

The Project Gutenberg eBook of Boy Scouts in Glacier Park, by Walter Prichard Eaton

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: Boy Scouts in Glacier Park

Author: Walter Prichard Eaton

Illustrator: Fred H. Kiser

Release date: September 20, 2011 [EBook #37485]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Roger Frank and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <http://www.pgdp.net> (This book was produced from images made available by the HathiTrust Digital Library.)

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK BOY SCOUTS IN GLACIER PARK ***

Boy Scouts in Glacier Park

Books by
WALTER P. EATON

The Boy Scouts of Berkshire—A story of how the Chipmunk Patrol was started, what they did and how they did it.
Colored frontispiece. 313 pages.

Boy Scouts in the Dismal Swamp—A story of Boy Scouting in the Dismal Swamp.
Colored frontispiece. 304 pages.

Boy Scouts in the White Mountains—A story of a hike over the Franconia and Presidential Ranges.
Colored frontispiece. 308 pages.

Boy Scouts of the Wildcat Patrol.—A Story of Boy Scouting.
Colored frontispiece. 315 pages.

Peanut—Cub Reporter—A Boy Scout's life and adventures on a newspaper.
Colored frontispiece. 320 pages.

Boy Scouts in Glacier Park
336 pages.

Cloth bound. Price, \$1.75 net each



The Great Continental Divide and the Game Trail Along the Top

Boy Scouts in Glacier Park

The Adventures of Two Young Easterners
in the Heart of the High Rockies

By
WALTER PRICHARD EATON

Illustrated with Photographs by
FRED H. KISER

W. A. WILDE COMPANY
BOSTON CHICAGO

Copyrighted, 1918,
BY W. A. WILDE COMPANY
All rights reserved

BOY SCOUTS IN GLACIER PARK

To
FRED H. KISER
*who photographs mountains so well
because he loves them so much
Best of companions on the high trails
and around the evening camp-fire*

FOREWORD

Glacier Park is one of the newest, as well as one of the most beautiful, of our National Parks. It is peculiarly fitted to be a summer playground, both for men and women who prefer to travel on horseback and "rough it" by putting up at a hotel at night, and for the true mountain lovers, who delight to use their own legs in climbing, and to sleep under the stars. This book has been written primarily to show Young America just how interesting, exciting, full of outdoor adventure, and full, too, of real education, life in this National park can be. We can promise our boy readers, and their parents, too, that there isn't any "faking" in this story. The trips we tell about are all real trips, and if you go to Glacier Park you can take them all—all, that is, except, perhaps, the climb up the head wall of Iceberg Lake. You have to have a real mountaineer as a guide, with a real Alpine rope, in order to make that trip. It was fortunate for Tom that one came along. Then, too, unless you stay in the Park over the winter, you haven't much chance of riding down a mountain

on a snow-slide. Possibly you wouldn't want to. I never knew anybody who took that trip intentionally! Tom and Joe and the Ranger were unlucky enough to take it, and lucky enough to live to tell the tale.

This book isn't written just to use the Rocky Mountains as a background for adventures which never really could happen to ordinary boys. It is written, on the contrary, to show what fine adventures can happen to ordinary boys, in one of the finest and most healthful and beautiful spots in this great country of ours, if only the boys have pluck, and have been good Scouts enough to learn how to take care of themselves in the open.

And it is written, too, in order to tell about Glacier Park, to make you want to go there and see it for yourself, to make you glad and proud that the United States has set aside for the use of all the public such a splendid playground, and to make you, if possible, more determined than ever to protect this, and all our other parks and State and National forests, from the attacks of the men who are always trying to get laws passed to let them spoil the meadows and the wildflowers with their sheep, or cut the forests for timber, putting their selfish gain above the welfare of the whole people.

W. P. E.

Twin Fires
Sheffield, Massachusetts
1918

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. JOE GETS BAD NEWS ABOUT HIS LUNGS—HIS "PIPES," AS SPIDER CALLED THEM	13
II. JOE LEARNS HOW MANY FRIENDS HE HAS, AND ACHIEVES A TENT TO SLEEP IN	21
III. SPIDER FINDS A WAY TO GET TO THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS, TO "PUMP JOE'S PIPES FULL OF OZONE"	32
IV. TOM AND JOE CROSS THE CONTINENT WITH THEIR FACES GLUED TO THE CAR WINDOW AND REACH THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS	43
V. THE SCOUTS LEARN WHY THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS HAVE NO FOOT-HILLS AND ARRIVE AT MANY GLACIER	54
VI. TOM BECOMES BOSS OF THE TEPEE CAMP, AND THE SCOUTS PITCH THEIR TENTS IN THE EVERGREENS	63
VII. JOE GETS ACQUAINTED WITH PORCUPINES, THE DIAMOND HITCH, AND SWITCHBACK TRAILS	73
VIII. JOE GETS A CHANCE AT LAST TO GO OUT ON A TRIP AS CAMP COOK	93
IX. OVER PIEGAN PASS TO ST. MARY LAKE, UNDERNEATH THE PRECIPICES	100
X. THE RANGER TELLS A GRIZZLY BEAR STORY BEFORE THE CAMP-FIRE	123
XI. TO GUNSIGHT LAKE, AND JOE FALLS INTO A CREVASSE ON BLACKFEET GLACIER	129
XII. OVER GUNSIGHT TO LAKE McDONALD, AND JOE AND BOB SEE A GRIZZLY AT CLOSE RANGE	144
XIII. IN AVALANCHE BASIN, WHERE BOB LEARNS THAT THE STORY OF THE ENGLISHMAN'S WALK BEFORE BREAKFAST WAS NO JOKE	168
XIV. UP THE DIVIDE IN A RAIN, WITH A LOST HORSE ON THE WAY, AND A HOWLING SNOW-STORM AT THE TOP	177
XV. TOM'S CHANCE FOR ADVENTURE COMES UNEXPECTEDLY, WEARING HOBNAIL SHOES AND CARRYING A ROPE	189
XVI. TOM GOES UP A TWO THOUSAND FOOT WALL, WITH AN ALPINE ROPE, AND LEARNS THE PROPER WAY TO CLIMB	203
XVII. TOM SEES BOTH MOUNTAIN SHEEP AND GOATS DO THEIR WILD LEAPS DOWN DIZZY LEDGES	218
XVIII. JOE GETS GOOD NEWS FROM THE DOCTOR, AND THE SCOUTS NAME THEIR CAMP, "CAMP KENT"	232
XIX. THE INDIAN POW-WOW—TOM AND JOE GET INTO THE SQUAW DANCE	240
XX. THE SCOUTS START ON A TRIP TOGETHER AT LAST, TO CLIMB CHIEF MOUNTAIN	250
XXI. THE CLIMB UP THE TOWER OF CHIEF MOUNTAIN, THE INDIAN RELIC ON THE SUMMIT AND AN EAGLE'S NEST	257
XXII. A BLIZZARD ON FLAT TOP—THE CAMP IS CHRISTENED "VALLEY FORGE"	268
XXIII. UP TO CHANEY GLACIER AND THE DISCOVERY OF A THREE THOUSAND FOOT PRECIPICE	276
XXIV. THE BOYS PREPARE FOR WINTER IN THE PARK, AND LEARN WHY THE TIMBER-LINE TREES ARE ONLY THREE FEET TALL	283
XXV. PROTECTING THE DEER YARDS—THE SCOUTS WAIT IN THE MOONLIGHT AND BAG A MOUNTAIN LION	291
XXVI. A HUNDRED MILES IN FOUR DAYS, OVER THE SNOW, WHICH IS A LONG TRIP TO GET YOUR MAIL	302
XXVII. THE RANGER AND THE BOYS GET A RIDE DOWN THE MOUNTAIN ON A SNOW AVALANCHE, AND DON'T LOOK FOR ANOTHER	312

XXVIII.	TOM STARTS ON A LONG HIKE IN THE DEEP SNOW, OVER THE DIVIDE, RISKING SNOW-SLIDES, TO SAVE THE RANGER'S LIFE	318
XXIX.	TOM TRAMPS DOWN McDONALD CREEK IN A CHINOOK WIND, AND REACHES SHELTER ALMOST EXHAUSTED	322
XXX.	TOM GETS BACK WITH THE DOCTOR, AND MILLS PULLS THROUGH—THEN THE SCOUTS HAVE TO LEAVE FOR HOME	327
XXXI.	HOME AGAIN—JOE'S CHRISTMAS PRESENT TO HIS MOTHER IS SOUND HEALTH AGAIN, AND TOM REJOICES	334

CHAPTER I—Joe Gets Bad News About His Lungs—His “Pipes,” as Spider Called Them

13

“What’s the matter, Joe, lost all your pep?” asked Tom Seymour, as he slowed his pace down so that his tired companion could keep up with him. It was a Saturday morning in May, and the two boys, in their scout suits, with heavy shoes on, were tramping through the woods, where the spring flowers were beginning to appear and the little leaf buds were bursting out on the trees. Both Tom Seymour and his chum, Joe Clark, loved the woods, and especially in early spring they got into them whenever they could, to see how the birds and animals had come through the winter, and then a little later to watch for the flowers and see the foliage come.

But this day Joe seemed to be getting tired. They were tramping up a hillside, through mould softened by a recent rain, that made the footing difficult, and though Joe was trying to keep up, Tom realized that something was the matter.

14

“Say, Joe, old scout, what ails you, anyhow?” he asked again.

“Oh, it’s nothing,” Joe answered. “I’ve had a cold for a month, you know, and it’s pulled me down, that’s all. Ma’s giving me some tonic. I’ll be all right. But I do get awful tired lately.”

He stopped just then and began to cough.

“I wish you’d shake that old cold,” Tom said. “I’m getting sick of hearing you bark in school—you always tune up just as Pap Forbes is calling on me to translate Cæsar. And if you don’t shake it, you’ll be no good for the team, and how’s the Southmead High School going to trim Mercerville without you on second bag?”

Joe stopped coughing as soon as he could, and demanded, “Well, you don’t think I keep the old thing around because I like it, do you? I’ll give it to anybody who’ll cart it off. Come on—let’s forget it!”

They started up the hill again, which grew steeper as they advanced, and presently Tom realized once more that Joe couldn’t keep up. As he had to breathe harder with the increased steepness, too, he began to cough again.

“Say, have you been to see a doctor?” Tom demanded.

“Oh, sure,” said Joe, sitting down on a rock to rest “Ma had old Doc Jones in first week I was sick, and he gave me some stuff—tasted like a mixture of kerosene and skunk cabbage, too.”

“Doc Jones is no good,” Tom declared. “My father says he wouldn’t have him for a sick cat. He doesn’t even know there are germs. Mr. Rogers told me the Doc thought it was foolish to make us scouts boil the water from strange brooks before we drank it. Haven’t you been to anybody else since, when you didn’t get better?”

15

“Say, what do you think I am, a millionaire?” said Joe. “I can’t be spending money on fancy doctors, and get through high school, too. Ma’s got all she can handle now, with food and everything costing so much.”

“I know all that, old scout,” Tom answered, putting his hand on Joe’s shoulder. “But I guess it would cost your mother more if you were laid up, wouldn’t it? Now, I’ve got a hunch you need some good doc to give you the once over. Are you tired all the time like this?”

“Oh, no,” Joe replied. “Or only at night, mostly,” he added. “I get kind of hot and tired at night, and I can’t do much work. That’s why I’ve been flunking Cæsar. Old Pap thinks I’m lying down on the job, but I really ain’t. I try every evening, but the words get all mixed together on the page.”

Tom sprang to his feet with the quick, almost catlike agility which, in combination with his thin, rather tall and very wiry frame, had earned for him the nickname of Spider.

“You come along with me,” he said.

“Depends on where you’re going,” Joe laughed.

“Say, I’m patrol leader, ain’t I?”

“You are, but this isn’t the patrol. We aren’t under scout discipline to-day.”

“*You* are,” laughed Tom. “You’re going to do just what I tell you. Come on, now!”

He grabbed Joe by the wrist and brought him to his feet. Joe didn’t resist, either, though Tom

16

expected a scrap. He came along meekly down the hill, through the wet, fragrant woods. Once on the village street, Spider led the way directly to Mr. Rogers' house, and 'round the house to the studio, and knocked on the door.

The scout master opened it. He was wearing his long artist's apron, and had his big palette, covered with all the colors of the rainbow, thrust over the thumb of his left hand.

"Hello, Spider; hello, Joe," he said. "What's the trouble? Has the tenderfoot patrol mutinied?"

The boys came in.

"No, sir, but Joe's windpipes have," said Tom. He quickly told about his chum's cold, and how he got tired now all the time.

"Now, cough for the gentleman, Joe," he added with a laugh.

Joe laughed, too, which actually did set him to coughing.

But Mr. Rogers didn't laugh. He looked very grave, and began to take off his apron. He washed his hands, put on his coat, and with a short, "Come, boys," started down the path.

There was a famous doctor in Southmead who didn't practice in the town at all. His patients came from various parts of the country, to be treated for special diseases, and they lived while there in a sort of hotel-sanitorium. It was said that this doctor, whose name was Meyer, charged twenty dollars a visit. The boys soon realized that Mr. Rogers was headed for his house.

"Say, who does he think I am, John D. Rockefeller?" Joe whispered to Tom.

"Don't you worry," Tom whispered back. "He's a friend of old Doc Meyer's, all right. He'll fix it. You trot along."

They had to wait in the doctor's anteroom some time, as he had a patient in the office. Finally he came out and greeted Mr. Rogers warmly. He was not a native of Southmead, but had come there only two or three years ago from New York, to have his sanitorium in the country, and he had always been so busy that most of the townspeople scarcely knew him. Tom and Joe, while they had seen him, had never spoken with him before. He was a middle-aged Jew, with gold spectacles on his big nose, and large, kindly brown eyes, which grew very keen as he looked at the boys, and seemed to pierce right through them.

The scout master spoke to him a moment, in a low voice, and then he led all three into his office. It wasn't like any doctor's office the scouts had ever been in. It looked more like some sort of a mysterious laboratory, except for the flat-top office desk in the middle, and the strange chair, with wheels and joints, which could evidently be tipped at any angle, or made into a flat surface like an elevated sofa. There was a great X-ray machine, and many other strange devices, and rows of test tubes on a white enameled table, and sinks and sterilizers.

The doctor patted Joe on the head as if he'd been a little boy instead of a first class scout sixteen years old, going on seventeen, and large for his age. He sat Joe down in a chair and asked him a lot of questions first, making some notes on a card which he took out of a small filing cabinet that was like a library catalogue case. Then he told him to undress.

Joe stripped to the waist, and stood up while the doctor tapped his shoulders, his chest, his back, and then listened with his ear down both on his chest and back, and finally he took a stethoscope and went over every square inch of surface, front and back, covering his lungs, while he made the patient cough, say "Ah," draw in a deep breath, and expel it slowly. Finally he took his temperature, and a sample of sputum.

Meanwhile Tom looked on with a rapidly increasing alarm. He knew a little something about tuberculosis, and realized it was for that he was examining his chum. He knew what a deadly disease it is, too, if it is not caught in time, and he began to feel sick in the pit of his stomach. He wanted to cry out to the doctor and demand that he tell him at once that old Joe did not have this terrible disease—that he was all right, that it was nothing but a cold. But, of course, he said not a word.

The doctor was putting Joe on the scales now, and weighing him.

"A hundred and fifteen," he said. "How's that? About your regular weight?"

"Guess there's something wrong with your scales," Joe answered, looking at the marker. "I ought to be a hundred and thirty. 'Course, I had more clothes on in the winter, last time I was weighed."

"Yes, and you ought to have grown some since," said the doctor. "Well, you will yet. You go home and rest now—sit in the sun this afternoon, and go to bed early, with your window open. Come back here to-morrow morning at ten o'clock, and I'll know more about you."

"But I can't sit in the sun to-day," Joe cried. "Why, we've got a game this after', and I *got* to play second."

The doctor looked at him with his kindly, fatherly smile, but his voice was like a general's giving a command. "No more baseball for you for the present, my boy," he said. "You've got to keep quiet and rest, if you want to get well quickly."

"How soon can he play?" Tom put in, excitedly. After he had said it, he thought it sounded as if he were more interested in the team than in Joe, and he was going to explain, but the doctor replied before he had a chance.

"That will all depend on how quiet you make him keep," said he. "You can come back with him tomorrow if you want, and I'll tell you some more."

The doctor spoke softly to Mr. Rogers while Joe was dressing, and then the three went out.

"Say, he doesn't leave much of you unexplored, does he?" said Joe. "What's the damage, Mr. Rogers? Gee, I never thought I'd be swell enough to go to Doc Meyer!"

"I guess he doesn't charge for scouts, when they really need him," Mr. Rogers answered. "Now, Joe, you go home and do what he told you. I'll be over to see your mother later, and tell her to keep an eye on you."

Tom went with the scout master in the opposite direction, his face very grave.

"Is—is—has old Joey got consumption?" he managed to ask, his lips dry and a lump coming up in his chest.

The scout master looked at his young patrol leader, and then put a hand over his shoulder.

"The doctor won't say for certain till he's examined the sputum," Mr. Rogers replied, "but I'm afraid he's got the beginnings of it. Now, don't take it hard, and don't say a word to Joe or his mother or anybody else. He's young, and it's just beginning, and we'll pull him through in good shape, and make a well man of him again. But you must make him do just what the doctor says, and stand by him."

"Stand by him!" cried Tom, two tears coming into his eyes in spite of himself. "Say, he's my best friend, isn't he? What do you take me for?"

"I take you for a good scout," said Mr. Rogers.

CHAPTER II—Joe Learns How Many Friends He Has, and Achieves a Tent to Sleep In

Tom could hardly sleep that night, for thinking about his friend. The doctor would probably tell him he'd got to go to the Adirondacks to live, or maybe to Colorado or New Mexico; Tom knew that people with bad lungs were sent to those places. But how was Joe going to get there, and how was he going to live when he got there? Joe's mother was a widow, with two other, younger children, and it was hard enough for her to send Joe through high school, in spite of what he earned in summer driving a mowing machine on the golf links. If he had consumption, the doctor wouldn't let him work—he would make him keep quiet. How was it going to be managed? Tom kept turning over this problem in his head, till he finally fell asleep for very weariness.

The next day he and Mr. Rogers again went with Joe to Dr. Meyer's. On the road Tom was silent and serious.

"Say, what's the matter with you, Spider? You look as if you were going to my funeral," said Joe.

"Yes, what's the matter with you?" Mr. Rogers added, giving him a sharp look which Joe didn't see. "Scouts are supposed to be cheerful, aren't they?"

"Yes, sir," Tom answered, trying to grin. But he made rather a poor job of it, he was so worried and anxious.

Dr. Meyer sat them all down in his office.

"Well," he said, turning to Joe, "how do you feel this morning? Did you keep still as I told you to?"

"You bet he did!" Tom put in.

"We'll see, we'll see," the doctor smiled, putting a thermometer into Joe's mouth, and picking up his left wrist to feel his pulse.

"Now, that's better than yesterday," he added, after examining the thermometer. "You see what resting does. I guess you'll have to do some more of it."

"You mean I can't play second next week, either?" Joe cried.

"I mean you can't play second for a long time," said the doctor, gravely.

"Is—is there something the matter with me?" Joe cried, growing a little pale.

"There isn't much yet, but there will be, if you don't do what I tell you," the doctor answered. "You have a case of incipient tuberculosis, that hasn't developed enough yet so we can't cure it, and make you weigh a hundred and eighty pounds by the time you are twenty, or even nineteen. You ought to be a big man, you know. But it will all depend on you."

Tom was leaning half out of his chair to listen.

"What must he do, doctor?" he asked, unable to keep silent.

"Are you going to make him do it?" the doctor smiled.

"I am, or—or bust his old head," Tom replied, with such heartfelt affection that both the men laughed.

"Do you sleep with your windows wide open at night?" the doctor asked Joe.

"Why—I—I can't in winter, 'cause ma won't let me; it makes the room too cold for the kid, she says."

"What!" Dr. Meyer exclaimed. "Do you sleep with a small brother?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, the first thing you do is to stop that! You must sleep in a room by yourself. It's not safe for your brother. You must sleep with the windows wide open."

"Couldn't he have my tent, and sleep outdoors?" Tom put in.

"Better still," the doctor replied. "Now, I'm going to make up a list of what you are to eat and drink, and a schedule of how you are to rest, and how much you can walk around."

"Walk around?" Joe said, bewildered. "I *have* to walk to school, and back."

"No you don't. No more school for you this term," the doctor answered.

Joe's jaw dropped. "Why—I—I—I'll not get promoted into the senior class, then!" he gasped. "Oh, please, I *must* go to school!"

"Good gracious, here's a boy that *wants* to go to school!" laughed Dr. Meyer. "It does you credit, my son, but it can't be."

"But it's been so hard for mother——"

"It would be harder for her if you couldn't go to school at all—ever, wouldn't it?" said the doctor, leaning forward and laying a kindly hand on Joe's knee.

"Yes—yes, sir," said Joe, who was now pretty white and scared.

"Dr. Meyer," Tom put in, "oughtn't Joe to go away somewhere to the mountains—the Adirondacks, or Colorado, or—or some place?"

"Well, he'd undoubtedly mend quicker in the Rockies, if he could be looked after," the doctor replied. "I wouldn't say it's absolutely necessary in his case, but if he knows somebody out there to look after him, and can afford it——"

"Course I can't afford it, Spider," Joe put in. "Quit pipe dreamin'."

"I'm not pipe dreaming," Tom replied. "If you'll get well quicker in the Rockies, you're going to the Rockies, and I'm going along to take care of you."

"How are you going to manage it, Tom?" said Mr. Rogers.

"I—I dunno, but I'm *going* to, somehow. Old Joe's got to get well and finish high school, and room with me in college, and then we're going to be civil engineers or foresters, and——"

"But the first thing is to get well," the doctor interrupted. "You can plan for the Rockies later. Right now we must see about Joe's diet and daily schedule."

After he had drawn these up—and it seemed to Joe he'd got to live on raw eggs and milk and cod liver oil, and spend most of his life in a chair on the porch—the two boys and the scout master departed.

It was now Joe who was depressed and glum, and Tom who needed no prompting to be cheerful. The minute he saw his chum in the dumps, he set about restoring his spirits.

