPIDS

The same thought seemed to awaken every one the next morning. All were out early but they found Jack making the fire. He stated that they were going to have some very fine biscuits that morning and so he was up early. No one thought of him in connection with the extra dish of prunes. The boys were soon on the water though they did not expect to get the first salmon.

"Ye Heavens!" said Pud. "If one of those big salmon got on my line, I wouldn't know what to do with it anyway. But all the same, I'm going to have a try."

"Same here," said Bob. "I really would like to hook one because my father has told me so much about salmon fishing that I'm anxious to see if I can play one as he told me how to do it. He has caught salmon not one hundred miles from here, you know."

"Yes, it's all very well for them to tell us how to do it," said Bill. "I'll bet, though, that we make a botch of it when we get one."

They were soon separated by varying distances. Bob got three trout but no salmon rose to his fly. Pud was down the stream and as Bob floated by, he said,

"I don't believe there are any salmon here anyway. I've got four trout but nary a salmon."

As if to rebuke his disbelief in the presence of salmon in that river, a big fish leaped clear of the water and tore away with Pud's line. In a moment, Pud was busy. He got so excited when he saw the wonderful fish make another flying leap that he forgot that he was on a frail canoe and over 146
he went. Bob hurried to his rescue and Pud was soon in his boat again. Pud had held on to the rod and when he got in the boat, he started to reel in but he was due for a rude awakening, as he was nearly yanked out of the canoe by a terrific rush from the fish.

"He's still on," yelled Pud.

"Give him line! Give him line! Now, careful. Reel in," yelled Bob.

Pud kept at it and for nearly an hour that fish kept him as busy as a bee. At the end of that time, Pud drew the salmon gently towards the canoe. Bob reached over to get him in the landing net when off he went again. It took another good twenty minutes before he was finally landed. Bob and Pud then paddled for the camp and reached there to find that Mr. Waterman and Mr. Anderson were already there each with a fine specimen.

In a little while they all gathered around for breakfast when a big surprise awaited them. Jack demurely brought on a fine baked salmon. When this appeared, Mr. Waterman hurried over to the tent, lifted the covering under which the three salmon he and Mr. Anderson had caught had been placed, and there were still the three salmon.

"You old dog!" said Mr. Waterman. "When did you get that fish? I was up pretty early myself but you must have had it still earlier, for you have had plenty here to keep you busy since we got up."

Jack did not answer Mr. Waterman's question. Instead, he merely queried in his quizzical way.

"Do I get them prunes?"

For answer, Mr. Waterman went over to the shelter made for the grub and came back with a can filled with the succulent prune. Jack took them with a merry twinkle in his eye.

"I don't think that I ought to take them," said he. 147

"Sure. Take them. I said that I'd give extra prunes to the man getting the first salmon and you did the trick," said Mr. Waterman.

"That's all right, but I don't need them. Let me give them to the first boy that gets a fish," said Jack.

"All right," said Mr. Waterman. "Then you'll have to give them to Pud, for he was the only boy to land one."

Jack then came over to the table and with grave ceremony, he handed the prunes to Pud. The latter did not want to take them but finally yielded. They had a very merry breakfast and Jack at last told them that he had gotten up about half past three and had hardly got out into the stream before he had a fine salmon on his line. He had a merry battle with the gamy fish but finally landed him and, hurrying back, he sneaked into camp without being seen. After breakfast, the various members of the party once more set out in quest of salmon, it being agreed that no one would catch more than two.

When they reassembled at lunch, every one had at least one salmon. All were happy as kings, especially the three boys, who had had one of their ambitions realized in catching these wonderful game fish. They went exploring in the afternoon. Mr. Waterman took the boys back from the river into a part of the country that had been burned over. They made for a rather high ridge merely to get the view, with Mr. Waterman leading. As he topped the ridge, he was seen to sink suddenly to the ground and then hurry back to them.

"Two fine bears up there," said Mr. Waterman in a whisper when he got back to them.

"Where? Where?" exclaimed Pud.

"Just over the ridge. They're eating berries," said Mr. Waterman.

"Let's run," said Pud. "None of us has even a revolver."

"That's all right," replied Mr. Anderson. "Bears won't hurt you. Mr. Waterman came back stealthily so that you could have a look at them. If they scent us we shan't get within a mile of them. So be careful." 148

Pud held back but Bob hurried on with Mr. Waterman and Bill was close behind. They very quietly got to the top of the ridge and both of the boys had a very good view of the two black bears that were busily engaged eating the raspberries that grew very luxuriantly there in the bare spots left by the ravages of the fire. Mr. Waterman had just begun to explain to them what very timid creatures they were when Pud came up, and falling over a root crashed down, making a terrific racket. In a moment the bears were gone. They seemed to vanish. They seemed instinctively to keep in line with big rocks or trees so that even the lynx-eyed Mr. Waterman had great trouble in following their course. The boys did not see them again.

"You big boob!" said Bill. "What's the matter with you?"

"I didn't mean to do it, honest to goodness," replied Pud. "But were there really any bear here or were you stringing me as usual?"

"Of course there was a bear here," said Bob. "But a big elephant came along and scared them away. I don't wonder they took to their heels when they heard the noise you made. You'd make a fine Indian scout. You had better walk behind Jean and note how noiselessly he moves along."

"I'm sorry," said Pud.

The party then turned away after looking over the country from their high point of vantage. They could see far and wide and for miles the great forest fire had left only blackened stumps and dead trees. They got back to camp in time for supper. Joe had had time to get out and as he had returned with five partridges, they had another great supper.

"They told me when I wanted to come up here," said Bob, "that if I wanted to live on bacon, prunes, hard dough, and beans all summer that this was the place to come." 149

"Yes, that is what they generally expect to get on such trips as this, but with just a little luck and a good cook like Jack, the least thing to be objected to is the 'eats,'" said Mr. Anderson.

"I should think so," replied Bob. "I don't know that I have ever enjoyed my meals so much as up here."

"The same here," piped in Pud. "I think we get almost too good grub, that is as far as I am concerned, for I want to reduce and I have a swell chance to do that with partridge and trout, one night, salmon for breakfast, and salmon, trout, and duck for supper."

"Yes," said Mr. Waterman. "We've been unusually lucky this summer."

After supper, they went for a paddle up the stream, going up for nearly three miles until they came to another rapid. Bob and Bill were in one canoe and Pud and Mr. Anderson in another. They went up the rapid as far as they could paddle and then swung around and came racing back. When they came to the quiet part of the river again, Bob said,

"That's great fun. I bet we have some excitement to-morrow when we go down the river to a point opposite Lac Parent."

"I guess we'll enjoy it all right. I pity Pud if he gets in the drink," said Bill.

The next morning, the guides and their two leaders took the greatest precautions in binding up the duffle bags and the grub. Everything was folded so that even though they might be capsized, there would be little risk of their kits and grub.

"You are making preparations as if you expect trouble," said Bob to Mr. Waterman.