"Buck up, old scout," he cried. "The doc told you it would be all right. Gee, what's just sitting on the porch for a few weeks? You won't have to translate any old Cæsar, and I'll come every day to see you swallowing cod liver oil, and then as soon as I can get it doped out, we'll hit the trail for the Rocky Mountains. Don't you want to see the Rocky Mountains?"

"Oh, quit your kidding," poor Joe answered. "The only way I'll ever see the Rocky Mountains is in the movies."

"Don't you fool yourself. Mr. Rogers and I'll dope out something yet, won't we, Mr. Rogers?"

"We'll put our heads together hard, anyhow," the scout master answered. "But first, Tom, we must get the scouts together and find a way in which we can all help Joe's mother, now Joe can't haul wood and do heavy work."

"That's easy, sir. And we must teach all the scouts to stop sleeping with their windows shut, too, mustn't we?"

"Alas!" said Mr. Rogers. "I thought I had. I guess we've got to teach the mothers and fathers to let them open the windows. And that's not easy, Tom."

"I s'pose not. Funny how afraid some folks are of fresh air. Well, old Joe's going to get plenty. I'm going to set up my tent in his yard this afternoon."

"Not your new tent, Spider, it might spoil it," said Joe.

"Spoil your grandmother," Tom retorted. "I guess it's my tent and I can do what I please with it, can't I? You go home and drink a tumbler of cod liver oil."

"I'm going with him, and have a talk with his mother," said Mr. Rogers. "You can bring the tent after dinner, and if you need a cot bed for it, stop at my house and get my folding camp cot."

That'll be my contribution."

"Sure, we'll fix him up so he'll never want to move into the house again," cried Tom, hurrying off toward his house.

His tent, a Christmas present from his father and mother, was Tom's proudest possession. It was made of balloon silk, very thin and light, but water-proof. It could "sleep" two occupants comfortably, and had mosquito netting screens for the flaps, and a little screen curtain for the rear window. It could be erected either on poles or on a rope strung between two trees. Yet the whole tent could be rolled up into a bundle which you could tuck under your arm, and it weighed but fifteen pounds. It cost a considerable sum of money, for Tom's parents, while not rich, wanted to make Tom a good present that last Christmas as a reward for his improvement in his school work. We might as well tell the truth about it, for a story that doesn't tell the truth is sure to get found out. Tom, in his sophomore year in the high school, had been a pretty poor student. He was "bright enough," as his teachers said, but he would not study. He had got interested in so many things that seemed more worth while to him than books—trapping, building a cabin in the woods, football and baseball, and especially the scouts. But after his sophomore year was over, and the summer vacation, too, was nearly done, Mr. Rogers called him into the studio one day and had a long talk with him. The result of that talk was that he came out pretty well ashamed of himself. Here he was a patrol leader in the scouts, Mr. Rogers pointed out, and right end on the high school team, with the prospect of being captain his senior year—in other words, one of the leaders among the boys. It was up to him, then, to set the rest a good example. Besides, he wanted to go to college, did he not, or to a forestry school? Did he not know that there were examinations to be passed? And what good was a surveyor or an engineer or a forester who did not know his business? Did Tom think you could know your business without studying? And that did not mean beginning to study some time in the future—it meant beginning now! Mr. Rogers ended up by telling him he was a bad scout, a bit of a slacker, which got to him more than anything else that was said.

He went out of the studio very sober, and he began to work that fall term as he had never worked in school before. Of course, he soon found out that if he got his lessons every day, it was really very much easier to keep along than it had been when he used to let them slide for two or three days at a time, and then try to catch up. In fact, it was really no trouble at all, and from almost the tail end of the class, he suddenly moved up to number four. His father and mother were so delighted that they gave him the balloon silk tent for Christmas.

As soon as dinner was over, he got this tent out of his closet, wrapped in its canvas bag, took his scout axe and some sticks from the wood-shed to make pegs with, and started for Joe's house. On the way he stopped for Mr. Rogers' folding cot bed. He found Joe sitting on the back porch, in the sun, and he made him stay there, though poor Joe wanted to come down and help set the tent up.

There were two trees in the back yard, and between them Tom strung a double strand of clothesline, through the rings on the top of the tent. Then he carefully raked the ground below, and with a shovel filled in a little hollow so that the rain water would drain away and not come in under. Then he stretched the tent, cut his pieces of wood into pegs, and pegged it down. After that, he unfolded and set up the cot bed, and with the help of Joe's mother made up the bed with blankets, put an old rug on the ground beside it, brought out an old chair, a small table, a candlestick and candle, and a washbowl and pitcher.

"There!" he cried. "That's good enough for anybody. Now, old Cod Liver, you can sleep outdoors, rain or shine."

Joe insisted on coming down to see his "new room," and while they were inspecting it three of the Moose Patrol came into the yard. They had heard the news about Joe—"by wireless, I guess," Tom said, for he had not told anybody except his own father and mother—and had come to see what they could do to help.

"Say, that's some swell bedroom, Joe," said Bob Sawtelle. "Wish I had one like it. Ma wouldn't always be callin' me down for spillin' water on the wall paper."

"What do you mean, spillin' water on the wall paper?" Joe demanded. "What do you do, throw it around the room?"

"Aw, no, but a feller splashes around washin' his face, and dumpin' the bowl into the slop basin, don't he?"

"I guess you do," Tom laughed. "Do you fellows really want to help old Joey?"

"That's what we're here for," said all three.

"All right, we'll get the kindlings split for the next week, and the coal brought up for Mrs. Clark. Where's the axe, Joe?"

Joe showed them, and the four boys went at the wood-pile and the coal bin. They split enough kindlings to last at least a week, filled up the wood-box by the kitchen stove and piled more wood behind it and carried up three hods of coal besides a big basket full.

"You're awful good to do this for Joe and me," said Mrs. Clark.

"Oh, that's what scouts are for," Tom declared. "Some of us are going to come around every day and 'tend to things, so old Joey can mind the doctor, aren't we, fellows?"

"Sure thing."

"Ra-ther."

"You bet."

"Say, Spider," Walter Howard suggested, "you ought to call a scout meeting and get everybody in on this—divide it up so one scout comes every day for a week on his way home from school. Why, old Joe'll be well again before we've all had a turn!"

"That's what I'm going to do, Walt, Tuesday night. Pass the word along."

"I know what my old man's goin' to say," Bob remarked.

"Well, what's he goin' to say? Spring it."

"He's goin' to say, 'If you boys were asked to split kindlings for your own mothers every day, you'd put up an awful holler.'"

"Oh, sure, mine too," laughed Walt. "They always say that. Seems as if they thought we were splitting kindlings because we liked to split kindlings, instead of because we like old Joey." 31

"That's the dope," said Tom. "Funny how folks don't see things sometimes."

"Ain't it?" said Bob. "Well, so long, Joe, old scout. Hope you sleep well in the tent."

"So long, Bob."

"So long"—from the others.

"So long, fellows—much obliged."

Only Tom was left.

"It's pretty nice to have so many friends," said Joe, "even if you have to get sick to find it out."

"Now you've found out, you get well again," Spider laughed. "I'll stop on my way to school in the morning and see you, and find out what books you want brought home. So long, old top."

"So long, Spider."

Tom went out of the gate, or, rather, over it, vaulting it with one hand. Joe's mother came out on the porch and put one arm around the boy's neck, and with the other hand felt his forehead.

"I don't think you've got so much fever to-night," she said.

"It's 'cause the fellers have cut all the wood and hauled the coal, that used to make me so tired. Gee, they're good scouts, aren't they, ma—'specially old Spider."

"Yes, Joe," said she, "there are a lot of good people in the world."

"You bet," said Joe.

CHAPTER III—Spider Finds a Way to Get to the Rocky Mountains, to "Pump Joe's Pipes Full of Ozone" 32

There are no doubt a lot of good people in the world, as Mrs. Clark said, but there is no doubt that a great many of them are forgetful. Tom Seymour found this out in the next few weeks. The scouts meant well, but every two or three days the one whose turn it was to look after the Clark wood and coal and do whatever heavy work there was to be done,—work too heavy for Joe's little brother and sister—would forget the duty. Tom, however, never forgot, for he went there every day, to study his lessons with Joe so Joe could keep up in his school work, and when the kindlings had not been split or the coal brought up, he did it.

"I don't know what I should do without you, Tom," said Mrs. Clark. "I feel guilty, too, because I feel as if you ought to be at home doing it for your own mother."

Tom laughed. "It's a funny thing," he said, "but having this on my mind has stopped my forgetting at home. I used to forget all the time, but now, when I go home, ma's wood-box is the first thing I think of. I kind of got the habit, I guess!"

Meanwhile Tom was turning over and over in his mind plans for getting Joe out into the high, dry air of the Rocky Mountains as soon as school was over. The first thing to think about was how to raise the money to get there. In his own case, it would be easy, because he had over a hundred dollars in the savings bank, which he had earned in the past five years, or which had been given to him at Christmas, and which he had saved up. But Joe had never been able to save his earnings—he had needed them all for his clothes and to help his mother out. It was Bob Sawtelle who solved that problem. 33

"Let's us scouts give a dance and a strawberry festival for old Joey," he said. "We can all of us pick some strawberries, enough for the feed, an' get our mothers to make cake, an' Bill Andrus's father'll give us the cream from his dairy, an' the girls'll help us serve, an' everybody'll come when they know it's for old Joey, an' there'll be two hundred people there, an' we'll soak 'em fifty cents, and that'll clear 'most a hundred bones, an'—"

"And you'd better take in some breath," laughed Tom, "while I tell you that's a fine idea. It's as

good as settled now.”

Tom was so sure of the success of the strawberry festival, in fact, that he began at once to consider what they were going to do when they got out West. Here he had to have Mr. Rogers’ help. The scout master wrote some letters, and a week later called Tom into the studio.

“I think I’ve got it,” he said, “that is, if you are willing to work, and don’t care what you do.”

34

“That’s me, when it’s for old Joey,” Spider declared.

“Well, here’s the proposition. Ever hear of Glacier National Park?”

“I’ve seen some pictures of it in a magazine,” said Tom. “Looked good to me, too!”

“I guess it’s a pretty fine place, though I was never there. It is up in the northwestern part of Montana, on the Great Northern Railroad, and there are two big hotels in the Park, right under the mountains, and some smaller hotels they call chalets, because they are built like Swiss chalets. A friend of mine who is connected with the railroad tells me these hotels, which open late in June, always need bell-boys. They are so far from any cities, or even any towns of any sort, that it’s hard to get labor out there. Now, I guess you could get a job as bellhop all right, though I don’t know whether Joe’s strong enough to work yet. We’d have to ask the doctor first. If he isn’t, my plan would be for you to take your tent along, and two folding cot beds, and get permission to pitch it out in the woods near the hotel. You wouldn’t have any other use for your money out there, so you could probably support Joe all right, and he could do the cooking. He’s a good cook, isn’t he?”

“Sure—the best in the patrol. He’s got a merit badge for cooking, you know.”

“Of course, they might object to having a tuberculous person in the hotel, but if he kept out in the woods, there wouldn’t be any trouble, my friend says. Besides, Joe isn’t a bad case. He’s plainly getting better all the time. I think we can fix it, if you are willing to take the job, and look after him. Being a bellhop isn’t just the job I’d pick out for you, or any boy, if I had the choosing. You have to be a bit of a bootlick, and people will give you tips, which is against all scout rules.”

35

“But the tips won’t be for me, they’ll be for old Joey,” said Tom.

“Exactly. And they will be given to you for work you do. They will really be your pay, for you won’t get much other pay. It all depends on how you take them. If you serve people who don’t give you tips as well and as cheerfully as you serve the others, it will be all right. We’ve got to get Joe well, and we can’t pick and choose. So I’ll put it up to you. I guess I can trust you not to become a tip hog. And if you find any better way to earn Joe’s keep out there, where you won’t have to take tips to get your living, you take it, won’t you?”

“You bet I will!” cried Tom. “Maybe I can become a—a cowboy, or something.”

Mr. Rogers smiled. “You’ll have to learn to ride a horse first.”

“Oh, I can ride a horse.”

“You may think you can, but after you’ve seen a real cowboy ride, you’ll know you’re only in the kindergarten class,” the scout master laughed.

Now that it seemed reasonably sure that he could get Joe to the Rockies, and find a way to live after they got there, Tom went at the task of arranging the strawberry festival. Of course, he made Bob Sawtelle chairman of the “festival committee,” because it was Bob’s idea to start with. All the scouts whose fathers or mothers had strawberry beds were “rounded up,” and a list made of how many baskets could be expected. Little Tim Sawyer, who was clever with a pencil or brush, made several posters to hang in the post-office and the stores. Spider himself wrote some notices for the weekly paper. Mr. Martin, who owned Martin’s block, where the festival was to be held, promised them the hall rent free, and as the cream was promised to them, also, and the cakes were made by the mothers, about all they had to buy was the sugar.

36

“Oh, we’re forgetting the drinks!” Bob suddenly cried, “and the music! We can’t have a dance without music.”

Some of the high school girls, Joe’s classmates, promised to furnish the fruit punch, and serve it, too, so that was easily settled. The music—a pianist and two violins—the boys hired from a nearby town, at a cost of fifteen dollars. With the sugar and a few other little expenses, their total outlay was about twenty dollars. The affair was so well advertised, however, and all the scouts went around selling tickets for so many days in advance, that when the evening came (it was a fine night, too, in June), there were two hundred and fifty people in the hall, and the scouts who took tickets at the door were kept busy till their fingers ached. The strawberries were all used up, and Bob and Tom had to rush out to the drug store to buy ice-cream for some of the late comers. That cut into part of their profits, but of course they could not refuse to give something to eat to the people who had paid for it. When the hard work of serving all these people was over, and the dancing had begun, Bob and Tom took all the money into a back room, and counted it up. With the musicians and the sugar paid for, and the ice-cream from the druggist’s, there was left a little over ninety dollars clear profit.

37

“Hooray!” cried Tom, “that’ll get old Joey to Glacier Park easy! Now, if I could only hear from my application for a job, we’d start next Monday. School is over. Gosh, there’s no sense hanging ’round here.”

“Bet you hear to-morrow,” said Bob. “I wish I was going, too, Spider.”

"Come along," cried Tom. "It's going to be great. I'm going to get a job as a guide, or something, when I get out there and learn the ropes, and climb all over the mountains and maybe see a goat or a grizzly bear!"

"Well, you bring me a bearskin for a rug, and we'll call it quits," Bob answered. "I guess next year I'll get up a strawberry festival for myself. Maybe I can get sick, or something, this winter."

"A lot you can, you old fatty," Tom laughed. "You look about as sick as—as a pig before killing."

Bob nearly upset the pile of money, trying to reach for Tom's head, to punch it.

Sure enough, the very next day Tom did hear from his application. He rushed over to Mr. Rogers' studio.

"Look," he cried. "I get a job all right, but I don't know just what it means. It says I'm to be in charge of the Many Glacier tepee camp, if I turn out to be big enough, and suit the boss. Otherwise, I'll be a bellhop in the Many Glacier Hotel. I'll get forty dollars a month and board at the camp. What's a tepee camp?"

"You know as much about it as I do," the scout master said. "I suppose it's a camp composed of Indian tepees, which the hotel rents to people who'd rather camp out than stay inside. Anyhow, I hope you get that job, for I don't like to think of one of my scouts taking tips all the time, the way a bellhop gets to do. It's un-American. Probably Joe could help you 'round the tepee camp, anyway with the cooking. And speaking of Joe, the first thing we must do is to take him 'round to Dr. Meyer's again, and find out just what he can and can't do, and what you've got to feed him, and so forth. Suppose we go right now."

The doctor gave Joe another thorough examination, from head to foot, and then put him on the scales. He smiled as the weight had to be pushed twelve pounds beyond where it hung in May.

"You see what rest, food and minding the doctor does," said he. "Well, my boy, you're on the mend. As a matter of fact, there isn't very much the matter with you now except a weakened condition and, of course, a tendency to relapse without proper care. A year in the Rocky Mountains ought to make a well man of you."

"A year!" Joe exclaimed. "We're only going for the summer."

"Well, the summer will help," said the doctor. "Keep on eating your milk and eggs, if you can get 'em, but probably after you've been in the woods a while you won't worry much about your food—you'll gobble what you can get, and so long as you feel right, go ahead. I'll give your friend a clinical thermometer to take your temperature, and you must get weighed once in so often. It wouldn't be a bad idea to have a doctor look you over now and then, too, if one comes into the Park. The things you must look out for are over-exertion and exposure. I wouldn't do anything but light work for a month yet, at least, and no climbing or long walks. If you must go somewhere, go on horseback, at a slow pace. And keep warm and dry."

"Well, Joe, that's a fine, encouraging report!" the scout master declared as they left. "You keep on minding the doc, and you'll be a well man."

"He'll keep on minding him, all right, all right," said Tom, putting his arm around Joe's shoulder, and then tightening it around his neck till Joe's head was forced over where he could give it a friendly punch.

Joe started to duck and punch back, but Spider cried, "Here—cut that out! No over-exertion!"—and then the three laughed and hurried on, to make arrangements for the departure of the boys.

Clothing, of course, was the most important thing, and the boys got out their trunks and selected what they would need, with the aid of a folder describing conditions in the Park. They took their scout suits, of course, with leggings, and their heaviest high boots. Tom also added a box of steel spikes and a key to screw them in with. They also took their sweaters, and mackinaws, though it seemed foolish to be taking mackinaws for a summer trip. Then they packed two suits of winter underwear, several pairs of heavy wool socks for tramping, two flannel outing shirts, and rubber ponchos, which both boys had bought the year before when the scouts took a five day hike. Then, of course, they took their knapsacks, and both boys sent for dunnage bags of stout canvas. They took their scout axes and cooking kits, knives, Tom's camera, compasses, and notebooks to keep diaries in. Tom had a folding camp lantern for which they got a box of candles. For bedding, each packed two pairs of heavy double blankets, and Joe's mother insisted on making a separate bundle of a winter bed puff, which, as it turned out later, he was glad enough to have. They also put in their winter pajamas, their scout hats, and some old leather gloves. Finally, they got some packages of dehydrated vegetables, soup sticks, powdered egg, army rations, and tabloid tea, to use on walking trips if Joe got strong enough to tramp. Such condensed and light weight rations, Mr. Rogers thought, probably could not be purchased in the Park.

It was a lovely day, almost at the end of June, when the two boys finally started. There had been a scout meeting the night before, at which Bob Sawtelle, who was to act as patrol leader in Spider's absence, had made a speech for the rest and presented Joe with a pocket camera, the gift of the entire troop. It was a short speech, but to the point.

"Old Joey's pipes have gone on the blink," he said, "and he's got to beat it out West to pump 'em full of ozone. We other fellers thought we'd like to see what he's seen, when he gets back, so we all chipped in and got a camera. Here it is, Joe, and don't try to snap Spider with it, or you'll bust the lens."

Joe tried to make a speech in reply, but he couldn't do it. He just took the camera, and said, "Gee,

fellows, you're—you're all to the good."

"And don't you worry about your mother's coal, either," Bob added. "We're going to keep right on fillin' the hods, and if anybody forgets when it's his turn, I'm goin' to beat him on the bean."

"That's a good one," cried little Sam Cowan. "You forgot yourself yesterday!"

"Well, I ain't goin' to forget any more, or let you, either," Bob answered.

Bob and several more scouts, as well as Mr. Rogers, Joe's mother and little brother and sister, and Tom's family, were all down at the depot to see the boys off in the morning. There were kisses and some tears from the women, and a scout cheer from the boys, and cries of "Have you got your axe, Spider?" and "Joe, dear, are you sure you put in your comb and brush?" and "Tom, dear, now don't forget to send mother a postcard just as soon as you get there," and "Say, Joey, bring home a Rocky Mountain sheep's head for the clubroom," and "Hi, Spider, don't forget a grizzly bear rug for me, so my little tootsies won't be cold when I hop out of bed."

The train came, the boys got aboard, it pulled out, and looking back they saw their friends and parents on the platform, waving good-bye, and the church spires and housetops of their village vanishing into the June green of the tree tops.

"Well," said Tom, "we're off for the Rocky Mountains!"

Joe rubbed his eyes. "Sure we are!" he answered. "I kind of hate to leave ma, though, and the kids."

Tom slapped him on the shoulder.

"Sure you do," he said. "But it's so you can come back a husky, well man, to look out for 'em better than ever. Don't you forget that, old scout!"

CHAPTER IV—Tom and Joe Cross the Continent With Their Faces Glued to the Car Window and Reach the Rocky Mountains

Neither Tom nor Joe had ever been West before, even as far as Chicago. As soon as they had changed cars to the through train, not far from their home town, each armed with a ticket about a yard and a half long, and got settled in their seats in the sleeping car, they glued themselves to the windows, and watched the country. There was something new to see every minute—the Berkshire Hills, the Hudson River at Albany, the great factories at Schenectady, the Mohawk River and the Erie Canal, Utica, Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo. They slept soundly that night, and woke up as they were passing along the southern shore of Lake Michigan. In Chicago they had to change cars again, to another station, and they had time, after seeing that their baggage was transferred, to walk around a little, among the high buildings, and out to the lake front.

"It's an awful dirty place, strikes me," said Joe. "All the buildings look as if somebody had spilled soot over 'em."

"I guess somebody has," Tom answered. "I guess they burn soft coal here. The air's full of it. Wait till we get to the Rockies, though; there's the air!"

The trip from Chicago to St. Paul was even more interesting than the first stage, because after a while the train followed the bank of the Mississippi River (the scouts had a railroad folder with a map spread out in their seat, to see where they were every minute), and there was something thrilling to both of them about the first sight of the great river, which they had heard about all their lives.

"Say, it's yellow, all right," Joe exclaimed. "I'd rather go swimming in our old hole back home, I guess. It ain't so awful big, either."

"Not way up here. We're a thousand miles from the mouth. But you'd better not try to jump it, even here—not till you get well," Tom laughed.

At St. Paul they changed once more, for the final train, the trans-continental limited which would take them right through to the Park.

"Golly, we won't see any of Minnesota," Tom complained. "It'll be dark while we go through that. And look at all those lakes we pass." He pointed to the map.

"Well, there has to be night as well as day out here, just like home. I guess we can't do anything about it," said Joe. "I'm kind o' glad to sleep, at that."

"Poor old Joe, I forget you get tired," Tom cried, penitently. "Seems to me I *never* want to go to sleep, with so much to see!"

"Oh, I'm not tired any more,—just sleepy," Joe said, bravely. But Tom saw he was tired, and called the porter to make up the berths.

They woke up in the prairie country of North Dakota—or, rather, Spider did. He was sleeping in the upper berth, of course, so Joe could have all the air possible, and he climbed down as quietly as he could and went into the observation car to see where they were. It was bright sunlight, almost as it would be at home at eight o'clock, yet his watch told him it was only a little after

four. He looked out of the window on a strange land—on the prairies about which he had read all his life and never seen before. He had been disappointed in the Mississippi River, but there was no disappointment here. They were more wonderful than he had ever dreamed—just one endless green sea of growing wheat stretching to the horizon, without a hill or a valley, as flat as the floor of the ocean. Indeed, they looked like a green ocean, with the small houses, the big red barns and silos, the little groves of trees behind the barns for a windbreak, rising like islands every mile or so. The whole world here seemed to be grain. Everything was under cultivation, there were no trees at all except the groves planted beside the farmhouses, mile after mile as far as the eye could see to the far horizon rolled the sea of young wheat, or else the golden stubble where the winter crop had been harvested.

For the first time, Tom understood what men mean when they speak of “the great wheat fields of the West,” for the first time he realized the bigness of America. He wanted to go wake Joe at once, and if Joe hadn’t been sick, he certainly would have done so. As it was, he let him sleep till six, and then he couldn’t stand it any longer, and shook him awake.

“Joe! we’re on the prairie!” he cried.

All that day, mile after mile, they traveled through the wheat, with never a break in the vast monotony of the level land, the endless procession of houses and barns far off, like islands in the green sea. The sun did not set till late, and even at nine o’clock they could read on the back platform of the observation car, as the prairie turned dusky, and in the west the lingering sunset was like a sunset over the sea.

“My, it’s been a wonderful day!” Joe sighed, as they went to bed. “I feel as if I’d just been soaked in *bigness*. I guess the Rockies aren’t any bigger than these prairies. But what gets me, though, is how the kids here go sliding in winter.”

A man on the platform beside them laughed.

“Say, I never saw a toboggan till I went East after I was twenty-one years old,” he said. “But I’ve seen some drifts that were twenty feet high, and that’s quite a hill for us.”

The next morning Tom again was the first awake, and he hurried out to see the prairie once more—but there was no prairie. The world looked exactly as if there had come a great wind or earthquake in the night and kicked the calm prairie sea up into waves. There were still no trees, only a great expanse of grayish grass and wild flowers, but you couldn’t see far from the train in any direction, because the land was so cut up with the billows, little rounded hills and earth waves maybe fifty feet high. This was the cattle country now, and every little while a rough log cabin and log stables, half dug out of the side of a bank, would appear beside the track, and there would be cattle and horses grazing over the slopes. Again Spider waked Joe, and they watched for a cowboy, but none appeared.

As they were eating an early breakfast, the train seemed to be running into more level prairie country again, though it never settled back into the really flat prairies. Presently they stopped at a little town, with a single street of low wooden and brick stores and houses, and no trees, and the two scouts got out to stretch their legs. The first thing they saw as they alighted was a cowboy! Clad in a flannel shirt, with big black fur chaps down his legs and a wide-brimmed felt hat mysteriously sticking on his head, he came dashing up about a mile a minute, kicking up a tremendous dust, and pulling his horse down with a quick sweep that stopped him exactly against the platform. The boys were so interested in him that it was not till they were getting aboard again, at the conductor’s shout, that Joe looked to the west, and cried, “Spider, quick! Look there!”

Tom followed his finger, and, lo! there they were, the Rocky Mountains! As far to the north, as far to the south, as the eye could see stretched the great, blue procession of towering peaks, dazzling white with great patches of snow on summits and shoulders, and seemingly only a few miles away.

“And we could have seen ‘em *hours* ago, if we’d only been looking ahead,” Joe complained, as they took their seats on the observation platform. “They can’t be more’n ten miles off now.”

A big, heavy man who was sitting there laughed loudly.

“Guess you ain’t never been out here before, have you?” he asked.

“No, we never have.”

“Well, this train’s making thirty miles an hour, and we got three hours to go yet before we get to them hills,” he went on. “You chaps remind me of a story, about a friend o’ mine who was prospectin’ up here before the government made a park out o’ Glacier. An Englishman came along one day, and he started out to walk to the base o’ one o’ them mountains before breakfast, so my friend, bein’ just naturally curious, allowed he’d go along too. Fust, though, he sneaked out and got a bite o’ grub. Well, they walked and walked till along about ten o’clock, and the mountain not gettin’ any nearer. By’mby they come to a brook a baby could have jumped, and the Englishman started to peel off his clothes.

“‘What in blazes be you goin’ to do?’ asked my friend.

“‘Well,’ said the bally Britisher, ‘that *looks* like a brook, but I ain’t taking no chances.’”

Tom and Joe laughed.

“I’ve always heard you could see awfully plain out here,” said Tom. “It must bother you at first

sighting a gun.”

“I reckon it does bother a stranger. I seen fellers sight for a goat at four hundred yards, when he was a clean eight hundred, and kick up the dust on the rocks twenty feet below him.”

“Have you hunted goats?” the boys demanded.

“What I’ve not hunted, *ain’t*,” said the man. “I don’t know what folks want goats for, though. They’re the hardest work to get, and no good when you get ‘em. A bighorn, now!”

“What’s a bighorn?” asked Joe.

The man looked at him in profound surprise. “By glory, don’t you know what a bighorn is?” he demanded. “Where do you come from, anyhow? A bighorn’s a Rocky Mountain sheep, the old ram of the flock, with horns fifty inches long that curl around in a circle, and he’s the handsomest, finest, proudest lookin’ critter God Almighty ever made. Wait till you see one!”

“Do you think we can see one in the Park this summer?” the boys asked.

“If you climb up a cliff about seven thousand feet and make a noise like a bunch o’ grass, I reckon maybe you can,” said the stranger.

The next three hours were about the longest the boys had ever spent. They went back into the sleeper as soon as the berths were moved out of the way and they could sit at the window, and with their faces glued to the pane strained their eyes ahead to see the mountains. Whenever the road made a curve, they could see them plainly, a vast, sawtooth range of blue peaks, some of them sharp like pyramids, some of them rounded into domes, marching down out of the north and stretching away to the south as far as the eye could see. Not only were they bigger mountains than the scouts had ever seen, even on a trip the year before to the White Mountains in New Hampshire, but all over them, on their summits, in great patches on their sides, sometimes quite covering an entire peak, were great fields of snow. Here it was about the 4th of July, with flowers blooming in the grass beside the track and a blazing hot sun in the heavens—and the mountains just out there covered with vast fields of snow!

“Gee, I wish the old engineer’d put on some steam!” sighed Joe.

“I wish he would,” Tom answered. “But I guess that snow ain’t all going to melt before we get there. Say, Joe, why do you suppose that range goes right up out of the prairie without any foot-hills? Remember, when we went to the White Mountains we got into smaller mountains long before we reached Washington? They went up like steps. But here the Rockies just jump right up out of the plain.”

“I don’t know—wish I’d studied geology. Maybe the guy who had the friend who walked with the Englishman can tell us.”

Tom shook his head. “I have a hunch he knows more about goats than geology,” said he. “Maybe we can get a book at the Park.”

The mountains were now getting perceptibly nearer. They were becoming less blue, the snow showed more plainly on their sharp peaks and great shoulders, and the boys began to pack up their handbags and get ready to disembark.

Their rear-platform friend, coming through the car, stopped and laughed.

“Don’t go trying to jump no brooks, now,” he said.

“Sure—we’ll throw a stone first,” Spider answered. “Can you tell us why the Rocky Mountains haven’t any foot-hills?”

The stranger seemed to take this very seriously. “They did have once,” said he, “but they was all dug away for the gold and copper.”

Then he passed on, still laughing.

“He’s a good scout,” laughed Joe.

“But I’d hate to have him for a geology teacher,” Tom answered.

The mountains didn’t seem much nearer than they had looked for half an hour when the train finally rolled up to the Glacier Park station and stopped. The boys, together with several tourists, got off, and the minute they stepped on the platform they felt how much cooler it was than back in St. Paul, and how much purer the air.

“Take a big lungful, Joey,” Tom cried. “This is the real old ozone!”

The station is at the gate of the mountains, where the railroad enters the pass which takes it through the range. The mountains here do not look very high, for you are so close under that you do not see much of them. The boys looked up at a ragged wall to the north, covered first with fir timber and then with snow patches on the reddish rocks. Behind them to the east, they looked out over the rolling plains. Close by the station was a big hotel, several stories high, but built entirely of huge fir logs. Even the tall columns in front were single logs.

“I suppose I go up there and report,” said Tom. “Let’s see if our baggage is all here, first”

They found the baggage on the platform, and set out for the hotel, passing on the way an Indian tepee, with pictures painted on the outside, and smoke ascending from the peak. This was the home of old Chief Three Bears, the boys learned, a Blackfeet Indian who lives here by the hotel in summer, and welcomes arriving guests. He was coming down the path, in fact, as the boys

walked up, a tall Indian, over six feet, and looking taller still because of his great feathered headdress. He was very old, but still erect, though his face was covered all over with tiny wrinkles.

The two scouts stopped and saluted him.

Old Three Bears smiled at them, and grunted, "Okeea" (with the accent on the first syllable, and the *ee* and *a* sounds slid together). Then he held his blanket around him with his left hand, and putting out his right, solemnly shook both boys by their hands.

"Say, the old Chief's got a big fist, all right," said Joe, as they went on. "I'll bet he was strong once."

"He must 'a' been good looking, too," said Tom. "I didn't know Indians were so big and—and sort of noble looking."

They now entered the great lobby of the hotel, which, like the outside, was all made of fir logs, with tremendous trunks, bark and all, used as the columns clear to the fourth story. Hunting out the manager, they learned that they were to take the motor bus for Many Glacier Hotel in fifteen minutes, and they just had time to go to the news stand and secure a government map of the Park and a government report about its geology, before turning in their baggage checks and climbing aboard the bus, a four-seated motor something like a "Seeing New York" automobile. This bus was full, three on a seat, and a moment later the driver cranked his engine, gave a toot on his horn, and they were off.

CHAPTER V—The Scouts Learn Why the Rocky Mountains Have No Foot-Hills and Arrive at Many Glacier

They had about fifty miles to go, northward, straight away from the railroad. It was a clear, lovely day, the air so transparent that you could apparently walk to the top of one of those mountains in an hour or two.

"Gee, I know now how that Englishman felt," Joe laughed.

The road was not what would be called a good road, or even a decent road, in the East, as it was only a track in the grass, full of sand and sharp little stones; it did not lead into the mountains at all; it ran along just to the east of the great range, over the bare, rolling hills of the prairie, so that from the motor bus you could see the entire mountain wall, mile after mile. What a wonderful wall it was, too! It sprang right up out of this rolling green prairie, a great procession of peaks, and now they were so near the boys could see they were not blue at all, but every color of the rainbow, with red predominating. Up their sides for a way stretched timber—all evergreen, and not very big—and then came the rocks—red rocks, yellow rocks, gray rocks, white rocks, in long horizontal strata, and in the ravines and hollows on the slopes great patches of snow stretching down from the snow caps on the summits like vast white fingers.

As they sped along, every eye in the motor fixed on the mountains, a man in the front seat pointed ahead to a huge red mountain which stood out eastward from the range, a noble mountain shaped like a tremendous dome.

"That's old Rising Wolf," he said.

"Rising Wolf!" said Tom. "That's a good name. It's Indian, I suppose?"

"It's Indian, but it was the name of a white man," the first speaker replied. "It was the name the Indians gave to Hugh Monroe. He's buried almost under the shadow of that mountain. Pretty good monument, eh?"

"I don't believe anybody'll move it," Joe laughed. "Who was Hugh Monroe?"

"Hugh Monroe," said the man on the front seat, who evidently knew a lot about the Park, "was probably the first white man who ever saw those mountains. He was born in Montreal in 1798. He entered the Hudson Bay Company when he was only seventeen, about as old as you boys, I guess, and was sent way out into the Blackfeet Indian country on the Saskatchewan River. Monroe was assigned to live with the Indians, and learn their language, and the next winter—1816—he went southward with them, following along near the base of the range, crossed what's now the boundary line, and came here. He even went on farther, to the Yellowstone. Monroe stayed with the Blackfeet all the rest of his life. He married a squaw, and got an Indian name—Makwiipowaksin—or Rising Wolf—"

"I guess I'll always say it in English," Spider laughed.

"After a while," the man went on, laughing too, "the Blackfeet came down here to live. We are going through part of their reservation now, and the whole Park was bought from them by the government. This was all their hunting ground, and right here, in Two Medicine Valley that you see leading in beside Rising Wolf Mountain, and in the Cut Bank and St. Mary's Valley we'll soon come to, Hugh Monroe hunted moose and elk and buffalo and silver tips, and he killed sheep and goats up on the slopes. He used to tell me how he had a cabin by St. Mary Lake (we get there in an hour) once, and had to stand off a raid of hostile Indians for two days—he and his wife and children. He's often told me, too, how he and the Blackfeet used to drive the buffalo over the Cut

Bank River cliffs. The buffalo would stampede, and not seeing the cliffs ahead, would all go crashing over."

"He told you?" cried Joe, incredulous. "Say, how old are you, anyhow? I thought you said he came here in 1816—that's a hundred years ago."

Again the man laughed. "Rising Wolf was buried in 1896," he answered. "He was ninety-eight years old. We folks out in the Montana mountains" [he pronounced Montana with the first *a* short, as in *cat*] "live a good while, son. It's the air. I can remember him well, and a fine old figure he was, a real pioneer, like Daniel Boone and the chaps you've read about in school. Yes sir, he's got a good monument." 57

And the man looked up again at the great red dome of Rising Wolf Mountain, towering over them. "Ask him about there being no foot-hills," Joe whispered, nudging Tom.

"Can you tell us why there aren't any foot-hills to this range?" Tom asked. "Of course, all this prairie here is rolling and high, but it's not really little mountains. The main range just jumps right up without any warning."

"Yes, I've been wondering about that, too," put in a man on the seat behind the boys. "I wish you would explain it."

The man on the front seat laughed. "I seem to be the Park encyclopædia," said he. "Well, I hunted in these mountains before the government ever thought of making a park of 'em, and I'm glad to tell you all I can. I'll tell you just as it was told to me by one of the government chaps that came out here—a scientist. He was looking for prehistoric animal fossils up in the Belly River Cañon, and he sure knew a lot. It was this way—all the prairies, he said, and all the land west of here, was once the bottom of the sea, or a lake, or something, and finally it pushed up and became land, and then, as the earth crust went on contracting, it cracked."

The man now put his hands together, spread flat side by side, and pushed them one against the other. 58

"The crack formed from north to south," he said, "and as the contraction went on something had to give, just as something has to give if I push my hands hard enough. See——"

He pushed harder yet, and his left hand slid up over the back of his right.

"That's what happened here. One edge of the earth crust, thousands of feet thick, rose right up and slid east a dozen miles or more, and then stopped. I believe the scientific fellers call that a fault. They call the eastern edge of this range the Lewis overthrust, because that's where the overlapping stopped. Look—you can see all along here the precipices where the crust stuck out over the prairie, and all those parallel lines of different colored rocks are the different layers in the old crust. They find the skeletons and fossils exposed in 'em, which would be buried two or three thousand feet if you had to dig down."

"But what I don't see," Joe said, "is why the top isn't just level? Why are there any peaks and valleys?"

"It happened a few million years ago, son," the man laughed. "I suppose things were some broken up at the first crack, and since then glaciers have come grinding down, and rains have fallen, and snows melted, and frosts cracked, and the ice and water have washed out cañons and carved the peaks. The high point was right where the undercrust stopped, back a dozen miles or more from the edge of the overthrust, so that became the Divide. That's pretty near level in places even to-day. But east and west the running water has carved out long valleys and left harder rock sticking up as peaks. Up farther north old Chief Mountain sticks right out into the prairie, a tower of limestone, with everything else around it carved right away." 59

"I get you," said Joe. "I bet I'd have studied geography harder if I'd had these mountains to look at while I was doing it!"

The man in the seat behind laughed. "There must have been some shake up when the crack formed, and these six thousand feet of crust came up over."

"I'd rather been some place else than standin' right on 'em," said the man in front.

The motor presently rolled through rather thick pine timber, up over a high ridge, and down into a valley.

"That's Divide Mountain to the left," said their guide. "Behind it is Triple Divide Peak. From the peak, the water flows to three oceans—west to the Pacific, east to the Missouri River, the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico, northeast to Canada and Hudson Bay. From here on all the brooks we cross are bound for Hudson Bay and the Arctic Ocean."

In a short time they came to the foot of a lovely lake, and stopped at a group of buildings, built like Swiss chalets, on the shore.

"St. Mary Lake," their impromptu guide said. "A lot of people think it's the most beautiful lake in the world, but you have to get to the upper end to see its full beauty. It runs twelve miles, right up to the foot of the Great Divide. That's Going-to-the-Sun Mountain you can just see the peak of on the right." 60

The scouts looked far up the dancing, wonderfully green-blue waters of the lake, to the tip of a vast pyramid of rock, blue with distance.

"Is that an Indian name? It's pretty," said Joe.

"No," the man answered. "A French missionary priest, who came here with Hugh Monroe back in the 1830's named the lake St. Mary Lake, and then he went on up it, and over the pass to the west, into the setting sun. So Monroe named the mountain Going-to-the-Sun Mountain. But, of course, it was really Indian in a way, because if Monroe hadn't lived with the Indians he wouldn't have thought of such a poetic name."

The boys were still only half-way to their destination, and the bus soon started off again, still keeping on the prairie, along the eastern edge of the range, and passing along the shore of Lower St. Mary Lake for many miles. At last the road turned sharp west, and began to climb. It climbed into a deep, narrow valley which led right up into the tumbled mass of red and gray and green peaks and rock precipices.

"This is the last stage," said the man. "We are going up the Swift Current Valley."

The road was very narrow, and it swung around ledges where there was a massive wall above them on one side and a sheer drop, without protection, on the other. The bus had a siren horn, which the driver set going three hundred yards before he reached one of these curves. As they climbed, the great mountainsides seemed to come nearer and nearer, and at last they towered over their heads, some of them almost perpendicular, and composed of layers of jagged red rock. It was not long before they crossed the tumbling green water of Swift Current River on a bridge close to a foaming waterfall, and brought up in front of a large hotel on the shore of a small green lake.

This was the end of their journey. The scouts got out, and went around to the lake in front of the hotel. Here the full view was spread before them, and Tom whistled, while Joe gasped.

Right in front of them lay Lake McDermott, perhaps a mile long and half a mile wide, the water a beautiful green, for all the lakes in the Park are fed from glaciers, and glacier water is green in color. This lake was surrounded by a fringe of pines. Out of the farther side sprung up a cone-shaped mountain, almost out of the water. To the left and right of this peak, called Sharp's Peak, and only two or three miles behind it, rose the abrupt head wall of the Continental Divide itself, a vast gray precipice, with great peaks thrusting up from it, and gleaming white snow-fields lying like gigantic sheets spread out to dry wherever there was a place for them to cling. Behind the hotel, on both sides, nearer mountains went up precipitously.

"It's some big!" Joe exclaimed. "Say—it—it kind of scares me! Think of climbing one of those cliffs!"

"We'll get used to it," Tom declared. "And we're going to climb 'em! We're going to get photographs of a goat, and see this old Park, top and bottom."

"Gosh, it looks all top to me," poor Joe replied.

"Come on—we'll find our boss, and get our tent pitched, and some grub into us—and we'll feel better," Tom cried cheerfully.

CHAPTER VI—Tom Becomes Boss of the Tepee Camp, and the Scouts Pitch Their Tent in the Evergreens

Just around the lower end of the lake from the great Many Glacier Hotel, perched up on a little slope, were two or three chalets, like those at St. Mary Lake, where tourists could stay at less expense than at the hotel. A little farther along, directly on the shore of the lake, the boys saw a group of tall white tepees.

"There's our home, I guess—if I get the job," said Tom. "We won't have far to haul the water, anyhow."

Tom led Joe into the big lobby of the hotel, which was supported to the roof by huge tree trunks for pillars, and found that he ought to report to the manager of the chalet camp, so he and Joe walked back over the bridge by the falls, and climbed to the office of the chalets.

"So you are Seymour, eh?" the manager said. He was a big, merry looking man, with a high, squeaky voice, and was always bustling about. But the boys liked him at once. "I don't know whether you're old enough to manage the tepee camp or not. Can you cut wood?"

"Yes, sir," said Tom.

"Can you make a bed?"

"Yes, sir."

"Can you count change?"

"When I've got any."

The man laughed, his large shoulders shaking up and down.

"Well, I'll try you a week—I've got nobody else. What's your friend going to do?"

"I brought a tent of my own," Tom explained, "and I thought I could pitch it just into the woods somewhere, out of sight, and we'd live in that, and Joe's going to get our meals, so's I can give all my time to looking after the tepees—couldn't we do that?"

The man turned to Joe. "Are you a good cook?" he asked.

"I can cook camp stuff all right, and make bread, and things like that," said Joe.

"Can you throw a diamond hitch?"

"I don't know—I never tried," Joe replied.

The man tipped back his head and squeaked with mirth again. "That's like the man who said he didn't know whether he could play the violin or not—he'd never tried," said he. "My boy, it takes years and years of patient practice to learn to throw a diamond hitch. But if you only could throw one, you could probably help us out this summer as a camp cook on lots of expeditions. We are going to be hard up for cooks this year."

"I bet I can learn!" cried Joe. "I can tie all kinds of knots,—the Becket hitch, and the bowline, and the false reef and the fisherman's bend, and the sheep-shank and the timber hitch—"

"Whoa!" the man laughed. "Well, we'll see. Come on now, and get your tent and stuff, and we'll go over and look at the camp. I suppose, though, you'd like some grub first, wouldn't you?"

"I could eat a couple of prunes," said Tom.