"Not especially," was the reply. "It is always best to be ready for anything in fast water. A broken paddle, just a mistake in judgment, may spell disaster. However, I think you'll enjoy it this morning. The river has some fast water all right but it is not very deep and though we may get wet, there will not be much real danger." 150

"How are we going to pair off?" asked Bob.

"Jack will take Pud. Joe will pair with Bill, you will come with me and Jean and Mr. Anderson will make up the party."

They were soon off, with Mr. Waterman and Bob leading. They had quite a stretch of slow water first and the boys were given their directions then.

"The main thing about getting through fast water is not to lose your nerve," said Mr. Waterman. "Next you must have confidence in your steersman and do what he tells you just as soon as he tells you."

"That's what I'm here for," said Bob, in his position up in the bow.

They soon swung into the rapids and it was exhilarating fun at first. Then Bob's heart came up into his throat for a minute as he looked ahead and could see only a smother of foam. Mr. Waterman steered straight for what seemed the worst part of it. In another moment they were in it and Bob thought that the canoe would never rise to the wall of water ahead. But it did. In a second, they were shooting down with Bob paddling for dear life trying as best he could to follow the calm directions of Mr. Waterman. The very speedy part of the descent lasted only a few minutes, but it was very exciting. Then they swung once more into the calm waters of the broad reaches of the river.

"Did we cover those two miles that took us over an hour to do the other day when we were portaging up?" asked Bob.

"That we did," said Mr. Waterman. "We did it very well. After a few trips of this kind, you will qualify as an expert canoeist."

"That's very kind of you to say so," replied Bob. "I know though that if I had hit that water with Pud or Bill that we would have been swimming long before now." 151

"Well, it does help to have an old stager like me in the back end of the canoe," said Mr. Waterman with quiet satisfaction. "To tell the truth, that is really an easy stretch of water. If you ever go through some of the rapids on the Shipshaw River or some of the larger rivers of this country, you will know what fast water really means. I went down the Shipshaw three years ago with Pierre and there were times when the slightest mistake would have meant death almost surely."

"I'd like to try that sometime," said Bob.

"You may think so, but really it is a foolhardy proposition unless you have very clever guides with you," replied Mr. Waterman.

"That's some sport," said Bill, as his canoe came abreast of theirs.

"I had my troubles," said Jack. "This young baby elephant up in the bow is too heavy and makes the canoe very hard to steer."

"That's right," said Mr. Waterman. "Suppose, before we reach the next rapids, that you get out a moment, shift some of the load up into the bow and have Pud sit back of the first thwart. That will balance the canoe better."

"That's a good idea," said Jack. "I'll do it."

"Why so quiet?" asked Bob of Pud as he looked across.

"Now don't kid me," said Pud. "I really thought three or four times that I'd be swimming down those rapids a mile a minute, but Jack brought me through all right. I'll give him all the credit."

"Don't you believe it," said Jack. "He did fine. He obeyed orders, but his weight in the bow made it very hard and I wouldn't want to try it over again."

A little later, Pud and Jack went ashore and fixed the cargo so that the canoe would not be down at the bow. Then they were off again. Once more they shot down through foam and spray, just missing rocks by a fraction of an inch. It proved the greatest sport that the boys had ever tried. They grew enthusiastic. 152

"Now, it's all right to like fast water," said Jack, "but don't let that make you careless. You can never afford to be careless even in rather easy water. If you do, you'll come a cropper sure."

They paddled on and went down three or four more easy rapids. By this time the boys commenced to think that they knew quite a little about how to take fast water. As they went along, Mr. Waterman warned them that they were now coming to a rather hard place but that it was very short. In another moment they were in it. Bob and his teacher went through like a breeze. Under the master hand of Mr. Waterman, the speedy descent of the waters was made

without dipping a drop into the canoe. As they came down into the smooth reach at the foot of the rapids, Mr. Waterman turned the canoe around, saying,

"Let's watch the others come down this last bit. It certainly looks exciting but while you're in it you have little time to think of the exciting features."

Just then Mr. Anderson and Jean came into view. They seemed poised almost on the brink of a cascade but the canoe came rushing down like a bird. At times, it seemed buried in the spray but it emerged triumphant at the foot. They also turned around to watch the others. Pud and Jack were next. Jack made it seem so easy that the boys were amazed at the deftness with which he steered the boat. At one spot, by a peculiar wrist motion known only to the initiated, he made the boat move bodily over to the right just in time to miss a big rock that seemed sure to be their Waterloo. It now remained only for Joe and Bill to come safely through. Under the influence of the eddies, Mr. Waterman and Bob had floated up almost to the very foot of the rapids. This was the big factor in what followed. 153

Jack and Bill hove in sight and down they rushed. Just before they struck the bad part of the rapids, Bill was seen to hold up his paddle broken short off at the handle. He turned around to snatch up the extra paddle but in doing so he was too hasty and in another moment, the canoe was caught by a swell and overturned. Anxiously the party at the foot of the rapids watched for the heads of Joe and Bill. Joe came up and was seen to make frantic efforts to get back to the canoe, but he was swept on. Bill did not appear. Bob was out of his canoe and out on the bank before any one even thought of stopping him. In another moment, he was running up the trail that ran alongside the river. A minute later he was out on the rocks above where the overturned canoe was now seen to be jammed between the rocks. A moment later, he plunged into the foaming rapids and fortunately drifted down right on the canoe. When he came there he had the greatest difficulty in not being swept over the canoe. Frantically he clung to the canoe, now finding himself helpless to save Bill, who was partly pinned under the canoe and was rapidly drowning right before his eyes.

Bills eyes were turning glassy, Bob thought, as he made a final effort to get the canoe free. He succeeded in doing this, but not as he expected, for his weight and the weight of the water as it swept along crumpled up the canoe and suddenly he found himself rushing down the rapids just like a wisp of straw on a miniature stream such as little boys sometimes make in the gutters. All at once he felt Bill's body bump him and instinctively he grabbed it and though bruised in a hundred places, he finally shot out at the foot of the rapids still clutching Bill's limp form. Bob was himself practically unconscious, but struggled to keep himself and Bill afloat as if under some superpower.

A moment later, the others were there and they soon had Bob and Bill out on the bank. Bill was far gone, as he not only had been half drowned when pinned under the canoe but he had knocked his head against the rocks in the latter part of his descent. First aid was given to him first. He 154 was stretched out over a log and then his arms were worked to get the air back into his lungs. In about five minutes, Bill opened his eyes and with a big sigh closed them again. A few minutes later he was sitting up, still in rather a dazed condition, but fast recovering. Bob had received quite a cut on his head, but he had not actually lost consciousness and he fast recuperated. He was up and about in a little while, apparently none the worse for his strenuous exertions.

"That was a close call," said Mr. Waterman.

"I should think so," said Pud. "When I saw Bob plunge into those rapids, I thought he was a fool, for I could not see how he could do anything."

"He saved my life all right," said Bill. "I was pinned under that canoe and was nearly drowned when Bob got there. I didn't get get this bump on the head until afterwards. I saw Bob come, but I was so nearly all in that I could only struggle faintly to get a breath of air now and then. When the canoe suddenly broke in two, I shot down and I must have hit a rock for I knew nothing more until I woke up on the bank."