"I got space for an olive and an oyster cracker, myself," said Joe.

"Well, pile in there and get a bite," the man said, pointing to a small room where the few helpers he needed in the chalets were eating. The scouts needed no second invitation, after their fifty mile motor ride, and they fell on the food hungrily.

"Say, Big Bertha's all to the good," Joe whispered to Tom, "if he does talk like a lady."

"Sure he is—he can't help havin' a squeaky voice," Tom answered. "He's treating us white, all right."

As soon as they were partially filled up—(they ate until they dared not ask for more)—the scouts went back to the hotel, with two borrowed wheelbarrows, and got their trunks and luggage. Then Big Bertha joined them, and they all three continued to the tepee camp, which was pitched between the trail and the shore of the lake. There were six or eight tepees, of stout white canvas stretched on a frame of lodge pole pines. Each tepee had a wooden floor and one of them contained a few cooking implements and a small cook-stove. The rest were for sleeping, and contained a couple of cots apiece.

"Now, this camp is used mostly by tourists who are going through the Park on foot," Big Bertha explained. "You are to charge them fifty cents a night per bed. They get the use of the range and cooking utensils free, and they're supposed to wash 'em, but they probably won't. Your job is to keep the camp clean, have wood always cut up for fires, make the beds, change the linen (you get that from me), collect the fees, attend to the latrine carefully, and—oh, just run the place as if it was the Waldorf-Astoria! The store where they buy grub, and you get yours, is up at the chalets."

"I get you," said Tom. "Doesn't look as if it had been used much this year."

"It hasn't. There's still so much snow on the passes that not many hikers have been over. But they'll be along in a week or so, though. You go ahead and pitch your own tent now, for Joe—somewhere out there in the woods. I guess if you boys are scouts you know how to do it right."

"Is the lake good to swim in?" Joe asked.

Big Bertha looked at him with a funny expression. "Sure," he said. "Try it, after you've got your tent up! Oh, and say, look out for porcupines at night, boys."

Only a few feet beyond the tepees the heavy woods began, not high woods, but a thick stand of fir about thirty or forty feet tall. The scouts took the tent and baggage in far enough to be out of sight of the camp, and screened from the view of the hotel across the lake, but still close to the shore. They found a dry, well-drained, level spot, threw a rope over it from tree to tree, and slung the tent. Then they cut pegs, fastened it down, set up their cots inside, and while Joe was making the beds, Spider hauled a lot of rocks up from the edge of the lake and built a fire pit.

"I s'pose it's going to rain sometimes," he said. "We ought to have a shelter over the kitchen."

"Don't look now as if it ever rained here," Joe answered, from the tent. "I'll build a lean-to over the kitchen while you're running the camp. Gosh, I'm goin' to feel like an awful grafter, just doing nothing, while you're working all the time."

"Aw, cut it out," Tom answered. "You'll be cooking for me, won't you? You're my housekeeper. I'm going to call you wifey."

"If you do, I'll put chestnut burrs in your bed," Joe laughed.

"Where are you going to get the chestnuts?" asked Tom. "I don't see anything around here but evergreen. Come to think of it, I've not seen a single hardwood all day."

"Golly, that's so," Joe answered. "I don't believe I have. It's going to be hard cooking with nothing but pine. How's a feller going to get a bed of coals?"

"I guess he isn't. But I'll see what can be done."

Tom went into the woods with one of the axes, while Joe busied himself about camp, making a shelf on a tree for the provisions, getting the trunks stowed away under the cots, rigging up a rough table out of two pieces of board he went back to the tepee camp and hunted up, and planning for a lean-to to be built later as a shelter while cooking.

Tom came back presently, his arms loaded with dry wood.

"All soft," he said, stacking it near the fire-pot. "There's not a hardwood in the forest anywhere. Come on, now, we've got to get a supply cut for the camp, in case anybody comes. If they don't come, we can cook on the stove there, I guess. It'll be easier than here."

"And not so much fun," said Joe.

The two boys worked industriously for the next hour, Tom doing the heavy chopping, and got a good pile of wood stacked up beside the stove in the camp. It was nearly five o'clock now, and still no one had appeared, so they went back to their tent, being hot and tired, put on a set of summer underclothes for bathing suits, and ran down to the lake. The bottom dropped away rather gradually, over rough stones, so they could not dive. Tom was the first in. He went in up to his knees, and emitted a yell that echoed from the wall of pines across the water.

"Wow!" he cried, "sufferin' snakes!"

"Is it cold?" said Joe, still standing on the shore.

"Oh, no, it ain't cold! Oh, no, it's warm as a hot potato!"

Spider took another step forward and slipped into a hole nearly up to his waist, lost his balance, and went under. He came up spitting water, and made a wild leap for the shore.

"You keep out o' this, Joe," he spluttered. "It's too cold for you to go in. Talk about glacier water—not for me!"

"I want to try it," pleaded Joe.

"No, you don't!"—and Spider grabbed him by the arm and dragged him back.

As Tom peeled off his suit and reached for a towel, Joe ran for their little camp mirror.

"Look at yourself," he said.

Tom looked. He was as red as a boiled lobster from head to foot.

"It's a wonder there ain't icicles on my elbows," he laughed. "You heat yourself some water on the fire, Joe, if you want a bath!"

Which was exactly what Joe did.

They were hardly dressed again, and beginning to prepare supper, when they heard a great clatter of hoofs and shouting coming down the trail. They ran through their fringe of woods, coming out on the trail a little way above the camp, and galloping toward them they saw a procession on horseback, shouting, laughing, screaming. At the head rode a cowboy, well in the lead, and holding his horse back. It was a big, bay horse, with a white star in its forehead, and full of ginger. The cowboy wore white fur chaps on his legs, and spurs, and a broad-brimmed felt hat. Behind him came another guide, also in cowboy costume, and then almost a dozen men and women, evidently tourists. Some of them knew how to ride, but more of them evidently did not. The women were bouncing around in their saddles and screaming, but nobody stopped. The race for home had begun, and the horses intended to finish at a gallop. As the leader thundered past the two boys, they saw with admiration how firmly he sat in his saddle, like a part of the horse, and looked calmly back over his shoulder with a laugh. Then they saw him touch the horse with his spurs, and it sprang forward with a bound, while the rest came tearing on behind. As one woman passed the scouts, her last hairpin flew out, and her hair came tumbling down in a braid, which began bobbing up and down on her back.

"Gee, that's the life!" Tom cried. "We simply *got* to learn to ride horseback, Joe. I bet they've been over a pass, or something, to-day."

"I bet some of 'em are going to eat off the mantelpiece to-morrow," Joe replied.

They went back by way of the camp, to see if any hikers had arrived, and then got their supper, a rather smoky job, with only soft wood to cook by. But they were too hungry to mind the smoke. After supper they walked around to the great hotel, which was not yet lighted up, for though it was now seven o'clock, it was still broad daylight, and bought souvenir post-cards to send home to their parents and the other scouts. As yet the hotel had few guests, for the season had hardly begun, the snow had lain so late on the passes that year, but there was music and bustle about the place, just the same, and another party on horseback was just galloping in, so the boys could watch the tired riders dismount, and the cowboy guides drive the horses away, down the road to their night feeding on the lower meadows. Joe longed to ask one of those cowboys to show him what that mysterious thing, a diamond hitch, was, but he did not have the nerve.

It was still quite light enough to read a newspaper when they returned to camp. Nobody had come, and as it had been a hard day, and Tom saw Joe was tired, he gave orders to turn in, though the lights in the great hotel across the lake, under the vast wall of Allen Mountain, were just twinkling on.

"Seems foolish to go to bed by daylight," he said, "but it's nine o'clock, and you're a sick little wifey."

"You'll be a sick little hubby, in about a minute and a quarter," Joe retorted, swinging at him. "Still, I feel as if I could sleep, daylight or not."

"Come here," Tom went on, "and let's see how your old temperature is. If you've got a fever to-night it means you got to stay still for the next week, and rest up."

He shook down the little clinical thermometer Dr. Meyer had given him, and put it under Joe's tongue. "Smoke that a while," he laughed.

After a couple of minutes he took it out again and inspected it.

"Ninety-eight," said he. "That's normal, ain't it? Hooray, old Joey, no temperature even after this day! I guess you're getting better, all right."

"Sure I am," Joe laughed. "I'm going to climb to the top of the Great Divide to-morrow!"

The night came on as they were getting ready to bunk, and with it came a sudden coolness.

"I guess we're going to be glad of these blankets, after all," Tom said, "and you won't be sorry your mother put in that puff."

"You bet I won't," Joe answered, climbing into his cot, and pulling the puff up about him.

Tom took a last look at the fire, at the still woods, at the lake glimmering down through the trees, picked up his sweater, which he had dropped on the ground, and hung it idly over a log by the fire, pulled the tent flap together, blew out the candle in the camp lantern, and also crawled in.

"Well, Joe," he said, "we've begun our life five thousand feet up, at the feet of the glaciers."

Joe's answer was a snore.

CHAPTER VII—Joe Gets Acquainted with Porcupines, the Diamond Hitch, and Switchback Trails

Some hours later the boys were awakened by a tremendous clatter just outside the tent. They both sprang up and rushed out. It was pitch dark, the last ember of the fire had died, and they could see nothing. But they could hear something scampering away in the underbrush.

"Is it a bear?" Joe whispered. "Gee, I wish they'd let you have a gun in the Park!"

Tom jumped into the tent and lit the lantern. By its dim rays, they saw what had made the clatter. Half their little stock of canned goods and other provisions had been knocked down off the shelf Joe had built.

"I know—porcupines!" Spider cried. "Remember, Big Bertha told us to look out for 'em."

They carried their provisions back into the tent, and went to sleep again.

Tom was the first up. Joe heard him muttering and exclaiming outside the tent, and crawled out to see what was the matter.

"Matter? Matter?" Spider shouted. "Look at this—and this!"

He held up his sweater in one hand, and one of the scout axes in the other. One entire sleeve of the sweater was gone, and the handle of the axe was so chewed up that it was practically useless.

"Holy smoke, what did that?"

Before Tom could answer, there was a movement in the undergrowth, and both boys sprang toward it. There, sure enough, was the culprit—a fat porcupine, surprised by their quick descent, and backing away from them with every quill rigid and ready for business. Tom grabbed a heavy stick, and was about to hit it, when Joe stopped him.

"Wait a minute—I want to see it work," he said. "I want to see if they really throw their quills. You keep him here."

Joe quickly hunted up a rotten stick, and gingerly poked it at the porcupine, which bit at the end viciously, and filled it full of quills, but he certainly didn't "shoot" them. The stick had to touch them first before they came out.

"There, now you see the story's a fake," Tom cried, "so good-night, Pork,—you'll pay for my sweater, you beast, you!"

He brought his club down on the poor animal's head, and laid it out.

"I kind of hate to see him killed," said Joe.

"I hate to kill animals myself, but we got to keep our sweaters and axes," Tom answered. "We'll make an Indian belt, or something, of the quills, and send it home to the kids."

They were still talking about the porcupine as they got breakfast.

"Don't seem as though a woollen sweater sleeve and a wooden axe handle were exactly what you'd call nourishing," said Joe.

"I'd rather have bacon," Tom laughed. "He looks fat, too."

As they were speaking, they heard steps in the woods, and a second later a tall, thin, tanned man in a khaki-colored uniform, with leather riding gaiters and a wide-brimmed felt hat, appeared in their little clearing. The two scouts rose quickly, in surprise.

"Hello, boys," the man said, as his blue eyes took in them and every detail of the camp at a single piercing glance, "goin' to have porcupine for breakfast?"

"He'll never have my sweater for breakfast again!" Tom replied.

The man laughed—or, rather, he smiled. It was really a kind of inside laugh, noiseless. Even his voice was low, so you had to listen sharply to hear what he was saying.

"They'll eat the clothes off your back if you let 'em," said he.

"But why do they eat such—such dry stuff? It's worse than patent breakfast food without cream," said Joe.

"Salt," the man replied. "They'll eat anything a man or a horse has touched, to get it salty with perspiration—an axe handle, for instance. I knew a lumber jack once who had a grudge against a feller, so he put salt on his cabin roof, and the porcs came in the night and ate the roof most off. There come a rain the next day, too."

76

The boys laughed. They wanted to ask their visitor who he was, but didn't see quite how to bring it about. Finally Tom said, "Won't—won't you have some breakfast?"

"Had mine," the man answered. "Might take a cup of coffee, though. Yours smells good."

He sat down on the log which was serving the boys as a chair, first easing his belt holster, which held a 38-calibre automatic.

"He must be a Park Ranger," Tom whispered to Joe. "Nobody else can carry arms in the Park, they say."

Joe brought him a cup of coffee, and as he took it, he said, "Well, boys, I hear you're goin' to look after the tepee camp. Thought I'd come down to inspect you. I'm the Ranger for this district. Mills is my name. My cabin's just up the trail a piece toward Swift Current. Let me know if I can do anything for you."

"Thank you, sir," said Joe. "Some time, if you—you'd——"

He hesitated, turning red at the boldness of his demand.

The Ranger waited in silence, only keeping a pale blue eye on his face, but a kindly eye.

"——if you'd show me how to throw a diamond hitch."

"Is that all?" said the Ranger, with one of his silent laughs. "I thought you were goin' to ask me for a thousand dollars. I can show you the diamond hitch 'most any time. I'm packing off to-day, about ten. Come around and get a lesson. Ride a horse, either of you?"

77

"Well, we ride just a little—farm horses out to plowing, and things like that," Spider replied.

"I have an extra horse. Maybe one of you'll come along with me some day when you both ain't needed in the camp. If you can always make coffee like this I'd like you along."

"Joe's the cook," Tom said. "He can go any time. It's I who am running the camp. He's just loafing and getting well. He's been sick."

"Well, Joe, you come out to my cabin at ten, and you can see me throw a hitch," the Ranger said, getting up, "and ride up the trail with me a spell, if you want."

Joe's eyes grew big with excitement. "I'll be there!" he cried.

The Ranger went back again, and the two scouts looked at each other.

"Say, he's some prince!" Joe exclaimed. "But I don't like to be getting the first ride ahead of you. I wouldn't do it, only if I learn to ride, and tie a pack on, maybe I can get a job as cook."

"Go to it, old scout," Tom answered. "That's what we came here for."

After breakfast Tom went over to the chalets to report and to do some work around the camp, and before ten o'clock Joe was at the Ranger's log cabin.

Mills, the Ranger, had three horses out of the little stable behind, and was putting a saddle on the largest horse.

78

"Go get the other saddle from the stable, and let's see you put it on your horse," he said.

Joe brought the saddle, a regular western saddle, with the high back and the horn in front, and did his best to get it on. The Ranger watched him a minute, and then showed him how to cinch it properly and tight.

"Don't be afraid to pull it hard," he said. "The old nag'll lose some of his belly before he gets home, and if you've not cinched it tight your saddle will slip."

Mills now put a saddle blanket on the third horse, and then a pack saddle, which is a framework of wood, arranged like a saddle underneath with a cinch belt under the belly and a broad canvas belt extending around the back and under the tail. After this is put on the horse the wooden frame of the saddle makes a kind of platform on each side to rest the pack upon. The Ranger now

brought out his stuff—dunnage bags, an axe, blankets, a canvas covering, and a long rope.

"You hold his head," said he to Joe, "and talk to him real kind, while I hang the bags on."

One bag was hung on one side, one on the other, to balance the pack, and then, while the horse tried to do a one-step on Joe's toes with his front legs, and kick Mills in the stomach with his hind legs, the Ranger threw the blankets on top, done up in a flat roll, over the whole saddle, and covered them with the tarpaulin. Finally, he took the long rope, which Joe saw had a canvas band and strap on one end, and fastened this strap, like a cinch, around the horse's belly.

79

"Now," said he, "we are ready to throw a hitch. Come here and help. We'll throw a double one, because that's stronger."

Joe soon saw that the process consists of weaving the rope back and forth under the sides of the saddle and then crossways over the top, in such a way that when it is done the strands of rope, from above, would be seen to make a diamond. Each time the rope was passed over to Mills, he took the end, braced one foot against the horse, and pulled it taut. Joe did the same on his side.

"Won't I hurt the horse?" he asked.

The Ranger laughed. "I give you leave, if you can," he said.

When the rope was all used, Mills fastened the end, went over the whole thing with his hand, testing it to see if it was tight, and then finished by giving the horse a resounding slap.

"That's the way you have to finish," he said, "or the horse wouldn't think you were through."

"I wouldn't think the horse would like to be packed much," Joe suggested.

"Never knew one that did," Mills replied. "Lots o' times, while you're throwing the hitch, that canvas band under the tail works up and sort o' tickles the horse, and then, Oh, Boy, look out! Your plug'll buck, and a packhorse don't reckon he's done a real good job o' buckin' till he's covered about three square acres of ground, and deposited canned beef, tea, syrup, blankets, axes, coffee-pots and a few other things entirely over said area. Then, when you cinch him tight before you start, too, he's likely to feel that's goin' to interfere with his digestion, and start buckin'. A packhorse is an ornery critter."

80

But this horse, now he was packed, was quiet as a kitten, waiting for the party to start. The Ranger called to Joe's horse, which had wandered away.

"Now mount," said Mills.

Joe, on the right side of his horse, started to put his right foot into the stirrup, and the horse shied away from him, almost spilling him on the ground.

"First lesson," said the Ranger. "Never get on a horse from the right. Some of 'em don't mind, but most of 'em do. No use tempting Providence."

Joe came around to the left side, and grasping the horse by the mane and the saddle horn, swung himself up.

"Now, just stand up as straight-legged as you can, and see how many fingers you can put between your saddle and the crotch of your legs."

"Two," said Joe. "Oughtn't my stirrups to be shorter?"

"If you want to ride like a bally British monkey, or a jockey, yes," Mills answered. "If you want to ride like a regular human bein', they're just right. Let's see you trot."

Joe tightened the reins and gave his horse a jab with his heels, and the animal started off with abrupt suddenness, at a sharp trot. Poor Joe began to bob up and down, and bang the base of his spine against the saddle. He tried to rise on his toes with the motion of the horse, but that, he felt, only made him the more awkward. The Ranger came up alongside, and passed him.

81

"Watch me," he said. "Just barely stand in your stirrups, comfortable like, bend forward from your hips, and let your body, not your legs, keep the gait."

He trotted ahead, and Joe saw with admiration that his shoulders hardly bobbed up and down at all. He did his best to imitate him, and after a while felt as if he were getting on to the hang of it. But they couldn't trot far, because the packhorse was following them, all by himself, and if he trotted it shook up his pack too much. So they pulled down to a walk, and climbed the trail, first the Ranger, then Joe, then the patient packhorse, through woods at first, and across a roaring, racing little green river, which foamed up against the horses' legs and made Joe hold up his feet under him to keep them dry.

"I'm going over Swift Current Pass," the Ranger said, "and on up the Mineral Creek Cañon on the other side, and then down into the Little Kootenai River country, to open the trail a bit. You can come with me to the top of the pass, and pick up some party to bring you back."

"I wish I could come all the way!" Joe exclaimed.

Mills laughed another of his silent laughs. "You're ambitious for a sick boy and a tenderfoot," he said. "You'll be sore enough, with fourteen miles, to-night."

82

They were getting out of high timber now, into stunted limber pines, which were covered all over with bright reddish-pink cone buds, like flowers, and everywhere in the grass and trees around them Joe saw more beautiful wild flowers, and more kinds of wild flowers, than he had ever seen in his life before. It was like riding through a garden, with tremendous red mountain precipices

for walls. Beside the trail was the Swift Current River, every now and then widening out into a lovely little green lake, and directly ahead of them, at the head of the cañon, rose an almost perpendicular wall of rock for two thousand feet, to a lofty shelf, on which Swift Current Glacier, snow-covered now, hung like a gigantic white napkin. To the right was the Egyptian pyramid of Mount Wilbur. From the glacier, down over the precipice, were falling half a dozen white streams of waterfalls, like great silver ribbons. As they got nearer and nearer to this head wall, and it seemed to rise higher and higher over them, while the walls on each side of them, the one across the cañon bright red, also grew higher and higher, Joe began to get nervous.

"Say," he finally asked, "are we going to *climb* that?"

Mills looked back at him with a grin.

"Sure," he said.

"Well, I don't see how," Joe answered. "I'm no goat."



Switchback Trail up Swift Current Pass

Mills laughed again, but said no more. Instead, he plodded steadily on, till the great cliff wall seemed about to hit them in the face, and Joe could hear the thunder of the white waterfalls as they leaped and plunged down from the melting glacier two thousand feet over his head.

Just as he had decided the Ranger was playing a joke on him, for surely nobody could get up those walls, the trail turned sharp to the right, and began to go up.

Then Joe learned what a Rocky Mountain switchback is.

A switchback trail can be put up almost any slope that is not actually perpendicular, and the slope they were climbing now was not quite that, though to Joe it seemed pretty near it. The trail was about four or five feet wide, and was dug right out of the side of the hill. It went up at an angle of about twenty degrees, for perhaps two hundred feet to the right, then it swung sharp left on a steep hairpin turn and ran another two hundred or three hundred feet, took another sharp hairpin turn, and so on up, and up. When Joe had made one of these turns, he could look right down on the top of the blankets on the packhorse below him.

"Say," he called up to the Ranger, "what happens to you if your horse falls off here?"

"Your horse never falls off," Mills answered. "If he did, you'd probably take to harp playing. But he won't."

They climbed up these switchbacks for two thousand feet or so, and then worked around a shoulder of the mountain so that they couldn't see the glacier any more, but looking back down the cañon Joe could see a great, narrow hole, with the green lakes like a string of jewels at the bottom, and at the far end, as blue and level as the ocean, the vast prairie.

"The prairie looks just like the ocean," he said.

"Does it?" said the Ranger. "I never saw the ocean. Must be fine."

In a minute or two they reached the first snow-field. Joe did not want to appear too green and excited, but he was almost trembling with excitement, just the same. He had reached the level of summer snow! He was above timber-line, or almost above, and here in a great northern hollow was a vast drift, four hundred feet wide and thirty feet deep in the middle, which Mills said would

not melt all summer! Little streams of water were gushing out from the lower side, and the snow was very soft and coarse, like rock salt. The trail went right across it, the horses picking their way carefully over the treacherous footing. They climbed but a little way more, and they were on the top of the pass.

When you think of a mountain pass, probably, you think of a deep valley or cañon between the hills, but a pass is not like that at all in the high Rockies. In order to get over the Continental Divide (which the Indians called "the backbone of the world"), you have to climb, and the pass is simply a point on this spine which is not quite so high as other points, and can be reached, moreover, from the base. Joe found himself in a little meadow which was full of stunted pine trees, the last of the timber, with snowdrifts, and with bright gold dog-tooth violets, some of them coming right up and blossoming through two inches of snow. On either side of him, the Divide rose up perhaps another five hundred or a thousand feet, in pyramids of naked rock. Ahead, to the west, he could see a great hole, where the Divide dropped down on the other side, and ten miles away across this hole a wonderful sharp-peaked mountain all covered with snow, and looking like the pictures of the Alps in his old geography.

"What's that mountain?" he asked.

"Heaven's Peak," said the Ranger. "Good name for it, eh?"

"It sure is!" said Joe.

Mills stopped the horses in a little grassy glade, sheltered from the wind by a group of stunted pines, and unslung the packs.

"You're going to make me some more of that coffee," he laughed, opening one of his dunnage bags.

While Joe was building the fire, Mills pointed up the great slope of naked, tumbled rocks to the south. "Climb up there some day," said he, "and down the other side, and you'll get on top of the Divide above Swift Current Glacier. It's narrow—just a knife blade, and all along the centre of it you'll see a game trail."

While they were eating lunch, Joe was amused to see the ground squirrels—hundreds of them, it seemed—come up out of their holes in the grass and look at the intruders. They sat up on their hind legs, pressed their front paws against their stomachs, and made a *cheeping* noise, almost like birds.

"Looks as if they were mechanical toys," Joe laughed, "and had to squeeze their middles to get a sound."

He put a piece of bread down side of him, to fill his cup again, and when he went to pick it up, it wasn't there—it was vanishing into a hole!

"Mechanical toy, eh?" the Ranger grinned. "Pretty smart mechanism!"

Before they were through lunch, another party appeared from the west, coming up into the pass, and dismounting. This was a regular tourist party of men and women, with two cowboy guides.

"I thought they'd be along," said Mills. "I'm going to send you back with them. And now here's what I really brought you for—I'll be gone three or four days, and somebody's got to look after Popgun (that's the horse you're riding). How'd you like to feed him every day, and give him some water, and a bit o' exercise, just around the lake, mind you. I don't want you riding off alone on the trails."

Joe gasped with surprise and delight. "You—you mean it?" he asked.

"Sure I mean it. Don't take me long to size folks up. I like you boys, and maybe we can help each other. Pretty lonely in my cabin, you know."

Mills gave him directions about the feed, and then went over and spoke to one of the guides. When he came back, he said to Joe, "Now, let's see you throw a diamond hitch."

Joe did his best, but he had to have help.

"I could get it with two or three more tries, I bet!" he cried. "Then I could get a job as cook with a party, maybe."

"There's a rope in the barn. You can be practicing," the Ranger laughed. "So long."

"Good-bye, sir," Joe answered, as the lean Ranger swung into his saddle, called to his packhorse as if it were a dog, and disappeared down the trail to the west, the faithful packhorse plodding on behind.

The other party were a long time about their meal, and Joe climbed part way up the peak to the south, getting above the last timber, which consisted of tiny, twisted trees not over two feet high, and some of them growing along the very ground. Up here he found beautiful, tiny Alpine flowers in the rock crannies, he started up what looked like a big black and gray woodchuck, and which he later learned was a whistling marmot, and he came upon a bird, something like a partridge, but the same gray color as the rocks. This bird was followed by six little fluffy chicks, which went scuttering away with shrill little peeps into the maze of stones, and ten feet away couldn't be seen, so like the stones were they.

"That's protective coloring," Joe thought. "Wonder why they are colored that way?"

He was later to learn that this was a ptarmigan hen and her chicks, the largest bird which lives

above timber in these mountains. No doubt it is colored like the rocks to protect it from the eye of foxes, eagles, and other foes.

Joe didn't dare climb any higher, though he longed to get to the top, which now rose steep above him. He felt perfectly well, too, and the climbing didn't make him cough. But he saw the party was packing up again, so he hurried down and cinched up another notch in his saddle to make sure it did not slip on the descent. He mounted and fell in behind the procession, which immediately began winding its way down the steep switchbacks. Joe, from the rear, could look almost directly down on the head of the leader, a hundred feet below him. One or two of the women were screaming, and now and then a stone, loosened by a horse's hoof, would go bounding down the slope with a terrifying rattle. But the horses, carefully putting one foot ahead of the other, were as calm and sure as if they were on level going, and nothing at all happened, of course.

Once on the comparatively level trail below, the leading guide broke into a trot, and the whole cavalcade came bouncing on behind. Joe bounced at first as much as anybody, but by dint of much trial, he got into the swing a little, and began to ride more comfortably. When they were on the level trail in the woods at last, a mile from the lake, the leader gave a yell, touched his spurs, and leaped out at a gallop. All the other horses, without waiting for any command, started in to gallop also, including Poppun. Joe yelled with the rest, jammed his cap on hard, hung to the horn of his saddle to keep aboard, and felt the wind rush against his face. Still galloping and shouting, the cavalcade dashed past the Ranger's cabin, and on toward the tepee camp.

Joe hoped Spider would be around to see. He wanted to stop his horse at the tepees, but whether he could or not was another question. Poppun didn't appear to have any intention of stopping till the rest did.

As they dashed in sight of the camp, he saw Spider standing by the trail. Joe yelled, "Hi—Tom!" and began to tug at the reins. Poppun came down to a trot obediently—and also suddenly, very nearly sending Joe out over his head. Another tug, and a "Whoa!" brought him up short, though his ears were pricked up, and his eyes were following the galloping cavalcade now disappearing toward the hotel.

"Well—*what* are you doing?" exclaimed the astonished Tom.

"I'm a regular cowboy now, eh, what? Allow me to introduce Poppun, my gallant broncho. We've been on top of the Great Divide, we have, and seen the water going toward the Pacific, and, gee I know where there's a game trail we can climb to, and I'm goin' to have this horse to ride for three or four days, and feed him, and—and all."

"I bet you're sore to-night," said Tom.

"I bet I am, too. You try him. Gee, he's a fine old horse. You ought to see him come down a trail—just as careful. Wow! and some trail, too!"

Joe dismounted, stiffly, with an "Ouch!" and Tom climbed into the saddle. Poppun looked mildly around, to see what the change meant, and then trotted obediently off.

Joe watched, laughing. There was no doubt that Tom bounced. He bounced as much as the women. The harder he tried not to, the more he bounced.

"See, you got to do it this way," said Joe, as the other scout came back. He started to mount again, with a leap, but his legs were so stiff they'd hardly work.

"Very graceful, *very* graceful indeed!" Tom taunted. "Why don't you get a job in the movies, you're so graceful?"

"Maybe I will," Joe answered, finally getting into his saddle. "Now look—here's the way."

He hit Poppun with his heels, and started up the trail, but before he was out of sight a second cavalcade, with a cowboy at the head, came thundering past. Poppun turned, and in spite of Joe's cries and tugs at the rein, insisted on galloping with it. Hanging helpless to his saddle horn, Tom saw Joe tearing past, in the middle of the crowd, and disappearing toward the hotel.

Five minutes later he returned, looking very sheepish.

"I see just how to do it," Tom taunted. "Joe, you've got speed, but no control!"

"You wait! I'll have old Poppun eating out of my hand yet," Joe answered. "Guess I'll put him up now, and feed him."

"Yes, and then you come back and rest. You've been doing too much to-day," said Tom.

When Joe got back, he found Tom busy at the camp. The first party of hikers had arrived—ten of them, men about thirty-five years old from Chicago, who were taking their vacation tramping through the Park. They all wore high, heavy boots with hobnails, flannel shirts, khaki trousers, and carried knapsacks on their backs. Tom was hustling around buying provisions for them at the chalet store, fixing their bunks, getting fresh water, making a fire in the stove, and so on, while two of the men, who acted as cooks, were getting ready to cook the supper.

"Can I help?" Joe asked.

"No, you go back to our tent and rest," said Tom. "You can get our supper, after you've thought a while about how graceful you are."

Joe went limping off, and was only too glad to lie down in the tent. He lay on his side presently.

He began to realize acutely, and locally, that he had been riding horseback, fourteen miles, for the first time.

But he had supper ready when Tom came at six-thirty.

"How do you feel?" Tom demanded. "I bet you've been doing too much. Tired? Got a fever?"

He got out the thermometer.

"I'm sore, all right, but I'm not very tired, not half as tired as I used to get at home, just walking back from school."

Tom answered by putting the thermometer in his mouth.

"No fever at all—and you're all sweaty," he said a minute later. "You really feeling better, old Joey?"

"Sure I am."

But Tom wouldn't let him help after supper in getting more wood for the camp. Tom did it all, while Joe sat at first outside the tepees and tried to hear the talk of the hikers about their trip, and later, when Tom was through, moved closer to the "council fire," built in a ring of stones, at the invitation of the men, and heard them tell of their twenty-two mile hike that day over Piegan Pass from Upper St. Mary Lake. It was fine to sit there, by the warm fire, as the darkness gathered over the great, solemn wall of the Divide, as the lights in the hotel across the lake twinkled on, as the night wind whispered in the pines, and hear the talk of glaciers, and snow-fields, and ten-thousand-foot climbs. It made Joe and Tom long for the day when they could get out, with blanket and knapsack, over the high trails. They went back to their tent at last reluctantly, while the hikers bade them a cheerful good-night.

"Seems as if everybody in the Park was good-natured," Joe remarked, as he crawled into bed. "Guess it's the air."

"I like everybody but the porcupines," Tom answered, carefully folding what was left of his sweater under his pillow! "I wrote home for a new one to-day, but I'll hang on to what I've got."

CHAPTER VIII—Joe Gets a Chance at Last to Go Out on a Trip as Camp Cook

The next few days were busy ones for both boys. Tom had hikers to take care of now every day, sometimes only two or three at a time, sometimes much larger parties, so that he had to wheel down more cots from the chalets. There was much to do, cutting wood, hauling water, making beds, raking and burning the litter after each party, for Tom had learned as a scout that one of the worst things a camper can do is to leave any litter behind him, and one of the best ways to collect flies around a camp is to leave scraps and garbage unburned or unburied. He even went over to the hotel and begged a can of stove polish from the kitchen, and each day, after the crowd had gone, polished up the camp stove.

Big Bertha, coming down to look things over, found him busy at this job.

"Well, well," said he, in his funny, high voice, "I'd know you came from New England. Must have a clean kitchen! The camp looks well, Tom, and nobody's made a kick yet. I guess we can keep you another week."

Then he laughed in such a way that Tom knew his job was safe.

Meanwhile Joe divided his day between cooking the meals for Tom and himself, building a lean-to kitchen and dining-room for rainy weather, rigging up a porcupine-proof pantry with some old chicken wire he found behind the hotel chicken yards, and feeding and riding the Ranger's horse. Twice a day he took Popgun out for a spin, going down below the hotel to the level meadows where the packhorses and saddle-horses rented to the tourists were pastured at night, and there he galloped, trotted, and jumped logs till he felt sure of himself, and all his saddle soreness wore off. Sometimes, after the guests at the camp were gone, and no new party had yet arrived, Tom took a try in the saddle, too, and both of them, with packs made of their blankets and an old mattress, practiced throwing a diamond hitch, while Popgun, who was being used for the experiment, stood still, but looked around at them with a comical, grieved expression, as much as to say, "What do you think I am, just an old packhorse?"

The Ranger did not return for five days, and Joe was sorely tempted to ride Popgun up one of the trails again, to the high places which lured him—to Iceberg Lake, for instance, only six miles away, which everybody talked about as being so beautiful. But he remembered what the Ranger had said, and he never went more than a mile or two from camp. It was certainly hard, with a good horse under you, and a bright sky overhead, and the great towering red mountains all around, not to ride on and on, higher and higher, into those wonderful upland meadows, and then on some more to the sky-flung bridge of the Great Divide!

On the sixth morning, as Joe drew near the Ranger's cabin to feed and water Popgun, he saw smoke coming out of the chimney. The door was open, and inside he saw Mills just getting breakfast.

"Hello," he called.

"Oh, it's you," Mills answered, looking out. "Come make me some coffee, will you?"

Joe entered, and Mills shook hands. "Glad to see you," he said. "I'd be glad to see *anybody*, so don't get flattered. I've been five days alone in the woods, cuttin' out fallen trees from the trail. Last winter was a bad one."

"I s'pose there's a lot of snow here in winter," said Joe, as he set about making the coffee.

"Last winter there was ten feet on the level in the woods, and the drift piled up against Many Glacier Hotel out there till all you could see was the peak of the roof."

"What!" Joe cried. "Why, that's five stories high!"

"So was the drift," said Mills

"What a chance for skiing!" Joe sighed. "Say, I'd like to spend a winter here."

"Don't let's talk about it," Mills suddenly said. "Makes me blue. The winters are too darn lonely. I see Popgun looks fat, and you've been groomin' him, too. Where'd you get the curry comb? I don't own one."

"Made it," Joe answered, "by punching holes with a nail through a tin box cover."

"Can you ride yet?"

"Well, I can get around, without having to eat off the mantelpiece at night."

"Want a job?"

"Sure, if it's something I can do. You know, I'm a regular grafter now, just living off Spider. What is it?"

"Cooking mostly. Tastes to me as if you could do that," the Ranger said, as he took a sip of Joe's coffee, and a bite of the fried eggs and bacon Joe had also cooked for him, as they talked.

"I can cook all right—I learned that in the Boy Scouts," Joe answered, eagerly. "Is it for a party?"

"Yes, it's a special party—a couple o' congressmen and their wives and families. The Park superintendent wants me to show 'em around the circuit a bit—have to be nice to congressmen, because Congress appropriates what little money we get to build trails with. All the camp cooks are out on trips now, and I'm up against it unless you'll go along."

"I'm your man!" Joe cried, eagerly.

"Well, you're as good as a man when it comes to coffee," Mills grinned. "I'll get a guide to help out with the packing and the heavy work. We start to-morrow morning, early. Be up here at seven."

"O.K.," cried Joe, with a salute, and hurried back to tell Tom the news.

Spider looked grave. "I dunno about it," said he. "You know what the doc said about overworking. I dunno whether I'll let you go."

"But it won't be overworking," Joe cried. "Gee, I feel great now, anyhow, and it's just cooking, and the Ranger's going to get a guide to do the heavy packing, and I'll be on horseback all the time, and out in the air, and, gosh, but it's a great chance to see the Park, and earn some money to pay you back—"

"Oh, forget that!" said Tom. "What's your pay going to be?"

"Don't know—didn't stop to ask," Joe laughed.

"You're a great little business man, you are," Tom said. "Well, you can try it this trip, if you'll come over now to the hotel and get weighed, and have your temperature taken."

The hikers had gone for the day, and the camp was vacant, so the two scouts went around to the hotel at once, and Joe climbed on the scales. Tom set them at a hundred and thirty, but the weight did not drop. He moved the indicator weight pound by pound till he reached a hundred and thirty-nine, before he reached a balance.

"Gosh," cried Joe, "that's almost ten pounds I've put on since I left little old Southmead!"

"Yes, and you haven't coughed for a week," Tom added. "You're on the mend, all right, all right. But you got to stay so, and I dunno about letting you go on this trip—it'll be hard work cooking for a whole lot o' people."

"Aw, please!" Joe pleaded. "I feel great now, honest I do. Besides, it's all out in the open air."

"Well, you can try it this once," Tom finally said. "But if you have any fever, or have lost any weight, or are fagged, when you get back, or have any signs of a cold, or cough, no more trips for you!"

"Yes, doctor," Joe answered, meekly.

They went back to the camp, and Joe spent the afternoon studying the government topographical survey map of the Park he had bought at the hotel, overhauling his personal equipment, and then, at the supply depot of the Glacier Park Saddle Company, which furnishes the horses, tents, guides, blankets, etc., for camping and horseback parties in the Park, selecting what he wanted in the way of cooking utensils and provisions for his party.

Mills said they would be out five days, and there were to be two men, two women, two girls and a boy in the party, besides Mills, Joe and two guides, for Mills had decided they'd need two. That made eleven people in all, or a hundred and sixty-five individual meals. Joe began to think, when he came to figure it out, that it was more of a job than it looked at first, especially when all the stuff had to be packed on horseback. He planned for canned soups, for coffee, tea and cocoa, served with condensed milk, of course; for plenty of bacon; for two or three meals of eggs, packed in a small crate; for two meals of beef (which, of course, would not keep, and would have to be served the first two days out); for pancakes and "saddle blankets" (a kind of pan-fried cake served with syrup, the syrup coming in cans); for bread, of course, if he had time to make any; and, finally, beans, sardines, crackers, some canned vegetables, and jam, marmalade and canned peaches. All these things could be carried easily, as they came in tins or jars. All that was needed were the horses. He got everything ready to be packed in the morning, and hurried back to camp to get Tom's supper. Tom was busy with a big crowd of hikers, who had just arrived over Piegan Pass, and it was late before the two boys sat down to their meal.

99

"I sort of hate to go now," Joe said. "I'll be seeing all the Park, and you having to stick around here and make beds for the hikers. When I get back, I'm going to ask Big Bertha to let me run the camp, while you have a trip."

"Yes you are!" Spider laughed. "You're going to rest a whole week after you get back. You look tired already. Guess I won't let you go, after all."

"I'd like to see you stop me!" Joe answered, as he took a third helping of pancakes.

"Well, you eat like a well man, I must admit," said Spider, reaching for what was left.

CHAPTER IX—Over Piegan Pass to St. Mary Lake, Underneath the Precipices

100

Promptly at seven, Joe was at the Ranger's cabin. He had already cooked Tom's breakfast, and Tom was over at the camp, helping the hikers to get theirs. The sun had long been up, and the day was clear and perfect. In fact, there hadn't yet been a rainy day since the scouts reached the Park. But Mills had told Joe to bring his rubber poncho, so he had it with him. He was to ride Popgun, of course, and the Ranger and he put their personal equipment of blankets, tent, extra clothing, ponchos, axes, and the like, on the Ranger's packhorse, and started for the big hotel.

"I've got hold of a good extra man," Mills said. "With so many skirts in the party, we'll have a big pack-train, for they insist on sleeping out instead of going to the chalets. I was over last night to see 'em."

"Where are we going to-day?" Joe asked.

"Piegan Pass," Mills answered, "and make camp to-night by the lake. That's twenty-two miles. Tomorrow we'll go to Gunsight Lake—that's only seven, and it'll be all they'll want after to-day—and rest up, and let 'em climb Blackfeet Glacier if they want to."

101

At the hotel the two cowboy guides, one of them not very much older than Joe, were already on hand with the horses and Joe's equipment of stores, and the cooking kit, and three tents, and innumerable blankets. It made such a pile of stuff that you'd have thought it would need a regiment of horses to carry it, but Mills and the two guides went about the task of packing it on to the backs of five horses, and so well did they stow it away, properly balanced on either side and made fast with ropes in diamond hitches, that the horses didn't seem to mind it in the least, though they looked more like camels than horses. It was eight o'clock before this work was done, and by that time the tourists appeared, with their dunnage bags, which had to be packed on two more horses.

Joe had never seen a congressman before, except once when he went to a political rally and he could not help staring at the two men as they approached, and wanting to laugh. Beside Mills and the two cowboys, they looked so unfitted for this job of riding a horse over the high trails! They looked about as unfit as the cowboys would have looked in Congress. Both of them still wore long trousers and ordinary boots, though they had bought themselves flannel shirts and soft hats at the hotel store, and sweaters. Their wives were not very much better equipped, though both of them had bought khaki divided riding skirts (for nobody is allowed to ride a side saddle in the Park). Beside the two congressmen and their wives, there were two girls about twenty, and a boy about Joe's age. One of the girls was the daughter of Congressman Elkins of New Jersey, the other two of Congressman Jones of Pennsylvania. All three of the young people, Joe noted, were better equipped. The girls had regular riding breeches and leather leggings, like a man's, and the boy had khaki riding breeches and high boots.

102

As soon as their dunnage bags had been packed on two more horses, the job of getting the women into their saddles began, and then getting the stirrups adjusted right. The girls and young Jones were up and ready long before their mothers were, and making uncomplimentary remarks.

"Say, ma," called young Jones, "if your horse bucks, grab his tail. That always stops 'em."

"Father looks as scared as when he made his first speech in the House," laughed Miss Elkins.

"Nonsense!" said that statesman. "I rode a horse many a time when I was a boy."

"That was a long time ago, papa dear," his daughter said.

"And pray when did you learn to ride?" her father asked, trying to get comfortable in his saddle.

"Oh, it's just going to come natural to me," she answered, with one of her rippling laughs that Joe liked to hear.

Mills walked through the little group of mounted riders, gave a testing pull to all the saddle girths, looked at the stirrups, and vaulted into his own saddle.

"You keep the two horses with the dunnage bags, and our own packhorse, in front of you, just behind the last rider," he said to Joe. Then he touched his horse with his heel, and the animal jumped up the trail. The rest followed—first the party of tourists, behind Mills, then one of the guides to keep an eye on them, then three packhorses, then Joe to keep an eye on these three, then the five other packhorses, and finally the second guide to watch them. In all, then, there were nineteen horses strung out along the trail in single file, which made a considerable procession, as Joe looked forward and then back upon it.

The trail they were on did not go past the tepee camp, so Joe had no chance to call good-bye to Tom. It went along the other shore of Lake McDermott, sometimes on the little rocky beach, sometimes almost in the water, heading directly up the valley toward the great gray fortress of Gould Mountain and Grinnell Glacier, which Joe could see glistening like a huge white and green silk mantle flung along a high ledge just under the spine of the Continental Divide. Mills broke into a trot as soon as the party was well started, and ahead Joe could see the two congressmen and their wives bounding up and down, and noticed that Congressman Elkins, who said he rode when he was a boy, bounded quite as much as any one. Of course, the packhorses wanted to trot, too, and Joe saw the guide in front turning back and gesticulating to him. He gave Popgun a jab in the ribs, and rode past his three charges, getting in front of them, and then pulled Popgun down to a walk. If he had not, of course, the packs might soon have been shaken off. The tourists were soon out of sight up the trail, in the woods, and Joe and Val, the young cowboy, were left alone, with the eight pack animals.