"You deserve a great deal of credit, Bob," said Mr. Anderson, "not only for your heroism but for the quick presence of mind you showed in doing the only thing that had a chance of saving Bill's life."

"You beat me to it all right," said Mr. Waterman. "The way you got out of that canoe and up that trail would have made me look like a snail so I stayed at the foot hoping to be of use there. I thought that Bill might appear any moment at the foot of the rapids as I could not see that he was pinned down by the canoe."

"I'm certainly glad you were there," said Bob, "for I would never have gotten Bill ashore by myself. I certainly was all in. I was not unconscious but I had big black spots before my eyes and I guess I was just about ready to pass out." 155

"Well, it's all over and we're very lucky," said Mr. Waterman. "We'll camp right here for the night and go on our way to-morrow morning. We can get back to camp all right even if a little later than we had planned."

In the meantime, Joe had come down the rapids unhurt and crawled into Jean's boat as if nothing out of the ordinary had occurred. While the others were bringing Bob and Bill back to the world, he and Jean set out after the broken canoe and captured it. Owing to the great care with which

their duffle bags had been made up that morning, nothing was really injured. Bill and Bob did not have much appetite for supper that evening as both were suffering more from shock than they recognized. In the morning, Mr. Waterman let them sleep until the last call for breakfast. After a swim, they were both just about as good as ever.

"How are we going to get everything into the canoes this morning?" asked Pud.

"What's that?" asked Mr. Waterman in turn.

"We had the canoes pretty well filled yesterday," said Pud. "With one less canoe, we'll have to shift things around, won't we?"

"Who said that we had one less canoe?" asked Mr. Waterman quietly. Pud looked to the bank of the stream and sure enough, there were four canoes there.

"Where did we get the extra canoe?" asked Pud puzzled.

"We didn't get it any place," replied Mr. Anderson. "Joe and Jean were up real early this morning and they fixed the one that seemed such a wreck last evening."

Pud went over to the canoes and sure enough, he saw where the canoe had been patched up.

"This isn't a very good job," said Mr. Waterman. "When we get back to camp, they will take out those broken ribs and replace them entirely instead of splicing them up as they have done. It will do all right until we get home but when Joe really gets through with that canoe, there won't be a sign of that smash-up." 156

"He's certainly clever," said Bill.

"Yes, he is in one sense, though in another he is just using the knowledge that he has acquired in years in the woods," said Mr. Anderson.

"Pierre, Jean, Joe or Jack can all build a very good canoe as they have often done so," said Mr. Waterman.

"Can Pierre make a birch bark canoe just like the Indians used to have?" asked Bob.

"Nothing easier," replied Mr. Anderson.

"I'll get him to make me one ofter camp is over and send it down to me in Virginia," said Bob.

"He'll be very glad to do it," said Mr. Waterman.

After a good breakfast, they were on their way. It was a credit to the real courage of Bob and Bill that though they had to go down three rapids before they came to the ford near Lac Parent, that neither of them showed any sign of the white feather. Both boys seemed to enjoy the exciting sport just as much as before the almost fatal accident of the previous day. On arrival at the ford, they found Pierre there.

Two hours later, they were back at their home camp and settled in their shelter tents. That night around the camp fire they went over the events of the week and concluded that they had had more fun and excitement crowded into that week than they had had in any other similar space of time during their lives. They all went to bed glad to-morrow was the Sabbath and that they could just laze around and enjoy the comparative comforts of their home camp.

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CHAPTER XII

PIERRE'S BIG SALMON

The next night, Bob visited the guides' tent after supper and he did not return to the others until nearly ten o'clock.

"What did you find so interesting up there with the guides?" asked Bill.

"Nothing much," replied Bob. "Pierre was telling me how he nearly lost his life landing a big salmon on the Shipshaw River one summer."

"Let's hear the story," demanded Pud.

"It's too late to-night but I'll tell it to you to-morrow night if you want me to," replied Bob.

The next evening it was raining, so a fire had been built outside of Bob's shelter tent. The boys were leaning back inside, all the more comfortable because of the dreary conditions outside. In spite of the rain, the birch logs burned brightly though accompanied by hissing, as big drops of rain came down now and then from the pines overhead.

"This is a good night to do murder or some other light occupation," said Pud to the others.

"Why not tell us that fish story of Pierre's now?" queried Bill.

"That's a good idea," said Pud.

"All right," answered Bob, "but I really wish I could give you the story just as Pierre told it to me, with the sidelights of Indian philosophy and the natural expressions of wood lore that made his story much more piquant and picturesque than mine could ever be. Anyway, I'll do the best I can. 158

"It seems that one summer he was sent out by one of the big lumber companies to scout for timber. He was told to get another Indian or two and go up the Shipshaw River and report the growth of timber near the water, whether he thought it could be rafted down or not, and any other information that would be valuable for the lumber companies. He took along two nephews of his, named Jean and Jacques, and an old Indian, named Montagnais because he was reputed to be the head chief of the tribe of that name to which all the Indians of that part of the country belonged. The old Indian told Pierre before he started that there was plenty of big timber in the Shipshaw Valley but that he would find it practically impossible to raft it down. Pierre told the lumber company this but they desired him to go anyway, stating that they wished to find out definitely about the matter that summer.

"They started off and took the steamer to Chicoutimi at the head of the Saguenay River. They there got into their canoes and were soon going up the Shipshaw. They found this river one of great volume, and they had many long portages to make and much fast water to pole up. It took them over three weeks of hard paddling and portaging to get near its source. At last they got as far up as the valley as Pierre thought was necessary. It was Pierre's idea that on the way down, they would stop off every few miles and go back into the country to look over the woods This they did, and, of course, this made their progress down rather slow.

"One day they came on a real Indian encampment at the foot of the rapids, and as it was near evening they determined to stop and enjoy the company of their brother tribesmen for the night. They found the Indians very glad to see them. They told them that they had wintered far to the north of the Great Divide and that they planned to get down to the St. Lawrence and in touch with white people and civilization once more. Later in the evening, they learned that the little party had stayed at that one place for three full days, because the chief was determined to catch 159
a big salmon that had tantalized him during that time. This salmon had been seen by all of them, as he lived in a big pool at the head of some rapids only a short distance down the river. It was then too dark to show this big fish to Pierre and his companions, but early the next morning, Pierre was down at the pool. He looked over a big rock into the pool, that was formed by a back eddy, and, sure enough, there was an especially large salmon swimming about in the quiet water. In another moment, Pierre had out his fishing tackle, but to no avail. The big salmon would have nothing to do with anything Pierre offered him. He tried one fly after another, but without effect. It seemed as if the big salmon despised his efforts. As if in defiance, every now and then the fish would swoop up to the surface and jump two or three feet out of the water.

"Pierre grew stubborn. All that day, he stayed by the pool, either he himself fishing or watching the old chief try every while to entice the giant salmon to take that hook. At night they all returned to camp and told stories of phantom fish that could not be caught except by black magic. They came to the conclusion finally that the big fish must be one of that kind, with something uncanny about him, and they decided that it would be bad medicine to try to catch him. Pierre was the only one that dissented from this.

"He got up even before dawn the next morning and was early down at the pool. He procured a little pitch and some black flies and stuck them together in such a way that, when they were thrown on the water, they looked just like a half dozen flies floating down the stream. He got out his smallest leader and fastened a hook among the flies. When he had finished, it looked very lifelike and Pierre was proud of his handiwork. Carefully approaching the stream without making any noise or permitting any shadow to fall on the water, he threw his semi-artificial fly far out on 160
the stream, so that the back eddy would ultimately bring it into the pool. Sure enough, the little black spot on the water whirled around and finally floated calmly and slowly around the pool. Twice it made the circuit and Pierre had just about decided that he was doomed to disappointment again, when he saw a streak fly into the air and his reel fairly sang as it spun around. Unfortunately something jammed and the rod was jerked out of his hands. Pierre saw it disappear over the edge of the rock, but he was after it and just caught the end of the rod as it was being dragged under. Pierre held on like grim death. In another minute he found himself out in the river and a moment later he was in the powerful current at the head of the rapids. Even yet he had time to get to shore but, with his usual obstinacy, he held on. A minute later he was going down the rapids, doing his best to keep his head above water, but with the line wound tightly around his arm. It was now a fight for life, and he had no time to think of the fish. Down he went, carried hither and thither by the powerful currents. He knew that each moment might be his last but he struggled on. Once he believed he heard a shout and thought he caught a glimpse of a canoe shooting after him, but the noise of the water and his fearful struggle to keep from being dashed upon the rocks that lined the river made this appear more like a dream than a reality.

"He was on the point of exhaustion when he swung around a bend of the river and found himself in quiet water. In one sense he was saved, for he had come through the rapids safely, but in another he was just at the beginning of his struggle for he was practically exhausted and at least a half mile from shore. He lay back on the water and closed his eyes, feeling that he could never

reach land. Just then he heard a call, and his two nephews swung around the point and made for him. They pulled him into their canoe and paddled for the shore. When they reached there, they started to carry Pierre up on the beach, but found the line tied around his arm. They disentangled 161
this to find that the pole was still at the one end of the line. They then started to reel in and in a moment they felt a weight pulling on the line. They pulled warily, and a minute later the big salmon came into view. Pierre had caught him after all. Whether he was drowned by being pulled down the rapids, whether he had hit a rock when entangled in the line, or for whatever reason, the fact remained that the line had held and that the big fish was brought safely ashore.

"Jean proposed that they should camp there that day to celebrate the occasion. Pierre was secretly very glad to do so, for he really was all in, not only because of his great exertion in coming down the rapids, but also because of the many bruises he had received from the rocks. He asked his nephews how they had come along so luckily to his rescue. They replied that they were just on their way to get a last look at the big fish when they saw him plunge over the rock by the side of the pool and then go down the rapids. He was some quarter mile ahead of them and they could not get near him in the rapids. They kept on going, however, although they were afraid that he would hit his head on some sharp rock and be drowned.

"One of the nephews then went up the river by the portage trail, and in another hour the small tribe and the old Montagnais chief were gathered around Pierre, hearing of his remarkable escape from death in the rapids and his more remarkable catch of the giant salmon. They roasted the fish for dinner and had a great feast in honor of the occasion. Pierre stated that this was the biggest salmon he had ever seen and that it was just luck that he had caught it. He gave himself some credit for the bait that had tempted the fish, but otherwise he felt that it was only luck that had brought the fish down through the rapids with him."

Bob stopped here and looked out at the rain which was still coming down steadily. 162

"Pierre has had some adventures in his life," said Bill.

"He told me another story about that trip up the Shipshaw, and though I tried to explain it to him, he could not see it," said Bob.

"What was that?" asked Pud.

"According to Pierre the Good Spirit showed that he was displeased at him for catching the fish. As they were going down a wide reach of the river two days later they saw a big pearshaped black object rise into view over the hilltops. It sailed on over them and just as it was above them, it dropped a rock which went right through Pierre's canoe. If the other canoe had not been near, they would not have had time to save anything. As it was, they saved all their duffle, and, going ashore, they soon had the canoe in shape again. Pierre felt that the Great Spirit had thus reminded him of his sacrilege in killing the big spirit fish. I tried to tell Pierre that he had seen a big balloon, and I called to mind that in that very year a big balloon had floated far into the wilderness. Pierre would have no such explanation. To him, the big object was a direct visitation of the Great Spirit, It completely terrorized, him and his mates, and he said that he would always remember it."

Here Bob paused and Pud took occasion to ask:

"Did Pierre get back all right after his trip?"

"Oh, yes; though he had one more experience that was not very pleasant," said Bob.

"What was that?" asked Bill.

"As I have already mentioned, they got out of their canoes and went inland every few miles to scout around and see what timber was in the little valleys leading off the main valley of the Shipshaw. On one of these occasions, Pierre and the old Indian went off on one side of the river, and the two others on the opposite side. They had only one rifle between them, for they were not out hunting and had taken it along merely from habit. Pierre had the gun, while the old Indian 163
went ahead with his easy stride. Though over sixty years of age, he was noted as one of the best walkers and sturdiest paddlers in the country. He led the way and Pierre came after, thinking hard about the displeasure of the Great Spirit as shown by the sinking of his canoe. They broke through a very narrow ravine and came upon a she-bear with three cubs. The sight of the Indians angered the bear and she made a rush for them.

"Pierre was not able to fire for a moment as Montagnais was right in his path. At Pierre's yell, the old Indian stepped back and the gun belched forth almost in the bear's face. The ball did not take effect and did nothing except to add fury to the mad rush of the bear. She swept Pierre aside ripping his shoulder with her claws, and caught Montagnais fairly in the chest. The latter went down without a cry. Fortunately, Pierre's shoulder was not very badly hurt and he had not dropped his gun. He slipped another cartridge into the rifle and gave the bear her quietus by hitting her right behind the shoulder and striking her heart. Pierre then looked at his old Indian friend and saw that he had received a very bad wound. Several ribs were evidently broken, while the chest bone seemed to be caved in. Pierre hastened to a nearby brook and got some water in a hastily improvised birch bucket. The water brought Montagnais to his senses, but a broken ankle made it impossible for him to move. He was evidently in great pain.

"In the excitement, Pierre had done nothing for himself and did not do so until he finally commenced to feel giddy and came near fainting. He then tore off his shirt and found that his

weakness was due to loss of blood. He bound up his arm and sat down to rest and to think what to do. He tried to carry the old Indian, but soon gave that up, both because he was too weakened to do so and because the great pain caused by moving his old friend made the latter faint. There 164
was nothing to do except to stay with his friend and wait for Jean and Jacques to hunt them up, or else to get to the river and bring them back. He thought that the latter would be the better plan, so he made Montagnais as comfortable as he could, propping him up against the old bear and giving him the rifle as defense. The cubs by this time had gotten over their scare and they came back to their mother and smelled around her with little whines and moans that were almost childlike. He left Montagnais leaning against the old bear with a cub on each side of him. They were quite little and as harmless as kittens.