It looked like an easy job they had, too, but Joe soon found it was not so easy as it looked. Some one of the eight was always wanting to fall out of line and eat a particularly tempting bunch of grass, or else took it into his silly head to make a détour into the woods, and then he had to be yelled at, or chased and driven into line again. Joe found himself fairly busy most of the first four miles of the trail, till they reached Grinnell Meadow, where the rest of the party had halted and were waiting for them.

Grinnell Meadow, Joe thought, was the most beautiful place he had ever been in. It was a grassy glade of twenty acres, at the foot of Grinnell Lake, and was studded with little fir trees and carpeted with great white chalice cups, which are a kind of big anemone. The lake itself was green in color, and maybe half a mile across. The far side lay right under a two thousand foot precipice which sprang up to the glacier, and down this precipice, from under the lip of the glacier, were pouring half a dozen very slender waterfalls, like long white ribbons let down the rocks. Just to the left the vast cliff wall of Mount Gould shot straight up to the almost ten thousand foot summit. (Of course, the meadow being five or six thousand feet above sea level, this wall of Gould wasn't ten thousand feet high, but only about four thousand.)

As soon as Mills saw the packhorses appear, however, he gave the signal to proceed, so Joe did not have time to look about much. The trail crossed the meadow, the ground squirrels peeping out of their holes and chattering angrily at the disturbance, and then turned left, and began at once to climb, alongside of the great cliff of Gould Mountain. They climbed beside a roaring brook, and Joe soon realized that they weren't going up Gould at all, but up the side cañon to the east. They hadn't gone a mile before this brook was far below them, and they looked across the deep hole it had made to the towering cliffs of Gould. Gould is a part of the Great Divide, and Joe could now see more plainly than ever before the strata of the earth crust—layer on layer of different colored stone, like the layers in a gigantic cake. All down the precipices were coming waterfalls, from the snow-fields above, and Joe and Val reckoned that one fall took a clean jump of twenty-five hundred feet. They could hear the thunder of it, across the cañon, though it was not nearly so loud as you might think, because most of the water turned to mist before it reached the bottom.

Now the trail began to get into the region of switchbacks, and Joe could see the horses of all the party strung out far ahead, and then suddenly doubling on their tracks so Mills would pass almost over his head, and speak to him as he went by. Before long, he saw Mills halt, where the trail went close to a beautiful waterfall, and as he came up, he heard the Ranger telling the party that it was Morning Eagle Falls.

"What a pretty name—it must be Indian, of course?" Miss Elkins said.

"Named for some Blackfeet chief, I suppose," Mills answered.

"Say, dad, what's the matter with you?" laughed the Jones boy. "Why don't you christen it Congressman Peter W. Jones Falls? What's the use of being in the House of Representatives if you can't name a dinky little waterfall after yourself?"

"My boy, he's waiting till he reaches the biggest mountain in the Park, to name that after himself," the other congressman said, while every one laughed, and the procession started up again.

They were climbing an ever steeper trail, now, and the trees began to grow smaller and smaller,

while, looking back, Joe could see Grinnell Meadow far below him and the great cliff of Gould shooting up out of it. Ahead, they began to get into snow-fields, and then they crossed timber-line, where the trees were twisted and bent and even laid over flat by the wind, and sometimes an evergreen a foot thick would be only eighteen inches tall, and then, for twenty feet, bend over and lie along the ground like a vine, sheared by the wind. Beyond timber-line they came into a wild, naked, desolate region of broken shale stone, with tiny Alpine flowers growing in the crannies, snow-fields lying all about, and to their right, quite near, the southern end of Gould Mountain where it dropped down a little to the Continental Divide level, to their left the bare stone pile summit of Mount Siyeh, which is over ten thousand feet high. A few more steps, and they stood on top of the pass, and looked over the rim, on the tumbled mountains to the south, with the great blue and white pyramid of Jackson (ten thousand feet) rising a dozen miles away or more, over what looked like a vast hole in the earth.

"This is Piegan Pass," said Mills.

"Why Piegan—and why a pass?" one of the congressmen asked. "I thought a pass was a place where you went between things, not up over their backs."

The Ranger laughed. "You're only seven thousand feet up here," he said. "That mountain to the east, Siyeh, is ten thousand."

"Why, it looks as if I could just walk across these stones and get to the top of it in twenty minutes!" cried Bob Jones.

"Try it," said Mills, laconically. "We'll be having lunch down in the pines below."

Joe thought of the story of the Englishman, and hoped Bob would try it.

"You haven't explained the Piegan," Miss Elkins said.

"Why, the Indians that owned this reservation were the Piegan tribe of the Blackfeet," said Mills.

"Dear, dear, another lost opportunity for dad!" sighed the irrepressible Bob.

The cavalcade now began the descent on the south side of the pass, with the Divide on their right, across a cañon, and the trail itself dug out of the vast shale slide which was the south wall of Siyeh. It was a steep, narrow trail, nothing but loose shale, and the horses had to pick their way slowly and carefully, while the riders had to lean well back and brace in their stirrups to keep from sliding forward on the horse.

"Say, Mr. Mills," Joe heard Bob call, "has this horse of mine got strong ears?"

"Why?" asked Mills.

"Nothing, only if he hasn't, I'm going to take a toboggan slide down his nose."

"Try walking," Mills called back.

Joe saw Bob dismount, and as he was feeling saddle stiff, he got off his horse, too, and led him down by the bridle. The poor packhorses had to tread on the very outside edge of the trail, because if they didn't, their packs would knock the wall on the inner side, and what kept them from slipping off was hard to see.

The trail down seemed endless. Far below, Joe saw a party coming up, looking about a quarter of a mile away.

"I suppose we'll meet 'em day after to-morrow," Bob said.



Trail up Piegan Pass Showing Continental Divide and Mt. Gould

As a matter of fact, it was half an hour before the two parties met. They had to pass on this narrow path, and Mills, the two guides, and Joe held the horses of their party while the ascending riders squeezed past, and then led the packhorses, one by one, to a spot where they could make room for another horse to get by. It seemed ticklish work to Joe, but the horses were as calm about it as if they had been on level ground.

It was long after one o'clock when the nineteen horses of the procession finally stepped off the last of the shale upon the green grass of a little meadow, and then into a level strip of woods. With a yell, Mills hit his horse, and went forward at a smart trot, everybody following, even the weary packhorses. Out of the woods on the other side they trotted into the most beautiful spot Joe had ever seen in all his life, and when Miss Elkins cried, "Oh, is this Heaven?" he felt like saying, "Me too!"—but remembered that, after all, he was only the cook, and kept silent.

"This is Piegan Pines," said the Ranger. "All off for lunch."

He sprang from his saddle, and he and the forward guide helped the two older women to dismount—and they certainly needed help.

"I can *never* get back there again," wailed poor Mrs. Jones, as she flopped down on the grass.

While the party were dismounting, Joe had just time for a quick look about him. They were in a little meadow, maybe half a mile wide, with towering rock walls on both sides, hung with snow-fields and a glacier or two, and, behind, the great shale slide down which they had just come. Only one side, to the south, was open—and there the meadow just dropped off into space. Across the hole, far off and blue, was the great blue mass of Mount Jackson, covered with snow, and the great white and green slopes of Blackfoot Glacier, the largest in the Park. The meadow was full of little limber pines, golden with millions of dog-tooth violet bells, and criss-crossed with tiny ice-water brooks, running in channels over the grass—made, of course, by melting snow on the cliffs above.

"Golly," thought Joe, "if old Spider and I could only come and camp here!"

But now Mills was telling him to get a quick, cold lunch, and he and the other guide sprang for the packhorses, and got out what was needed, while Mills made a camp-fire beside one of the brooks.

As Joe was making his preparations, he felt Miss Elkins standing beside him, and looked up.

"Are you the cook?" she asked.

"I—I believe so," Joe stammered, getting red.

"You don't look very old to be a cook," said she. "Have you got lots and lots to eat? I could devour a whole butcher shop, I think."

"Cold lunch," said Joe, grinning. "Ranger's orders."

"Oh, not a cold lunch! Mr. Mills—Mr. Mills—cook says you say a cold lunch. You didn't say that, did you?"

"Sure, ice water and a cracker," the Ranger grinned. "Can't stop to cook."

"Oh, please, just coffee—mother will *never* get back on her horse without a cup of coffee."

"I'll never get back without *two* cups," groaned Mrs. Jones.

"Well, Joe, make 'em coffee," said Mills, with a wink at Joe, who had been intending to make coffee all the time.

He filled his kettle at the little brook, and while the coffee was boiling, opened a small can of sardines apiece, some boxes of crackers, a can of beans, and two or three jars of jam. For the jam, he carefully whittled some dead pine limbs into rough spoons, to save dish washing, and sweetened the coffee, when ready, in the pot, for the same purpose.

By the time he had this very simple lunch spread out on a bit of level ground, with no plates or spoons except for the beans, which he had heated while the coffee was boiling, the party had scattered, all but Val, the young cowboy.

"Ready?" Val asked.

"All ready."

Val picked up a piece of wood and a frying-pan, which lay on the opened pack. Pounding the pan with the stick like a drum, he yelled,

"Come and get it!"

"That's the word that brings 'em in these parts," he added to Joe.

It did.

"That's the most eloquent speech I ever heard!" exclaimed Mr. Jones.

In about one minute, they were all gathered around the fire. Val passed the food and Joe poured the coffee.

"Say, what do you take these sardines out with?" demanded Mrs. Jones.

"Fingers were made before forks, mother darling," said Bob. "See—watch your little son."

He picked up a sardine by the tail, and dropped the whole of it into his mouth.

"Well, I must say, I'd like a fork——" she began, and Joe turned red, for he had forgotten the forks for the sardines.

But Miss Elkins spoke up before Mrs. Jones could finish.

"Cook hasn't time to wash dishes this noon," she said. "We've got to make camp before dark. Besides, we're roughing it. I think it's great!" and she, too, picked a sardine out of her tin by the tail, and dropped it upon a cracker.

Joe cast her a grateful glance, and she smiled at him sweetly. He decided then and there, as he put it to himself, that she was "all to the good."

Meantime Mrs. Elkins, her mother, was watching Val, with fascinated eyes.

"What *are* you looking at, mother?" her daughter demanded. Bob's eyes followed hers, and he gave a hoot of glee.

"A Charlie Chaplin sandwich!" he cried.

Then everybody looked at Val, who was grinning amiably, as he sat on a fallen log, making himself a sandwich, between two crackers, of the entire bill of fare—sardines, jam, and baked beans. This he consumed in exactly three bites, and proceeded to concoct another one.

"Well," he said, as he made this second, "you mix 'em all inside, don't you? Why not first? Saves time."

"Ugh!" said Mrs. Jones. "I'm afraid I wasn't born to rough it."

"Efficiency, I call it," said her husband. "Why not, as he says. Think I'll try it."

"Me, too," said Bob.

"Me, too."

"Me, too," from each of the girls. They all did try it—once—much to Mrs. Jones' disgust.

It did not take long to clean out the sardine tins and the jam jars. Then Joe produced a piece of sweet chocolate apiece, while the girls called him "a darling thing," and the congressmen lit their cigars and lay back on the grass, while Joe and Val packed up again.

"You go along right away, with the pack-train," said Mills to them, "and when you reach the lake, turn toward Sun Camp, till you come to the point of land. Start making camp by that. We'll come slower."

So Joe had to climb back on Popgun—reluctantly, for he hated to leave this beautiful upland meadow, and led the way down the trail, with the eight packhorses behind him, and Val bringing up the rear. Of course, he and Val were thus so far apart they could not talk, and with nothing in front of him, it seemed almost as if he were alone, plunging into the unknown wilderness.

The trail immediately fell over the edge of the meadow, into timber, and began to descend steeply, the woods growing more dense and the trees much larger as the trail dropped down, till, after a mile or two, they were in a heavy forest of big fir trees. As they neared the bottom land,

the footing got heavy, too, and finally the trail was mostly black mud. They plodded through this for a mile or more, and then, through the great tree trunks, Joe began to see light, and, high up, the red and white and gray tops of mountains, and finally, after they had turned to the left by a rushing stream, and followed down it a ways, he saw the dancing waters of a green lake. A short distance now, and they were beside this lake. It was, Joe knew, St. Mary Lake, the upper end of the same lake he had seen on the trip in from the railroad on the motor bus.

As he came out on an open headland on the shore, he could not help pulling up his horse, and looking at it. Val trotted up beside him.

"Some pond, eh?" said the cowboy. "I like this puddle. Good fish in it, too."

But Joe was not thinking of fish then. He was thinking—well, he could not have told you what he was thinking; maybe he was just feeling. It was all so huge, and awe-inspiring, and yet so beautiful! The lake was two miles wide, he fancied, and went out of sight around a headland to the east. To the west, it seemed to run right up into a big cañon that ended bang against Blackfeet Glacier, Mount Jackson, and the sawtooth peaks of the Great Divide. Directly opposite, two huge rock pyramids came sheer down into the water.

115

"Those are Red Eagle and Little Chief Mountains," said Val. "See that house over on the one little island? That's where the president of the Great Northern Railroad lives in summer. Come on, though, we can't look at the pretty pictures. We've got to get tents up for the others. She doesn't like to rough it, Mrs. Jones don't. Say, I bet she asks you to heat her curling irons to-night."

Joe laughed.

"Why didn't you remind me of the forks?" said he. "I'm green, you know, and get rattled."

"Forks, what for? Let her use her pickers. It'll do her good," said Val.

Joe laughed again. Val was just what he wanted a cowboy to be—jolly, reckless, without any reverence for any one or anything. He liked him especially because when it came to doing any job, he went right at it cheerfully and did it.

They now trotted east, along the border of the lake, directly in front of them towering up the huge and beautifully shaped pinkish-gray pyramid of Going-to-the-Sun Mountain. After a mile or so, Val called out for Joe to turn off the trail, and he obeyed, going down through the woods to a long spit of rocks and earth and little trees which had been pushed out into the lake by a roaring brook, which now flowed through the middle of it. Here they dismounted and unloaded the horses, which Val led back to the trail, and then took somewhere up the slopes to their night feeding.

Meanwhile Joe set about making camp. He first picked out a good place for the fire pit, and built that. He got out what he was going to need for supper, and then set about collecting dead wood for his fire. He did not have to go far, either, for the whole rocky beach of the lake was lined with driftwood, and he cut up a good supply, made a fire, and put on two kettles of water to boil, one with some of the beef in it for a stew, one for soup. Then he went at the task of setting up the tent the Ranger had packed, in which he and Mills would sleep, and in which he would keep his provisions.

116

He had hardly finished, and had the stuff stowed into it, when up the trail he heard voices, and a moment later the party came in sight. They were mostly silent now—only Bob and the girls were doing any talking. Their mothers were hanging forward over the horns of their saddles, thoroughly tired out, and the two congressmen looked nearly as fagged as the women.

"Can I help?" Joe asked the Ranger, after the party had dismounted, and the older people had flopped on the ground.

"No, get supper as soon as you can, that's all. Dick and I will pitch the tents. Where's Val?"

"He took the horses somewhere."

"Good. He can take these, too, when he gets back. That'll please him a whole lot! Why didn't he wait till he had the whole bunch?"

Joe looked quickly at Mills' face, for he had never seen the Ranger cross before.

Mills managed a grin, when he saw the look. "Yes, I got a grouch," he said, in a low tone. "It's that Jones woman. You'd think she wanted a twin-six limousine to bring her over Piegan Pass! What'll you take to throw her in the lake?"

117

"Wait for Val. He'll do it for nothing," Joe laughed. "She'll feel better soon. I'm goin' to give her two forks."

Joe went back to his preparations for supper, keeping the fire roaring under his stew to hasten the cooking, and mixing up a batter of flour, condensed milk, one of his precious eggs, and some baking powder, for cakes. The Ranger and Dick, the other guide, were busy with the tents, one for the three men, and two smaller ones for the four women. The women's tents had little folding cot beds, but the men's did not, and Mills, with a wink at Joe, gave Bob and the two congressmen axes, and told them to go cut themselves boughs to sleep on, from a big evergreen which had blown over. Meanwhile, the two girls came over to Joe's fire, and watched him work.

They sniffed at the kettle of stew.

"Are we going to have *meat*, really, truly meat, for dinner, Cookie?" asked Miss Jones.

"Alice, if you call him Cookie, he'll poison you, won't you—Joe?" said Miss Elkins.

Joe looked up and met her twinkling eyes. "Sure," he said. "I'll put a Charlie Chaplin sandwich in it."

"Mercy, Mr. Cook, Sir Cook, My Lord Cook, Reverend Cook!" cried Alice.

"All right, s'long as you don't call me Dr. Cook," said Joe, peeping in the stew kettle to see how it was coming along. 118

"Here, no flirting with the cook," Mills called out. "You girls have got to make the beds."

"All right," laughed Lucy Elkins. (Joe thought to himself that Lucy was a nice name.) "Where are the sheets and pillow-cases?"

"You'll find 'em in the linen closet, next door beyond the bathroom," Mills grinned.

Then she and Alice grabbed armfuls of blankets from the packs, and disappeared into the tents.

Meantime Val arrived, and the Ranger asked him why he didn't wait and drive all the horses up together.

"'Cause I'm a natural born mut, and didn't think of it," said Val.

The Ranger growled, and turned away. "Because he'd rather do that than pitch tents," he muttered. "All cowboys are lazy."

The two weary congressmen and Bob now reappeared, with armfuls of evergreen boughs, and the Ranger went to show them how to lay their beds. The sun was getting well down toward the tops of the peaks on the Great Divide to the west. Already it was getting colder, and the women had put on their sweaters. The green waters of the lake were lap-lapping against the shore, and the smell of Joe's stew was rising with the smoke of the fire. When he saw it was about done, he made a big pot of coffee, then opened his cans of soup, and poured them into the other kettle of boiling water, and mixed it to the right consistency. As soon as this was ready, and Val appeared down from the woods above, he pounded a frying-pan and yelled. 119

"Come and get it!"

In a second he was surrounded. Sitting on large stones, or logs washed down by the spring floods in the brook, with their laps or other stones as tables, every one except Joe ate the piping hot soup. Then they had stew, on tin plates, with bread and coffee and jam, and while the stew was being eaten Joe tossed over the "saddle blankets" in his frying-pan.

"Why don't you go into vaudeville with that act?" Bob called to him, as he flapped a cake up with the pan, and caught it neatly, other side down.

These they ate with butter from a jar and syrup from a tin can, which Joe had stocked at the Many Glacier store. Finally, he gave them preserved peaches for dessert.

"Poor Joe," said Lucy, as he passed her dessert to her. "I don't believe we've left a thing for you."

"Don't you worry about me," Joe answered. "I have the supplies in my tent!"

She laughed, but he saw that she was watching to see if there really was any supper left for him, and it seemed very good to have some one thinking that way about you.

As a matter of fact, there was a little soup left, and a good big plate of stew, and all the jam he wanted, so Joe had no complaint. He sat behind his fire and devoured his supper hungrily, before he tackled the final job of cleaning up all the dishes. 120

It would have been quite dark at home by this time, for it was eight o'clock, or more, but up here it was still light enough to read, and as Joe took the dishes down to the brook to scour them with clean sand before he poured boiling water over them, he looked up into the west, and saw the great, towering pyramids of the mountains, blue against the sunset sky, with their snow patches and glaciers all rosy pink. The two girls were standing near him, and when they saw him looking, they said, "Isn't it lovely?"

"I never saw anything so beautiful," Joe answered, simply. "I like mountains, but these are such big ones, and there are so many colors in 'em!"

"Joe, I believe you're a poet," Lucy said.

"Well, if your poetry is as good as your coffee, Shakespeare will have to watch out," Alice laughed.

Joe turned red again, and nearly dropped his stack of plates.

When he had the dishes washed and the fire-wood ready for morning, he found that the Ranger had built a big camp-fire in front of the tents, and placed some logs about it, to lean against, while sitting on the ground. Everybody was sitting in a ring, glad of the warmth now that the cold night chill was falling from the peaks—all but the two cowboys, who had disappeared.

"They've gone to the Sun Camp chalets, half a mile down the trail," said Mills, when somebody asked where they were. 121

"And where's Joe?" said Lucy. "Oh, there he is. Come on in the house, Joe, where it's warm. Mr. Mills is going to tell us a bedtime story."

She made room for Joe to sit beside her, and he sank down, weary and sore, for they had ridden

twenty-two miles that day, and he had cooked for eleven hungry people.

"Now Mr. Mills—begin!" she commanded.

The poor Ranger turned red in his turn.

"Gosh," he said, "I couldn't tell a story. I don't know any stories."

"Oh, yes you do—you must."

"Tell us a bear story," cried Bob. "And tell it quick, or dad'll be telling one of those he gets off in after dinner speeches, and we'll all be asleep."

"Bob, I'm too sore and tired to thrash you," laughed the congressman.

"But you're never too tired to tell a story, dad. Hurry, Mr. Mills, I can see one coming now!"

"If I had a child like that, I'd—I'd——" Mr. Elkins began.

"You'd send him to Congress to listen to all the speeches there for punishment," chortled the irrepressible Bob. "Please, Mr. Mills, a bear story."

"Yes, a bear story!"—from the men.

"A *grizzly* bear story!"—from Alice. "A *great*, BIG grizzly bear story!"—from Lucy. "And put in the middle-sized bear, and the little weeny bear, too, if you want to." 122

The Ranger laughed. "Well," he said, "I can tell you a bear and a lion story, if that'll do."

He threw another driftwood log on the fire, and began.

CHAPTER X—The Ranger Tells a Grizzly Bear Story Before the Camp-Fire 123

"The first thing you want to remember about old Mr. Silver Tip," said the Ranger, "is that he's a good deal like a lot o' big, strong men, he's too powerful to be scrappy. You hear a lot o' stories about grizzlies bein' terrible fighters, and they sure can fight when they're cornered, or when old mother bear thinks her cubs are in danger. But if a silver tip can possibly get away, he gets. That's not because he's afraid, either, of anything on earth except a high power rifle. It's because he ain't lookin' for trouble. Mr. Silver Tip is afraid of a rifle, all right, and he's about the smartest of all animals in keeping away from it, too. But there's nothing else he's afraid of, and before man came into these mountains to shoot him, he just wandered around here, the king pin, and nobody bothered him a bit, no sir."