"Pierre found that he must have lost a lot of blood for he had some difficulty in getting back to the river. At last he reached there, and in due course of time Jean and Jacques came paddling across the river, singing a low Indian love song, happy as any children of the forest should be when in their native haunt on a fine summer's day. They were all attention when they saw Pierre and were ready to start at once even without their suppers. This Pierre did not let them do as he felt that he himself would not be able to get back to his old friend without some nourishment. The two young Indians hurried things along and Pierre felt much better by the time supper was over. They then started off and, though by this time night had fallen, Pierre led them straight to the gully and found old Montagnais quietly sleeping with the three cubs lying around him. They built a fire and examined the injuries of the old man. He was now quite conscious and he told Pierre and the others just how badly he was hurt and what they would have to do to get him out.

"Under his directions, they built a leafy litter and as soon as dawn showed the way, they carried him back to the river. They felt that it would be best to rest there for a few days. Jean and Jacques made a trip back to the gully and returned with the bear's skin, as much bear meat as 165
they could handle, and the three cubs following them like puppies. By the end of their week's stay, the old Indian was able to sit up and he said that he would be able to do his share if they got him into the canoe. Pierre stayed three days more and then set out. It required skillful paddling for him to make some of the rapids but finally they emerged once more upon the bosom of the wide Saguenay. In due time, Pierre got back to Escoumains and made his report about the lumber."

"Now, I know why Pierre was not very anxious to go up the Shipshaw with me two years ago," said Mr. Waterman. "He told me that he had been up the river but he did not want to go again."

"He was no doubt thinking of the balloon," said Bill.

"Do you think it was a balloon?" asked Pud.

"It undoubtedly was," said Mr. Waterman. "The very year that Pierre went up the Shipshaw, they held a long distance balloon race starting away over in the United States. One of the balloons was carried away to the east of the Saguenay and the two pilots did not get back to civilization for over two weeks. They had a very hard time for they had to tramp out. The remains of the big balloon are up there in the wilderness and have probably more than once aroused the astonishment and amazement of wandering Indians."

"Maybe no one has found them," said Pud.

"That's quite probable, for you know that we have been up here for quite some time, and we haven't seen anything of them," said Mr. Waterman. 166

The rain still came down but, sheltered as they were, they rather enjoyed it. They talked for some time and then dispersed to their various tents.

Bob and Bill were together. Just before turning in, Bob put two big logs on the fire and they lay down in their blankets watching the fitful flames that darted feebly up into the rain.

"We're lucky to-night that we're not out on a trip," said Bill.

"How so?" asked Bob.

"Well," replied Bill, "if we were on a trip we should not have this shelter tent along and we should stand a good chance to get a soaking."

"I shouldn't mind that much," said Bob. "But don't you remember that last trip? We had a rainy night then and we did not get very wet. Our sleeping bags kept us just as dry as punk all night, though I could hear the rain beating down like sin on my head."

"That's true," said Bill. "These sleeping bags are great stuff. All the same, I'm glad I'm here to-night."

"Are you going to keep the fire going to-night?" asked Bob sleepily.

"Yes, if I happen to wake up," said Bill. "I'm nearest the fire and I'll just throw on a log if I can reach one without getting out of my bag."

"I've seen to that," said Bob. "You can reach these logs easily enough. Don't bother to do it though unless you wake. Needn't keep it on your mind." 167

"Don't worry. I'm as sleepy as the dickens now, so I shall probably not bat an eyelid until morning."

"Good-night," said Bob as he rolled over.

"Pleasant dreams," said Bill in answer.

Ten minutes later the only sign of life about that part of the woods was the fire which blazed up now and then, only to be put down when a breeze knocked a lot of big drops from the trees.

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CHAPTER XIII

THE PLATINUM MINE

Because of the experience that Bob and Bill had had, Mr. Waterman thought it best to stick around Lac Parent and take it easy for a few days. This they did. They found the trout fishing very good and concluded that after all there was nothing like fly fishing for the speckled beauties. Fishing for salmon was a change but they all felt that if they were to fish for a summer they would much prefer the smaller fish. There seemed to be no lessening of the supply. On Wednesday they all went into Escoumains. They went by the trail, carrying their canoes through the first two lakes so that they had only about six or seven miles of walking. They did this because they made the trip more for the sake of a change than because they had to go to the village for supplies. Sandy MacPherson still talked of the German spy.

"I have to admire both his nerve and his cleverness," said Sandy.

"To come here for that purpose and to do so for several years simply proves the excellence of the German spy system, considered by far the greatest and most far-reaching of any nation's in the world," said Mr. Waterman.

"Sure," said Sandy, "that's the point. Field has been here for the last five years so when he came in early this spring we thought nothing of it. The way he got me—me, the representative of the 169
law, to help him in with those wireless instruments four years ago was the height of audacity. How did he know that I knew nothing about wireless?"

"He had probably talked to you about it," said Mr. Anderson.

"Well, I bear him no ill-will," concluded Sandy, "especially as the German submarines did not get a single troop ship that left either Halifax or Quebec."

"Did those revenue officers question you about us?" asked Mr. Waterman.

"I should think they did," replied Sandy. "I got mad at last and asked them if they suspected me of being disloyal. That shut them up. I guess the thing is over for good."

They all went back to the camp via the short route with the exception of Mr. Waterman, who went back via the road with a load of provisions. As he left, he stated that he would camp at the ford that night and would expect them all over there very early in the morning to help him with the stuff. The party separated and the next morning even before daybreak, they all left the home camp and headed for the ford. The fact that the boys were quite willing to go along and would really have felt slighted had they been left behind showed how much they had developed since coming up to the camp. They not only thought nothing of getting up before daybreak and going off over two lakes but they knew that when they got there, they would merely load themselves down with grub and come back. What would have seemed to them a big day's work only a few 170
weeks before, they were now eager to do before breakfast.

Such is the way of the wilderness. Men get to see that every one must do his share and a little discomfort is scoffed at. The boys enjoyed the early morning paddle through the two lakes, while the portaging of the canoes was by this time mere child's play to them. They really thought nothing about it and took their turn when traveling light just as a matter of course. The improvement in Pud was the most noticeable. He had lost weight and was quicker on his feet and handled himself much better. They arrived at the ford to find Mr. Waterman busy getting everything ready to move out. He had things in good shape and in ten minutes they were on the back trail. There were so many of them that the weight assigned each was comparatively light and they walked away at a rapid pace. Before seven o'clock, they were back on Lac Parent and with appetites that would have been the delight of an epicure.