"But don't grizzlies have to fight to kill anything as big as a moose?" asked Bob.

"They don't kill anything as big as a moose," the Ranger said. "Oh, once in a blue moon an old bear will go wrong, and take to killing cattle. Down in Wyoming there was a silver tip used to kill cattle, and two hundred men and dogs hunted him a month, and never did get him. But mostly they live on roots and berries and mice and ground squirrels and dead birds and animal carcasses something else has killed. Why, I've seen a grizzly digging out a ground squirrel in the early spring, just after he'd come out of his winter nest, not far from my cabin, and a lot of sheep, down there to get the early grass, walking right up close to him to see what he was up to. When they got too close—sheep are kind o' curious, like kids and women—he just *woufed* at 'em, to drive 'em off. They weren't afraid of him eatin' 'em, though, at all, and he could have cleaned out the flock with about two bites." 124

"Well, this is just to show you how little fear Mr. Silver Tip has that anything but a man can do him any harm, or will dare try it. I was hunting once over west of the Flathead River, in bear country, and I had a dead horse out in a clearing for bait. Up in a tree on the edge of the clearing I'd built myself a kind of blind, where I could watch. You see, most bears can climb trees, but the grizzly can't, so when one comes after you, Bob, you just beat it up the nearest trunk."

"Thanks for the tip—the silver tip, as you might say," the boy laughed.

"Well," Mills went on, "by 'n' by along into the clearing come two lions, long, lean, hungry lookin', sneaky beasts they are, too—I hate 'em—and they fell to on the carcass, and began to eat. Thinks I, I'd wait and see what happened, instead of killin' 'em and maybe scarin' off the bear with the shots so's he'd never come back. Sure enough, the old boy came galumphing along presently, and went up on his hind legs when he saw the lions at his festal board, as you might say. Then he dropped down again, and just walked right up, stuck his big shoulders in between the two lions, shovin' 'em apart, and began to eat." 125

"That's no way to treat a lion," said Lucy.

"No, specially as one of 'em was a lady lion," Mills laughed. "But that's what old Silver Tip did. The lions naturally didn't like it, and one of 'em snarled, and up with his paw and fetched the bear a nasty swipe. Then I expected to see trouble."

"But what do you think the old bear did? He just kind of side-cut with one of his big paws and caught that lion a blow that sent him spinning head over tail twenty feet down the slope. Then he went right on eating. He didn't look at the other lion, he didn't even look around to see what the

first one was goin' to do. 'Peared as if he was quite certain what they'd both do, and they done it. They both took a quick sneak into the woods, and left Mr. Silver Tip to his feast. You couldn't have brushed off a mosquito more calmly. I says to myself then that it showed how sure of himself the grizzly is—he's king of the forest, all right."

"And did you shoot him after that?" Lucy asked.

"Sure I shot him."

"I think you were real horrid," she said.

"Maybe," Mills answered. "But I'm still wearin' his skin in winter."

"How many shots did it take?" asked one of the congressmen. "I've always heard you have to pump a grizzly full of lead, and then use a knife to defend yourself, after your last shell is emptied."

"The feller that told you that was a bum shot," said the Ranger. "'Course there are a lot of bum shots come out here huntin'. One bullet, in the brain, the upper part of the heart, or the right place in the spine, will drop a silver tip like a sack o' grain. You've got to know where to hit, and you've got to hit there, naturally. Trouble is, green hunters get scared or rattled, and don't aim right, and half the time when they think they're plugging the bear they're really peppering the rocks behind him. I wouldn't want to hunt 'em myself with a single shot rifle, but I could if I had to. A city chap in one of our parties once, over in the Blackfeet forest, smashed all four of a bear's legs with bullets, and then the bear, tryin' to get away, fell into a stream and drowned to death. Our cook asked the feller why he didn't chuck him in to start with, and save shells."

"When you going to show us a bear?" Bob demanded.

"Mercy, I do hope it isn't very soon!" cried Bob's mother. "I'm sure I don't want to meet one. I don't suppose there are any in the Park any more."

"Oh, yes, more 'n ever," said the Ranger, managing a secret wink to Joe. "Why, there was two women from Boston once, sitting in broad day on the steep cut bank of a stream, and they heard crashings in the bush, and looked back and seen a big grizzly coming right toward 'em, and they yelled like Comanches and fell right down the bank into the water, and waded across up to their necks and beat it back to camp."

"Better stick close to brave little Bobbie, ma," laughed her son. "I won't let the naughty big bear bite you. But when are you going to show me one, Mr. Mills?"

"Day after to-morrow," said the Ranger.

Joe pricked up his ears. It sounded as if Mills meant it.

"Is that a threat or a promise?" Lucy asked.

"Promise for Bob, a threat for Mrs. Jones, I guess," said the Ranger, rising from the ground, and adding, "Who's ready for bed?"

"Better ask who isn't," somebody laughed.

Joe went as far out on the rocky spit into the lake as he could get; he could see the dying camp-fire gleaming red back under the trees; and all around him, over the dim, starlit water, rose the majestic mountains, great walls of shadow rearing up half-way to the top of the sky. It was a still, solemn scene, and he felt very small as he crouched by the lake and cleaned his teeth in water that was almost as cold as ice.

When he got back to camp every one was abed, and he crawled into the tent with Mills and wrapped himself up in his blankets, with only his poncho for a mattress, and almost before he had got his body fitted into the unevennesses of the ground he was fast asleep.

CHAPTER XI—To Gunsight Lake, and Joe Falls Into a Crevasse on Blackfeet Glacier

The Ranger was the first up in the morning. He gave Joe a shake by the shoulder, and Joe half opened one sleepy eye and said, "Aw, ma, it ain't time to get up yet."

Then he heard Mills chuckle, and he realized where he was. He looked at his watch, and saw that it was almost six. Outside, it was broad daylight, and the sun was flooding up the lake.

Joe sat up and threw back the blankets. "Golly, I'm sore and stiff," he said, rubbing himself. "Been sleeping on a cot, and I'm soft, I guess."

"You also did twenty-two miles yesterday," Mills remarked. "Well, I haven't told 'em yet, but we're going to do only seven to-day, and then have a side trip for the young folks. Guess Mother Jones will want to stay in camp and help you get supper."

"She'd better try!" cried Joe, springing up at the word "supper," for it reminded him that it was his job to get breakfast. He had a quick wash in the brook which ran past the camp, and set about making some biscuit, bacon and eggs, coffee and flapjacks. His fire was going merrily, and in its

heat he had begun to get warm (for the night chill was still in the air, and you could almost see your breath), when he saw Congressman Elkins poking a sleepy face out of the men's tent flap, with his hair all tousled, and his body bent half double. He spied the fire, and made a hobble for it.

"Say, Joe, let me get some of that heat, will you?" he said.

"Sure," Joe laughed. "Didn't you have blankets enough?"

"I had five—ought to be enough, in the third week of July, you'd think. But I shivered all night, and every time I shivered a new branch in our wonderful bough bed found a fresh spot on my anatomy to puncture. I'm beginning to think Mrs. Jones is right about this roughing it stuff."

"No, sir, she isn't," Joe answered, as he set his batter of biscuit over the fire. "Only you have to learn how to do it, and get hardened to it a bit, too. How'd you have the blankets?"

"How'd I have 'em? Over me, of course."

"That's the trouble," said Joe. "The secret of sleeping warm is to have 'em *under* you, too. That's where as much cold comes as from above, even in a bed. You roll yourself up in 'em to-night and see if you're not warm."

"Where'd you learn all this?" the congressman asked. "You look pretty young to be a camp cook. Live around here?"

"Oh, no, sir, I live in Massachusetts. I learned how to camp as a Boy Scout. My chum—another scout—and I came out here this summer, because I was—I wasn't very well. He's got a job at Many Glacier tepee camp, and I'm getting so well now Mr. Mills got me to go as cook, 'cause I'd made coffee and things for him and he knew I could cook."

"I suppose you learned cooking as a scout, too, eh?"

"Yes, sir," Joe answered, pouring out the ground coffee into the pot. "I worked to get a merit badge in cooking. You see, I could help mother with it, too, when she was sick, or anything."

"Well, I'm beginning to have a better opinion of the Boy Scouts every minute," the man laughed, sniffing the food and warming his hands by the blaze. "I thought it was just a kind of fad."

"Oh, no, sir!" Joe cried. "Why, all our little scouts, after a year, are lots better boys, and everybody says it's been a fine thing for the town!"

"Here, daddy, you stop bribing the cook to give you breakfast in advance!" a laughing voice interrupted them. Joe turned, and saw Lucy Elkins coming from her tent. Her hair was down her back, in brown waves, so that she looked almost like a little girl, and she was smiling and bright and gay as the morning sun.

"I suppose *you* slept well," her father said, "weren't cold and no pine boughs in your ribs."

"I don't know," she answered. "I slept so hard I can't tell whether I was cold or not. But I know I'm hungry. Why don't you wake everybody up, Joe, and let's get to business."

She went off up the brook with her tooth-brush and towel, and the Ranger, taking a pan, beat reveille on it with two sticks. Other sleepy heads emerged, Mrs. Jones last of all, looking very cross and shivery. By the time they had all got fully dressed and washed, and the girls had braided their hair (letting the braids hang down their backs), the two guides appeared. They had spent the night just down the lake at the Sun Camp chalets, with other guides, friends of theirs.

Joe set his eggs to cooking last of all, got the dishes ready, poured the coffee, and then gave the now familiar yell,

"Come and get it!"

That is a call in Glacier Park no one has to hear a second time. Even Mrs. Jones perked up, and stopped complaining about how cold she was, and how she hated to clean her teeth in ice water, and how she missed her morning bath, and silenced her own tongue with a bite of bacon that was more nourishing than ladylike in size. The breakfast disappeared in double quick time, and Val went up the hill for the horses, while Mills and Dick began to strike the tents and arrange the packs, and Joe cleaned his dishes and packed his provisions.

At half-past eight, the party was in the saddle again, Mills at the head, and started up the trail, along the lake shore, toward the gleaming white field of Blackfeet Glacier and the red, snow-spangled cone of Mount Jackson.

"Where are we bound to-day?" some one asked.

"Only seven miles, to Gunsight Lake," the Ranger answered. "I thought maybe you'd like an easy stage to-day, and this afternoon those that wanted to could go up on the glacier."

"The man is almost intelligent!" Mrs. Jones exclaimed. "Only seven miles—that sounds more reasonable to me."

They were seven easy miles, too, up a streamside by an easy grade, a good deal of the way through tall timber, and past a beaver dam, the first one Joe had ever seen. It was made of small logs, twigs and grasses, all matted together, and plastered neatly and tightly with mud, and must have been a hundred feet long and perhaps three feet high, so that a considerable little pond had backed up behind it, in which, rising above the water, were the huts, which looked like larger and better built muskrat huts. Joe pulled down his horse to a slow walk as he passed, and saw the

little canals the beavers had made, leading from the bed of the stream back into the willow and aspen swamp. He figured out that the chief reason the beavers build dams is so they can flood such a grove of young willows, aspens, etc., and float out the tiny logs they cut (the young shoots, with tender bark), to their houses, where they store them for winter food. Later he asked Mills, and found he was right. When the beavers can find deep water, with food trees right on the bank, they will not bother to make dams.

Joe lingered till Val yelled at him to “get a move on,” hoping he might see one of the little animals at work, but the beaver works mostly at night when he has to be above water, and not one was now to be seen. 134

It was a short, easy trip to Gunsight Lake, and they reached the open meadow at its foot by eleven o'clock. The lake, a smallish one, lay at the bottom of a great horseshoe amphitheatre. If you will imagine the Harvard stadium two or three miles long instead of two or three hundred yards, with sides almost precipitous and three thousand feet high, and a green lake where the football gridiron is, you have a picture of Gunsight. The closed end of the horseshoe was the Divide, and that was where the Gunsight Pass lay, over which they would climb to-morrow. The north side was Fusillade Mountain, the south side was the great shoulder of Mount Jackson (the summit being invisible from this point). The meadow where they were to camp was just out at the open end, where they could see around the shoulder of Jackson to the glittering field of Blackfeet Glacier, the largest in the Park, hung on the upper slopes of the Divide, to the southwest, and where, behind them, rose the huge cliffs of Citadel Mountain, which is exactly like old Fort Sumter or the old fort on Governor's Island, enlarged to the “*nth*” power. (If you don't know what “enlarged to the *nth* power” means, it's either because you have not studied your algebra, or have not reached algebra yet.) The floor of the meadow was full of wild flowers, especially the great, tall white spikes of the Indian basket grass, and full, too, of low balsams and pines. 135

Close to the shore of the lake lay a big pile of lumber, old, twisted iron beds, half a cook-stove, and the like.

“What on earth happened here?” asked Mrs. Elkins.

“Avalanche,” said the Ranger. “Was a chalet here—Gunsight chalet. In the winter of 1915-16 a snowslide started down Jackson, and this is what's left.”

“Oh, heavens!” Mrs. Jones cried, looking up the red precipices of Jackson to the snow-fields far above, “do you suppose there'll be another one?”

“We don't often have 'em in July, marm,” said Mills briefly, “but you never can tell,” and he winked at Joe.

They now pitched tents near the lake, and Joe set about cooking a hot lunch, for he had plenty of time. While the water was heating, he got some boards from the pile of wreckage, and made a rough table and benches. Then he started out to gather some flowers. Lucy and Alice saw him, and came to help. The three of them, in ten minutes, found thirty different kinds of flowers, all in a space of two or three hundred feet, and made three bunches, which they stood in tin cans on the table, and then put little pine boughs around the cans “to camouflage them,” as Joe said.

“I told you Joe was a poet,” Lucy said to Alice. “I'll bet he'll produce a table-cloth in a minute.”

“Can't do that,” Joe laughed, “unless you'll climb up and get me one of those up there——” and he gestured toward the white snow-fields far up the cliffs, which did, indeed, look like huge sheets, or table-cloths, flung on the rocky ledges to dry. 136

As soon as the tents were pitched, and lunch was over, Mills said:

“Well, who wants to go up to Blackfeet Glacier?”

“I do!” from Bob.

“I do!” from Lucy.

“I do!” from Alice.

“I do, if I can go on horseback,” from Mr. Elkins.

“Same as Elkins,” from Mr. Jones.

“I want to sit still,” from Mrs. Jones.

“I couldn't leave Mrs. Jones all alone,” from Mrs. Elkins.

“You haven't spoken, Joe,” said Lucy.

Poor Joe—how he wanted to climb up and see a real glacier! But he smiled bravely and cheerfully.

“I shall have to stay and get dinner,” he answered.

“Oh, that's too bad! I just *know* you're dying to see the glacier. Mr. Mills, wouldn't we be back in time for Joe to get dinner, if he went?”

“Well, we might be, if dinner was a bit late, and you didn't have a roast turkey,” the Ranger said.

“Well, I move we have late dinner, and take Joe along. All in favor, say aye.”

Bob and Alice yelled “Aye!” and Mr. Elkins said, “Jones and I are paired, so it's a vote.”

Joe tried to say some word of thanks to Lucy, but he couldn't manage it. Besides, he had no time,

for Mrs. Jones broke in:

"Well, I'd like to know if you expect Mrs. Elkins and me to stay here all alone?"

"You might be getting the dinner, Martha," her husband grinned.

"Val will stay in camp," Mills said. "He's fed up on glaciers, anyhow, ain't you, Val?"

The young cowboy nodded. "You can have 'em all," he said, "and welcome."

So Joe found himself in the small party headed for Blackfeet Glacier, as soon as he had put his stew to simmer over a small fire, which Val promised to keep going. Mills took three of the strongest ropes from the packs, and they set off up the steep, rough trail climbing the shoulder of Jackson. They soon had a superb view below them, first of the meadow, with their own tents like white dots in it, and then back down the cañon to St. Mary Lake, and the great pink and gray pyramid of Going-to-the-Sun Mountain. But it was not long before every one stopped looking at the view, and paid entire attention to the trail. This was a side trail, not one of the regular tourist highways, and it was not built for comfort. It was tremendously steep, and very rough, more like a flight of high, irregular stone steps than a path.

"Oh, I think this is terrible on the poor horses!" Lucy said, as her horse scrambled up a rock, and she had to cling to his mane to stick on the saddle.

"Get out and walk, then," Mills called back. "Grab hold of your horse's tail, and let him pull you up."

"Say, what you giving us?" said Bob. "Think I want to go down the hill again backwards?"

Mills laughed. "Think these horses are mules?" he answered. "See, this is the way."

He got off his horse, grabbed it by the tail, and to everybody's surprised amusement, the horse started up, with the Ranger scrambling behind him, half climbing, half being pulled along.

Every one else got off, too, and in single file, each person clinging to his horse's tail, they began the ascent again. The horses, being considerably longer legged than men, climbed faster up the high steps than a man could do alone, but with the horse's tail to hang on to, you could manage to keep up. Everybody laughed at first, yelling at one another, but in three minutes the yells had ceased, and in five, the laughter. No one had any breath left for that. If Joe had thought, he probably would have been frightened, for he was certainly disobeying the doctor, but he was having too good a time to remember doctors, and as even the lack of breath did not make him cough, he had nothing to remind him. Panting, covered with perspiration, the two congressmen were about ready to quit. They presently reached a more level place, a high upland meadow covered with flowers, and mounting again rode up and across this, and came at last near the lower edge of a great snow-field, which stretched away southward for three miles, broken here and there by peninsulas and islands of rock, and stretched upward clear to the summit of the Divide over their heads, at an angle of about forty-five degrees at first, but much steeper near the top.

"The biggest glacier in the Park," said Mills.

"Where?" said Mr. Elkins. "All I see is snow."

"I know it—too bad, but we had so much snow last winter it's not melted off yet. But take my word for it, that's all ice underneath."

"Hooray, let's climb out on it!" Bob shouted.

"Not for me—I've climbed enough to-day," his father said, still puffing.

It ended with the two congressmen resting in the meadow, while Mills, Dick the guide, Joe, the girls, and Bob, climbed up some way over the rocks without any trail, and reached at length a place where the vast snow-field seemed to be sliding down past them, like a huge, silent river. Of course, it did not move, but it gave that illusion.

"What a place to ski!" said Joe.

"Wow!" yelled Bob, "you bet! You'd get some jump at the bottom, too."

Mills grinned. "About as far as whichever place you're going to when you die," he said, as he began to uncoil his three ropes, fastening them together.

"What's the big idea?" asked Bob. "That snow's soft; you wouldn't slip in that."

And, to prove it, he started down the rocks, and out on to the snow-covered glacier.

Mills suddenly spoke with a sharp note Joe had never heard him use.

"Come back here!" he said.

Bob came.

"Now, Joe," he said, "you go first on the rope, because you've got spikes in your shoes. We've got to look out for crevasses. Sound your footing when it looks suspicious. We'd need Alpine stocks to go far."

He fastened one end under Joe's arms.

"You next, Dick, to brace if Joe goes under. Then the rest of you, and I'll be the rear anchor."

He made the rope fast around Dick, twenty feet behind Joe, then told Bob and the girls to hold it

fast at equal intervals, and fastened the rear end around his own waist

"Now, Joe, let her go," he said.

Joe went down the rocks, and out on the great snow-field, tilted like the roof of a house. It was soft, as Bob had said, but not like ordinary soft snow. It was more like walking in cold, wet, rock salt, and the footing was anything but sure. Joe went cautiously, slowly climbing upward and outward at the same time, and as he looked below him, down that smooth, glistening, white slope, and realized that if he once got started sliding he would probably go half a mile and shoot off the lower edge into space, he felt his heart, for a minute, go down somewhere into his boots. So he looked up, instead of downward, and felt better.

Everything went well for some hundreds of yards, and the whole party, on their rope, were well out on the great snow-field, when Joe saw just ahead of him a very slight depression in the snow. Bracing with his right foot, he put his left forward, and hit this depression smartly. It caved in! He tried to spring back, yelling to Dick to brace, but his right foot, with nothing but snow for the spikes to hold in, slipped, and he felt himself going down. He had no time to think, only just a terrible flash in his brain of accidents he had read about to Alpine climbers, before the rope caught him under the armpits with a cruel yank; he hung for a minute surrounded by the wet, cold snow which was falling down his neck, and then he felt himself being tugged up again by Dick.

Mills had come up, bringing the rope around Bob and the girls in a loop, by the time Dick had him out.

"Hurt?" he asked.

Joe was poking snow out of his neck, and loosening the grip of the rope under his arms.

"I—I guess not!" he panted. "Gee, that gave me some surprise, though. I thought something was coming, and tested it with one foot, but the other slipped."

"We ought to have ice axes," Mills said. "The snow's getting too thin. Back's the word."

Joe looked around at the rest of the party, and saw that Lucy and Alice had turned deadly pale, and even Bob was looking sober.

"Are you sure you aren't hurt, Joe?" Lucy asked.

"I'll get dinner, O.K.," Joe answered.

Meanwhile Mills had approached the hole where Joe went under, and called the rest to come and look, one by one, while he and Dick braced the rope.

Joe looked, too. His fall had collapsed a snow bridge over a crevasse, and through the hole, which was six feet wide or more, they could see down through a layer of snow into what looked like a bottomless slit between walls of dirty green ice. A cold, damp, chilling breath came up from the hole, and far below they could hear water running.

"Now you get the big idea, Bob, eh?" said Mills. "See why we had the rope?"

"Yes, and I bet old cookie's glad it was a strong one," Bob replied. "Say, I wish it had been me'd been ahead!"

"Oh, do you?" the Ranger laughed. "Want to be lowered down?"

"Oh, no—Mr. Mills!" Alice cried.

"Cheer up, he wouldn't let me," Mills grinned. "Besides, he's too fat and heavy to pull up again."

"If a feller fell down there, and they didn't get him up, and he froze into the ice, would he come out some time at the bottom of the glacier?" Bob asked.

"I guess he would," said Mills, "but his widow might get tired waiting and marry again."