Jack was the only one that had remained behind and as soon as they disembarked, he called them. They all came running. He had salmon steaks, hot biscuits, porridge with milk and apricots. They certainly enjoyed the meal, went fishing as usual. Coming back about eleven o'clock, they went in for a swim and got a lot of enjoyment out of this. In spite of the northern clime in which they were, the shallowness of the lakes permitted the water to get pretty well heated by the hot July and August sun, and swimming was a real pleasure. It was only now and then when they struck a lake fed mainly by springs that they found the water too cold for swimming. 171

The next day, Pud suggested that they should go over to the cabin in the gulch, called by all the German spy's hut, and explore.

"That's a good suggestion," said Mr. Waterman.

"We can easily do it in a day," said Pud.

"Possibly not," said Mr. Waterman. "We'll take sufficient grub for a week for we do not know just where our search may lead us. We may come out on the Portneuf River, fifty or sixty miles away."

"I didn't think of that," said Pud.

They were soon ready. Mr. Waterman and Pierre brought along their guns. The party was made up of the three boys, the two leaders just mentioned and Mr. Anderson. They were soon over in to the second lake. There they stopped to fish, except Mr. Waterman, who went off to one end of the lake as he thought that he was pretty sure to bag a duck or two there. He was right, as his gun was heard occasionally during the next two hours. The fishing was fine and when Mr. Waterman returned with six fine young ducks, the boys knew that they were going to have a big supper again. They had lunch and then went on to the cabin. They determined to stay there all night and just explore the gulch.

"I have often been up on the sides of this gulch but I have never been down here to see what was here," said Mr. Anderson.

Behind the cabin they found an excellent spring with a little stream leading away from it.

"I guess we'll make no mistake if we take this spring for a starting point to-morrow. This stream will surely lead us out of the gulch, as it must have an outlet," said Mr. Waterman. 172

"There is sure to be an outlet because there is no lake here," said Bob.

The stream led them further down the gulch and they found themselves going down even further. When they had reached a point about a half mile from the cabin, they found that the path they had been following stopped and turned up the hill. This was not the path they had previously noted as leading to the top of the mountain.

"Let's follow this path," said Bill.

"All right," said Pud.

They turned off and they had not gone far before they came to what seemed like a mine. The boys were very excited as it seemed to them that they had discovered the reason why Field and his friends had made their summer home in this gulch rather than in some other that would have been just as suitable from the wireless standpoint.

"This looks like a mine to me," said Bob.

"It certainly does look that way," replied Bill.

"He has a lot of quartz over here," said Bob as he went over to a little pile that had been made to one side.

"It looks as if this were a recent discovery," said Bill.

"It certainly does," said Pud.

They examined the quartz but it did not look like anything they had ever seen.

"Let's take some of it back with us," said Bob. "Mr. Waterman is quite an expert on metals, rocks, etc., and he will probably know what it is." 173

"That's a good idea," said Bill. "He told us the first time we climbed the mountain to the west of this gulch that it looked as if there should be some kind of minerals down here. From above, this gulch certainly looks like many a mining camp site in Colorado."

"I remember his saying that," said Pud.

The boys hurried back to the cabin and they had hard time restraining their impatience until Mr. Waterman returned. Bob handed him the quartz without any comment. Mr. Waterman took it and after a short examination, he said,

"Where did you find this, boys?"

"We found it off the little stream," said Bob. "Evidently Field has recently discovered a mine of some sort and he has just started to work it, for not very much work has been done yet."

"You have made a valuable discovery," said Mr. Waterman. "If I am not mistaken, this quartz has streaks of platinum and you know, platinum is more valuable than gold."

"What!" yelled Pud. "We've discovered a mine that is better than a gold mine."

"Now don't get excited," said Mr. Waterman. "It is most probable that Field has had this place regularly staked out and claimed by some friend over here."

"How can we find out?" asked Bill.

"We'll have to look it up at Tadousac, where the records are kept," said Mr. Waterman. "Lead me to your platinum mine," concluded he. 174

They all went over to the hole in the ground and Mr. Waterman looked over the quartz that had been taken out. "I have no doubt that this is platinum," said he at last. "I may be mistaken, but I hardly think so."

"Let's hustle back and get out of Tadousac right away and put in a claim," said Bill.

"Now, don't hurry. It will keep, no doubt," said Mr. Waterman. "In any case, it will not be necessary for all of us to go to Tadousac. I would suggest that Mr. Anderson and Bill take the back trail and get out to Tadousac in due time and put in a claim for the mine in the name of Pud, Bill and Bob."

"Not on your life," said Bob. "You and Mr. Anderson are in on this as we would never have come had it not been for you. In addition, you would have been sure to discover the mine yourself before the afternoon is over."

Bob spoke with such sincerity and he was backed up by the two other boys so earnestly that at last Mr. Anderson and Mr. Waterman gave in and consented to be given a share in the mine.

"Now don't go building any great castles in the air," said Mr. Anderson. "We may be mistaken and this quartz practically worthless."

"I'll wager that that German knew what he was doing," said Bob. "Mr. Waterman thought that he was from the west by the way he knew the woods and woodcraft and I bet he did not dig that big hole himself without feeling that he had something worth while."

"You are probably right," said Mr. Waterman. "But here is another thought. If we put in a claim for this gulch, we may have a hundred mining sharks down here right away and that would spoil 175 the whole thing, especially if there is more of the stuff."

"Well, let's lay claim to the whole gulch," said Mr. Anderson. "I'll give them the impression that we are buying this gulch because it is so picturesque and centrally located."

"You may be able to get away with it if you go about it carefully," said Mr. Waterman.

"Don't you think that those revenue officers noticed that mine?" asked Mr. Anderson suddenly.

"They probably did but thought nothing of it as they were so intent on catching Field and finding out what he had been doing," said Mr. Waterman.

"We can't be sure of that," said Mr. Anderson. "I think it would be best for Bill and me to get out as fast as we can without attracting attention and put in a claim for this gulch at once."

"You'll have to put in a mining claim for this to be any good," said Mr. Waterman.

"I'll fix that," was the reply. "I'll put in a full claim, which means that if any minerals are found on the land, they belong to the owner of the land if found by him and half the same if discovered by any other person."

"Do you think that we can get to Lac Parent to-night?" asked Bill.

"If we start right away," said Mr. Anderson.

Everything was full of excitement until the two had departed on the back trail. We shall not follow them but merely mention that in due course of time, Mr. Anderson filed a claim for the 176 gulch, the same to be paid for at the regular settler's rates. It seemed that the big timber companies had had men down into the gulch and because of the difficulties in getting out the lumber they had not bought the timber on this particular part of the country. This was very fortunate, for Mr. Anderson was thus able to buy the land outright, to be paid for after it had been regularly surveyed. The preliminary papers were signed and the two then heaved a sigh of relief as they now knew that they were secure in their discovery.

We shall thus leave them and return to the others. These latter spent the rest of the afternoon exploring the sides of the gulch. Mr. Waterman saw further evidences of mineral wealth and grew very enthusiastic over the prospects. They slept in the spy's cabin that night and were very cozy around the open fireplace that had been built at one side of the room.

"This is some cabin," said Mr. Waterman the next morning. "Field was very comfortable here, I'll bet."

"It must have been lonely," said Bob.

"It probably was after the revenue officers had rounded up his mates, but prior to that time, I have no doubt that they had a very fine time. They could get out to the north and go fishing, leaving one man to listen to the wireless, and they probably had their share of game. Well, let's be going," finally said Mr. Waterman.

They determined that the best way to travel would be to go right down the stream. Pierre was detailed to go ahead and clear a trail where necessary. Pud carried one canoe and Bob the other. They also carried their packs, while Mr. Waterman carried the pack and a big load of grub. Pierre 177 carried only his little pack, which left him free to swing the ax. They made fair progress, though it

was rough going. They found that the gulch was not so deep as it looked. In other words, the stream led them down and down. Under other circumstances they would have found the scenery very beautiful. It is one thing to find a beautiful bridal veil falls fifty or sixty feet high when you have nothing to do but admire it. It is another thing altogether to come upon such a fall and to have to pick a way down the precipice carrying a canoe and other load. There seemed no end to the trail on which they were. Down they went, and Pierre was heard more than once to exclaim "Sacre! Mon Dieu!" and a few other favorite expressions with him when he was exasperated. They went along at least five miles in this way and there seemed no end to the trail.

"I take it back," said Mr. Waterman. "Field and his pals did not come out this way to fish. That is sure. There is no sign of a trail."

"It's a good thing we brought that grub along," said Bob. "This trail is hard enough coming down, but it would take us all day to get back to the cabin."

"You're right," said Pud. "I'm getting into good shape but this trail is getting my goat."

"Don't worry," said Mr. Waterman. "I've been within a few miles of this place, and it can't be very long before we hit either the Portneuf River or some lake that drains into it. I'll wager that the Portneuf is within twelve miles of here." 178

"Twelve miles!" said Pud, with a sigh.

"That's nothing," said Mr. Waterman. "I think, though, that we'll soon hit a lake, for I have never had to portage more than six miles in this country without striking some lake or river."

"Oh, let it be soon," said Pud. "Not that I care. But simply so that Bob won't play out."

"Don't worry about me," said Bob. "You haven't heard me kicking, have you?"

They stopped for lunch at the base of a forty-foot fall.

There was a deep pool, flecked with foam, as was to be expected. Mr. Waterman got out his line and in fifteen minutes he had six fine trout out of the water. Pierre soon had them cleaned and they had them for lunch. On they went again, but they traveled more than another five miles before they came to a small lake. Mr. Waterman looked at his compass and decided that the lake must flow into the Portneuf River. They went to the far end of the lake, where a little stream flowed out.

"I'll wager that we'll hit the Portneuf River in less than an hour to-morrow," said Mr. Waterman.

"To-morrow?" queried Pud.

"Yes, I think that we have done enough for to-day. Here is a fine place to camp and I think that the best thing for us to do is to fish for a couple of hours and then have a good dinner."

This they did, and when they returned to the camping place they found that Pierre had the ducks steaming in the pot and that supper was practically ready. They enjoyed that supper most heartily, for they had had a very hard day. They sat around the camp fire that night until a little later than usual for it was a wonderful night. The stars seemed right above them. One big planet stood right over the top of a distant mountain and it looked exactly like a big incandescent light hung there to light the travelers on their way. 179

Pierre was more talkative than usual. He told them that he had been on this lake and that he now recognized that he had been half way back to the gulch. He told of killing a big bear nearby one summer. He pointed off to a distant mountain and said that it had occurred over there. He had seen the bear while scouting for timber for one of the big lumber companies. The bear, when he saw him, was about two miles away on a mountain opposite to him. He determined to get him if possible. He crossed over to the other ridge and had great trouble in locating the bear again. Finally he did so. He worked around to the other side of the bear so that the wind would not carry his scent to the bear. Finally he got within one hundred yards of the bear. The latter then showed signs of uneasiness, and as there were some thick woods near Pierre thought that he had better not take a further chance.

He gave the bear one shot, which hit him in the shoulder. The bear, in a frenzy, rushed straight at him. He had only an old-fashioned rifle and before he could break his gun and put in another cartridge the bear was only a few feet away. Taking hasty aim at the glaring eye of the bear, he pulled the trigger. The bullet hit the bear plump in the eye and he dropped dead in his tracks. 180

"Gosh!" said Pud. "I don't know what I'd do if I saw a wounded bear coming right at me. I guess I'd drop my gun and run."

"That would be the worst thing you could do, for in spite of their size, bears are remarkably active, and they go through the woods like a streak," said Mr. Waterman.

"I bet that you'd stand your ground, all right," said Bob. "You've lots of nerve, Pud, and that's all that's necessary in a pinch."

"I suppose I would, but at the same time, I am not aching for the experience," answered Pud.

"Men are generally braver than they think," said Mr. Waterman. "I've known pretty poor sort of fellows that would stand up in a pinch and fight like sin, either against some animal like the bear,

or even against their fellows."

"I think that that's so," said Bob. "You know that in time of war, practically everybody enlists."

"Yes," said Pud, "but some of them are really forced to do it by public opinion."

"That's very true," replied Bob, "but even the fellows that do not care to enlist are just as brave as the others when a battle comes."

The conversation drifted on until at last Mr. Waterman looked at his watch and piled them all off to their blankets. They were up early the following morning. After a hearty breakfast they set out down the stream. This proved so small that they were compelled to get out of their canoes and portage. A half hour later they came into another lake, which both Pierre and Mr. Waterman recognized at once. 181

"I've been here before," said Mr. Waterman. "The outlet of this lake leads directly north, so that we shall hit the Portneuf River some seventy miles from its mouth. They journeyed on, and by that night they had reached the river.

"We'll have some fast water that we had not counted on when we left," said Mr. Waterman.

"Very fast rapide," assented Pierre.

"Can we make them?" asked Pud.

"Can a duck swim?" replied Mr. Waterman, with a merry twinkle in his eye that betokened that he was ready for the fun ahead.

"Are these the rapids you told me of?" asked Bob.

"You bet," said Mr. Waterman. "There are some dangerous spots, but we'll manage them all right."

Once more they carefully packed their bags and the grub. Practically all of the duffle was put into Mr. Waterman's canoe and it was all tied to the thwarts, so that if an upset occurred things would not be lost. Bob went, with Mr. Waterman, while Pud was with Pierre.

"I like this," said Pud, with a frowning glance.

"Never mind. Pierre and you will manage all right," said Mr. Waterman. "You'll find that the paddling will be easy. It is more a matter of steering. We'll hit some water this morning that will make that fast water in the Escoumains look like a mill pond."

"Lead me to it," said Bob. "Come on, Pud! Don't stand there." 182

They set off, and for some time they paddled along on a smoothly running current. It then began to get faster, and soon they were into the thick of it. Bob and Mr. Waterman went through the first rapids just like ducks. It was most exhilarating sport. They waited at the foot of the descent for the other canoe, and they soon saw it shooting towards them.

"That looks pretty dangerous," said Bob, as he saw the canoe dash through a foam-flecked bit of water with sharp rocks on both sides.

"It's a game for small children," replied Mr. Waterman. "In the hands of experts there is really not much danger in this water."

"Is there worse water ahead?" asked Bob.

"Sure thing," said Mr. Waterman. "This was a pretty good one, but you'll know what real fast water is when we have passed through the Devil's Cauldron."

"Some sport," said Pud, as their canoe swung alongside. "I'm trying to do my share, but I have full confidence in Pierre, so why worry."

"You're right," answered Bob.

"That had the Escoumains Rapids beaten hollow," continued Pud.

"Mr. Waterman says that there's some real sport ahead," said Bob.

"Go ahead. I'm game," said Pud.

They went on and they came to a long series of rapids. Down they went at railroad speed. Bob was kept busy doing as directed by Mr. Waterman. Several times they burst right through 183 between rocks when Bob could see nothing but a wall of mist before him. Then at last they came to the famous Devil's Cauldron. Here the river seemed to rise almost between cliffs, and the water boiled up on all sides. They rushed down what was practically a cascade, broken here and there by jagged rocks. Mr. Waterman steered the canoe most skillfully and they emerged at last on the smoother reaches below. Once more they turned around and Bob could hardly believe that he had come through such a swirl of waters in their frail canoe. Just then the other came into view. It was most exciting to watch it dart from wave to wave, shooting now like an arrow and then stopping in its course as if held back by invisible hands. Pierre sat in the stern and wielded the paddle just as calmly and nonchalantly as if they were paddling across a pond. His hand seemed sure, and the canoe came through like a swallow on the wing.

"Some sport," yelled Pud, as they drifted past.

"You bet my life," said Pierre. "Dat is ze grand sport. 'Dat is ze life,' as my fren, Monsieur Waterman, sing."

"That was the most exciting time I have ever had," laughed Bob, as they ranged alongside and paddled on together.

"That is the worst we'll find on the river," said Mr. Waterman.

"We'll hit two or three more short stretches that will keep us busy."

On they went and before the sun was low in the sky they had gone over fifty miles. 184

"It's hard to believe that we have gone so far to-day," said Bob.

"The water is fairly high now," said Mr. Waterman. "That makes the river run fast, and it is easy to cover distance under such circumstances."

"It's been the best day that I have ever spent," declared Bob, as they stepped out of the canoe on a fine sandy beach, where they were going to spend the night.

"I've enjoyed every minute of it," said Mr. Waterman. "Fast water makes very fascinating sport. It's the danger, I suppose."

"It's dangerous, all right," said Bob. "If we had been tipped over going down that Devil's Cauldron, it would have been five to one against our ever getting out."

"It would have been a hundred to one," replied Mr. Waterman. "At the same time, if no accident occurs, one should come through all right if one knows how to handle a canoe. I have been tipped over three or four times in all my life, and generally the accident was due to my own carelessness."

They spent another happy night around the fire, with Pierre telling them more of his experiences.

"It is only on small trips like this that one can get Pierre to talk," said Mr. Waterman. "When a bunch is along he either feels that he has no right around the fire with the others or he is too busy to get into the humor."

"He has certainly had some experiences," said Bob.

They determined, before they sought their blankets, that the next day they would go down to the mouth of the Portneuf River and then get the St. Lawrence steamer up to Escoumains. They 185 decided to do this so that they would save time, as Bob and his party had to leave the woods in a very few days. Then again, they were all eager to find out what luck Bill and Mr. Anderson had had in getting in a claim on the gulch. Nothing exciting occurred the next day, as it was smooth sailing, or rather canoeing, until they hit the St. Lawrence. At this place the St. Lawrence is about forty miles wide. There was a southerly wind, so they kept to their original plan and took the river boat to Escoumains, arriving there about four o'clock in the afternoon. Mr. Waterman hustled around and soon had a pair of little Canadian horses. These hustled away with them and the two canoes, and by dark they were at the ford once more.

The next morning they were up early, and by seven o'clock they were back on Lac Parent. Jerry's cheery halloo proved to them that they had been expected. They found Bill and Mr. Anderson already back, and Mr. Waterman was very much pleased with the way they had gotten results.

"The gulch is ours, then," said Mr. Waterman. "We can easily raise the money, as land is cheap down here."

"We won't have to pay the money until it is regularly surveyed, and that will not be until next summer, I expect," said Mr. Anderson.

"I hope that it will keep, for I want to have three or four days' good fishing before I go," said Bob.

"I'd like to go over to the cabin again and get some more samples of that ore, so that we can have it examined in Philadelphia when we get home," said Bill. 186

"We'll do that too," said Mr. Anderson.

The next four days were quietly spent. Fishing and a side expedition over the gulch furnished only moderate excitement, but everybody enjoyed himself. Then one morning our three boys awoke to the fact that they had to leave the woods where they had had such a good time and in which they had learned so much and had such exciting experiences. As usual, they got up early. It really was not a happy party that left Lac Parent that morning. They went into Escoumains over the old trail. The fact that they portaged the canoes through two lakes and then carried their duffle bags the rest of the way, showed in what excellent condition they now were. Pud was as hard as nails. He walked along at the head of the party, with no more signs of being winded than Bob or even Mr. Waterman. The latter was with them, and he was going to accompany them as far as Quebec to get the samples of ore into the hands of some expert assayist.

After reaching Escoumains it was with sincere feelings of regret that the boys had to get into their civilized garments again. Nothing of importance or special interest occurred on their way to Quebec. They once more went up to the Frontenac Hotel and waited there for Mr. Waterman,

who had gone at once to the assayist. In less than two hours he came back smiling.

"What luck?" asked Bob.

"Come up to the room," was the reply.

When they got up there they all fired questions at him.

"Not all at once," he said. "I saw the assayist or geologist, and at the first glance he told me that the samples of ore were genuine and very valuable. He tried to find out where I had gotten them so I had to do some tall lying to lead him off the scent. When I left his office I was careful, and I looked around several times. I thought that I was being followed, so I went into stores and out again, and I think he will have his troubles finding out where the mine is."

"If we really have made such a valuable discovery," said Bob, "we must be careful not to say anything about it. When we have once gotten full title to the gulch we can then let others know where the mine is."

"You're right," said Mr. Waterman. "According to the statement of the expert, we really have a big thing on our hands, and with careful handling, we can get rich through it."

That evening the boys, with Mr. Waterman, went to visit the St. Ann de Beaupre cathedral. The boys, as well as Mr. Waterman, were deeply impressed with the solemn dignity and massive beauty of the church's interior. They also noticed the look of deep, sincere devotion on the faces of the worshippers as they paid homage to the blessed saint.

It was hard to say good-by to their pleasant companions, but finally Mr. Waterman saw them off on the train the next morning, and the following evening they were back in Philadelphia. Here Bob had to leave his friends, as he lived farther south. On shaking hands with them they promised to meet again the next summer and go north to develop their mine. They each declared that they had enjoyed the summer in the woods most heartily, and they swore eternal friendship to one another as young men of their age are apt to do.

Transcriber's Notes

1. Punctuation has been changed to conform to contemporary standards.
2. The Table of Contents was not provided in the original text.

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