"Mr. Mills, you're perfectly awful" said Lucy, with a shudder. "Take us back from this horrid place."



Crevasse in Blackfeet Glacier

They went back carefully in their own tracks, and rejoined the congressmen, who, it seemed, had climbed where they could watch, and had seen the whole thing from a distance. There was much excited talk about Joe's experience all the way down (on the down trip they led their horses over the steep part, needing no help on the descent), and Joe, sore as he was under the arms and rather shaky from the shock, began to feel like quite a hero. In fact, by the time they reached the level meadows at camp, it did not seem terrible at all, and every one had begun to enjoy it.

"Except me," said Lucy. "I shall dream all night of the way poor Joe's head went suddenly out of sight, and I saw Dick bracing on that rope and wondered if it would hold!"

"The moral is," said her father, "have a good rope."

"I should say the moral was, don't climb in foolish places," Mrs. Jones declared, for the two women had of course been told the story at once.

"Gee, ma," Bob declared, "if everybody was like you, we wouldn't know there were any Rocky Mountains. Somebody's got to take a chance!"

Mills had said nothing. Now he spoke, in his brief, quiet way.

"It was a sound rope. Nobody took a chance," he said. "We don't let 'em in the Park."

There did not seem to be any reply to this. The girls went into their tent to rest, Joe changed his wet boots—which were soaked with the snow—and his wet shirt, and set busily about getting dinner. After all, he was the cook, and there was no further time for being a hero.

CHAPTER XII—Over Gunsight to Lake McDonald, and Joe and Bob See a Grizzly at Close Range

There was no story telling that night. Dinner was late, and afterwards the dusk came earlier up here under the shadows of the great cliffs, and every one except the two women was glad enough to crawl in early. Joe was gladdest of all. He had to confess that he was tired, as well as sore—and now he realized that he had disobeyed all orders not to climb and take strenuous exercise. But he felt of his head, as his mother used to do, and could detect no fever, and he had not coughed once, so he did not worry enough to keep himself awake more than one minute and a quarter. In the morning, he was awake almost as soon as the Ranger, and sat up feeling fine. Lucy was the next up, as usual, and once more her cheerful self. She gathered fresh wild flowers—a great bunch of yellow columbine and blue false forget-me-nots, for the "table," while Joe was cooking, and asked him how he felt, and sang softly to herself, and then asked him again if the fresh, clear, morning air way up here in these high mountains was not the most wonderful thing in the world.

"It's medicine to me, all right," Joe answered, looking up and watching the sun come over the rock bastions of Citadel and turn to pink and gold the snow-fields on Fusillade. "Gee, I think

mountains—big mountains—are just the best ever!”

“The best ever, that’s what they are, Joe, and you’re going back East so big and strong that your own mother won’t know you. You must write to me and tell me about it, won’t you?”

“You bet I will,” Joe replied, turning red over his fire. It certainly was almost like being home to have some one like Lucy Elkins be so interested in him, and kindly and sweet. The fire was very smoky, and got into Joe’s eyes, and he had to wipe them—but Lucy did not see, or, if she did, she pretended not to.

“Well,” said Mills, after breakfast, “everybody pack. We’ve got a long day ahead of us, if we stop any time to see the sights.”

“And where are we going?” somebody asked.

“Over Gunsight Pass, and down to Lake McDonald,” the Ranger answered, pointing up to the Great Divide at the head of Gunsight Lake.

“Do you mean to tell me we are going over that place?” demanded Mrs. Jones.

“Why not?” said Mills.

“Why not? Well, I’m not one of these Rocky Mountain goats I hear about.”

“Your horse is,” the Ranger laughed.

As soon as camp was struck, and the horses brought from the upper meadows, where they had wandered in the night, and packed, the party started up the trail.

“Gunsight Pass—I like that name,” said Bob. “But how did it get the name?”

“You’ll see when we reach it,” Mills replied.

The trail over Gunsight is one of the most interesting in the entire Park. The head wall of the horseshoe of rocks which holds the green lake is too steep to climb, so the path gets to the summit by working up the shoulder of Jackson, in a long series of inclines, with sharp, steep switchbacks every little way, to boost it a little higher up the steep slope.

After climbing for, perhaps, two miles, they reached what appeared to be the level of the Divide ahead of them, but they were still around on one side of the horseshoe, and had to make their way along the tremendously steep wall of the mountain till they got to the pass at the centre. Between them and this pass lay a huge snow-field, two hundred yards wide, and extending half a mile up the slope, and as far down, and ending at the bottom right on the top of a precipice, which dropped off into the lake. They could hear the melting water from this snow-field falling down far, far below, over the precipice.

Mills stopped his horse, and studied the ground, while the two women looked at the steep, gleaming, slippery field of snow, steeper than a house roof, at the yawning hole at the bottom, and declared in loud tones that they would *not* go across.

But other parties had been across, and somebody had shoveled out a path, about three feet wide, to make level footing for the horses. Still, even so, it was a ticklish place, for if a horse once slid off, there would be no stopping him short of the lake two thousand feet below.

“Everybody off!” Mills ordered.

“Joe, Dick, Val,” he commanded, “lead all the horses over, one at a time, and then two of you come back.”

After the horses were across—and they did not have the least fear, even when one of their feet would cut through the soft snow, and they appeared to be in danger of slipping—Joe and Dick returned, and, with Mills, led the two women and the girls over, and helped them back into their saddles. Bob and the two congressmen came alone, and in the centre of the slide, Bob made a big snowball, and let it roll down. Inside of a hundred feet it appeared to be traveling a mile a minute, growing bigger all the time, and finally it hit a rock at the bottom with a loud report, and the broken pieces flew out over the hole below.

“Say, Joe,” he called, “great place for skis, eh?”

Joe laughed, but not very mirthfully. The thought of going down that slope on skis made you sick in the pit of your stomach.

It was but a few steps now, around a hanging ledge, to the pass, and as they came out into the small level space on top of the Divide, they saw in front of them, forming the northern gate-post of the pass, as it were, a big rock pile shaped exactly like the front sight of a rifle—a sight several hundred feet high.

“Now you see why it’s Gunsight Pass,” said Mills to Bob.

“Some gun!” the boy answered.

Those ahead moved to the western side of the Divide, and suddenly Joe heard the girls screaming with delight. As soon as he got there, he realized why, for never before had he seen anywhere such a wonderful view.

Right below them, eight hundred or a thousand feet, lay the loveliest little lake in all the world, oval in shape, a beautiful green in color, possibly half or three-quarters of a mile long. Out of one side sprang up the red precipices of Mount Jackson, from the upper end rose the wall of the

Divide to their feet, on the other side, sweeping around in a circular curve carved by some ancient glacier as smooth as a drill hole, was the precipice of Gunsight Mountain. At the farther end of the lake the land just dropped away out of sight, and far off in the distance they could see range after range of purple mountains. Right at their feet, almost at the top of the Divide, was a pine tree, the only one, the very outmost sentinel of timber-line. It was only eight feet tall, though the trunk was two feet thick, and it was torn and twisted and gnarled by the winds till it looked like a grim old fighter who had left all the rest of his company far below and battled his way on up, almost to the top.



Party Crossing Near Top of Gunsight Pass

Even Mrs. Jones stopped her horse and admired this view.

"It's really worth coming for," she said.

"And how she hates to admit it," Val whispered in Joe's ear, for the whole party was now gathered together on the edge, looking at the prospect.

"What's the name of that heavenly little lake?" Lucy asked.

"Lake Ellen Wilson," Mills answered.

"Oh, dear, it shouldn't be—it ought to have a beautiful Indian name, like Eye-of-the-morning, or something," said she.

"Let's name it Lake Lucy Elkins," Bob suggested. "Seems to suit you."

Joe thought so, too, but he did not say anything.

Lucy laughed. "If we only *could* rename it," she answered, "I certainly would find a pretty Indian name. I think it's terrible, the way we take the land away from the Indians first, and then give everything new names, in the bargain."

The trail now descended in switchbacks to the very shore of the lake, for, although it had to climb up again at the lower, west side, the precipices were so steep in between that the only way to get from one point to the other was to descend to the shore.

"And this water is really going to the Pacific Ocean," said Mr. Jones, as they reached the lake. "We are over the Great Divide, Bob!"

"Yes, I feel a change in the climate," the irrepressible Bob answered.

"That's not such a joke as you think, at that," Mills said. "The climate is different over here, as you'll see presently."

They had still another pass to go over—Lincoln Pass (not a part of the Divide) before they could begin the final descent to Lake McDonald, and from the lake shore they began to climb again, with the green water between them and the tremendous red walls of Jackson, where long, narrow snow-fields clung in the hollows. At the top of Lincoln Pass was a meadow, on the edge of a precipice, a meadow full of snow-fields, wild flowers, and a few stunted, twisted pines, for it was on the very edge of timber-line. Here Mills ordered a halt for lunch.

"Charlie Chaplin sandwiches again, Joe," he said. "You can make tea if you want to, and can find any wood."

Joe and Bob and the girls between them managed to scrape together enough dead wood to make a small fire, and the water Joe got from the little brook flowing out from under a snow-field and starting on its long journey to the Pacific Ocean.

After lunch, everybody wanted to sit around for a bit, and enjoy the view of Lake Ellen Wilson and Mount Jackson, and Joe and Lucy got their cameras from their packs, and took pictures of each other on horseback, of the party, of Bob and Alice climbing down over an edge of the cliff beside a waterfall, and finally of a wonderful, twisted pine.

"I love the old trees at timber-line," Joe said. "They look so sort of—of heroic."

"Guess they are, all right," Bob laughed. "I'd feel heroic if I stood up here in winter!"

Almost as soon as they started again, they began to drop down a steep, rocky trail to the Sperry camp, a chalet built up on the slopes to accommodate the people who want to climb over the Divide just behind it to Sperry Glacier; and then to drop, by a wide, good trail, past rushing brooks, into the first real forest Joe had seen. The climate certainly *was* different over here—he began to feel it. It seemed warmer, and the air wasn't quite so vividly clear. There was a faint suggestion of haze over the lower blue ranges out to the west. It must be different, he told himself, there must be more rainfall, anyhow, and less severe winter cold, or the trees wouldn't be so much larger.

Down and down they dropped, through spruces and pines and larches, growing ever taller and larger, till suddenly the trail went into the most wonderful forest Joe had ever seen. It was entirely composed of one kind of tree, tall, straight, ghostly gray trees, with a thin bark that shredded in strips on the smaller trunks; and these trees grew so thickly together that their tops made a solid canopy over the ground below, shutting out all sunlight, so that it was almost twilight deep in the heart of the forest. Not a living thing grew on the forest floor; it was simply a carpet of brownish, tiny needle-like dead leaves, and of dead sticks and fallen tree trunks.

Joe heard Lucy, ahead of him, saying it reminded her of the woods that Hop-o'-my-thumb and his brother got lost in. It reminded him of some great forest he once dreamed about in a nightmare; and yet it was beautiful, because of the ghostly gray of the tall trees, and the utter hush and silence of its dim recesses.

"What kind of trees are these?" he called back to Val. "They look like some sort of cedar."

"You can search me," Val answered. "I couldn't tell a tree from a cauliflower. Great place for bears, though."

The trail here was so wide that Joe could trot ahead and ask Mills.

"Yes, they are cedars," Mills said. "They call 'em white cedars, I believe. The wood is much softer than your slow-growing cedar in the East. It's a great forest, isn't it?"

"Makes me sure I want to be a forest ranger," Joe answered. "Val says it's a great place for bears."

"Hi, bears, ma!" yelled Bob. "Val says there's lots of 'em here. Say, Mr. Mills, how soon are you going to show us that bear? You know you promised one to-day."

"You'll see it yet—I never break a promise," the Ranger answered.

They rode on, down through the cedar forest, for a mile more, and suddenly saw light through the trees ahead, trotted into a clearing, and almost immediately found themselves by a good-sized hotel, built out of this very cedar lumber, and on the shore of a big lake.

"Lake McDonald," said the Ranger.

"*And* a hotel!" cried Mrs. Jones. "You can all camp where you like, but *I'm* going to have a room with a bath to-night."

"I wouldn't mind one myself," said her husband.

"Me, too," the other congressman put in.

"Well, I suppose that means we have to sleep in a stuffy old room to-night, Alice," said Lucy, "and eat in a dining-room with a lot of people. Oh, dear, I prefer Joe's cooking!"

"Looks as if you were going to have a snap to-night, Joe," said Mills. "You want a room with a bath, too?"

"Oh, no," said Joe. "I'm going to take my blankets up into those cedars and sleep."

"You are?" Bob cried. "Then I'm with you. We won't be quitters, anyhow. Us for the rough life—and the bears."

"No, Bob, you'll come to the hotel with the rest of us," said his mother.

"Aw, no, ma, let me go with Joe! Gee whiz, here we come three thousand miles to rough it in the Rocky Mountains and you go and bunk up in a flossy hotel—roughing it with hot and cold water, and a valet to black your boots!"

Everybody laughed, and Mr. Jones said, "Let the boy have a good time, mother. I guess he'll fare as well with Joe as he would in the hotel. Joe's a Boy Scout, aren't you, Joe?"

"Yes, sir," Joe answered.

It was finally settled that way, and while the party went into the hotel to get their rooms, Joe, the guides and Mills unpacked the horses and stabled them, took the dunnage bags of the party to the hotel, and all but Joe found their quarters in the annex. Joe picked out blankets for two, an axe, some grub and a few cooking utensils, and as soon as Bob came back, the two boys carted them back a few hundred yards into the deep woods, in a wild spot well off the trail, made themselves a fire pit against a big stone, which was so covered with green moss they first thought it was a stump, spread Joe's poncho for a bed, on a raked up and smoothed heap of the dead needles, and then went back to have a look at the lake before supper.

It was still early, and the girls were out on the pier in front. Bob spied a canoe for hire, and promptly engaged it. They all four got in, with Joe as bow paddle and Bob as stern, and paddled straight out into the lake, which was quiet now as the wind died down with the setting sun. As they drew away from the shore, they began to realize what a big lake it is—ten or twelve miles long, with great, dark cedar and evergreen forests coming right down to the water's edge, and by the time they were near the middle, they saw how above these forests here at the upper end rose peak after snow-covered peak, piling up to the Great Divide.

"It looks like a lake in Switzerland, doesn't it?" said Alice.

Joe, of course, had never been to Switzerland, so he looked all the harder.

"Only I like it better," Lucy answered, "because here, except for the hotel and those few cottages near it, you don't see anything but forest and wilderness. It's so wild and lonely! Oh, dear, I'd like to *live* here!"

"I'd like to sail an ice boat here in winter!" said Bob.

"And I'd like to fish here now," said Joe, as a fish jumped half out of the water just ahead of the canoe.

"Fish! Hooray! Say, Joe," Bob called, "if I get a fish early to-morrow, will you cook him for breakfast?"

"You bet!"

"You horrid things," said Alice. "We'll probably be eating breakfast food and canned peaches in the hotel. I hope you don't get your old fish."

"Ain't that just like a girl!" said Bob.

They paddled slowly and reluctantly back, as the sunset lit the snow-fields on the great peaks to the east, and turned them pink. The supper gong rang as they landed.

"Now, Bob, be back right after supper, if you want to see that bear," Mills called, and Joe and Bob hurried to their camp to get a quick supper.

All they bothered with was soup, some fried ham, and pancakes, with tea. They had large quantities of those things, however, and didn't stop to wash the dishes.

"This is no time to be fussy," Bob said. "I'll never tell. We gotter see old Mr. Bear."

So they hurried back to the trail, where Joe took out a handkerchief, and tied it to a branch.

"What's the big idea?" Bob demanded.

"Well, it's so dark here now you can just barely see the trail," Joe said. "We could never tell where to turn off by the time we get back. Don't want to be hunting all night for our camp."

"I get you, Sherlocko," Bob replied. "Now for the bear. Hurry up!"

The entire party was waiting when they reached the hotel, and Mills led the way, back by another road into the cedars, which were now very dark. A lot of other guests were moving in the same direction. After a way, a strong smell began to assault the nose.

"Smells to me like swill," said Bob.

"Garbage, Robert, is a nicer word," said his mother.

"Well, it doesn't change the smell any," he answered.

Mills said nothing, but walked on, while the smell grew stronger, and in a moment, by the dim light, they saw that the hotel garbage had been dumped on both sides of the roadway. Just ahead a group of people had stopped, and Mills led the way up to this group.

"There," said he, "I promised you one, but I see five."

"Where? I don't see anything," said Congressman Elkins.

He was standing on the extreme edge of the road, and just as he spoke something big and dark and mysterious gave a grunt and with a crash of broken sticks reared up not six feet from him.

The congressman jumped back and nearly upset Mrs. Jones, who screamed.

At her scream, two other dark forms close to the road moved, and in the dim light the party could see one of these forms go ten feet up the trunk of a half fallen tree. Peering into the dark of the woods, Joe could at last count, as the Ranger said, five bears, two of them huge ones, three smaller (including the one up the tree), and not one of them more than fifty feet away.

"The two big ones are silver tips?" he asked.

"Sure," said Mills. "Want to pat one?"

"No, thanks."

"I must say, bears are dirty animals, if this is what they eat," Mrs. Jones put in, sniffing. "I don't think I like them so near me."

"I'm sure I don't," Mr. Elkins laughed. "Of course, I know these are tame, and all that, but—well, it's like the dog the man said wouldn't bite. 'I know it, and you know it,' said the other fellow, 'but does the dog know it?'"

Just then the big grizzly nearest them, which was standing on his hind legs, gave a low, snarling growl, as if he was mad at being disturbed at supper, and Mrs. Jones announced determinedly that she was going back.

And she went. Joe, Bob, and the girls wanted to linger, but the older people called them, and they had to go.

158

"Well, *that* wasn't very exciting!" Bob complained. "Gee, you could have patted 'em, 'most. I wanted to see you shoot one, Mr. Mills."

"I'd as soon shoot a cow as a tame bear," the Ranger told him. "You can't shoot anything but lions and coyotes in the Park, and only Rangers can shoot them. We're protecting game here, not killing it."

"Wouldn't you kill a bear if it came for you?"

Mills laughed. "I'd try a tree first," he said.

But Joe had noted that all the time he stood near the bears, he had his hand on his hip, where his big automatic rested in its holster; and the scout suspected that he wasn't quite so sure about the bears being entirely tame as he pretended.

Back at the hotel, the first thing they saw was Val, in the lobby, with a clean shave, his hair cut and plastered down in a smooth part, a clean shirt and a bright red necktie on, and his best white fur chaps, with silver buckles, on his legs.

"Oh, look at Val, all dressed up like Astor's horse!" Bob shouted.

"Where are you going, Val?" the girls demanded.

"Oh, down to the big struggle," said the young cowboy.

"The *what*?" they asked.

"The big struggle—the dance," said he.

"A dance? A dance? Where?"

"Down to the hall. Better come."

"Sure—come, Joe, come, Bob," Lucy cried, and grabbing poor Joe by the hand—for Joe was scared stiff at a dance, being a poor performer, and besides, he had on his worn scout suit and heavy boots—she led him off, while Alice grabbed her equally reluctant brother.

159

The hall was a little annex to the hotel, and when they got there the piano was going, and a lot of people, cowboy guides, waitresses, guests, everybody, was dancing. Almost nobody was dressed up for a party as we dress in the East—any kind of rough clothes and stout boots went here, alongside of silk dresses and satin slippers, worn by some of the hotel guests.

"Gee, I can't dance any more 'n a cow," Joe stammered to Lucy.

"Nonsense," she said, "I'll bet you can dance very nicely. Anyhow, you've got to try just one with me."

So they danced a one-step, and Joe managed to get through it without treading on anybody's toe.

"There—what did I tell you!" Lucy laughed. "Of course you can dance. I don't know why it is boys always say they can't."

"I got around with you all right," Joe answered. "But with most girls I feel 's if I had about twenty pair o' feet."

"All you need is practice," said she.

"Hi," called Bob, who had been dancing with his sister, "come over here and pipe the pantalettes!"

Joe and Lucy went into the alcove where he and Alice were, and there they saw a stuffed and mounted mountain goat—the first Joe had ever seen except in pictures. It stood about three feet high, with long, pure white hair, hanging down in a beard under its chin, and hanging down its legs to a point, as Bob said, "just above the tops of its boots, if it wore boots." This hair on its legs did look exactly like the pantalettes you see in pictures of little girls back in the days before the Civil War.

160

"There ain't no such animal!" Lucy laughed.

"I wish we could see one, alive," said Bob.

"I'm going to hunt one later with a camera—me and Spider—he's my chum up at Many Glacier."

At the other end of the dance hall was a mounted sheep—a big old ram, almost six inches taller than the goat, with a magnificent pair of horns which curved up, back, and around till the points touched the base, making a complete circle. Even stuffed and mounted, he was a magnificent creature, proud and alert.

"Oh, I think it's a crime to kill such beautiful animals!" Lucy exclaimed.

"Me, too," said Joe. "I'd rather hunt 'em with a camera, get a picture, and leave the animal alive for somebody else to see."

"Well, *I'd* like to have a head for my den," said Bob. "Wish they let you hunt in the Park."

Joe and Bob were both so sleepy that they soon left "the big struggle," and started back for the camp. It was almost pitch black now in the cedars, and after they had walked up the trail as far as they thought was right, they had to hunt some minutes before they found the handkerchief. Turning off from the path, they stumbled through the woods till they caught the glimmer of red coals from their fire, threw on some fresh wood to get light, and prepared for bed. Rolled up tight in their blankets, they were soon fast asleep.

It was still pitch dark, and it seemed as if he'd just gone to sleep, when Joe was awakened by a noise close by. He felt as much as heard the presence of somebody or something. The fire had again died down to a heap of coals, and only a faint red glow dimly lit the base of the great, ghostly tree trunks close around. Joe sat up, straining every nerve of eye and ear. Suddenly a dead stick broke with a loud snap not far away, on the side toward the provisions, which had been placed in the fork of a half fallen tree trunk. Bob woke up at this, with a jump that brought him, too, into a sitting posture.

"Wha's 'at?" he exclaimed, in the startled voice of one half awake.

The answer was another crash of broken sticks and a deep, guttural growl. At the same instant, by a sudden flicker of flame from the fire, a ray of light shot between the trees and in a flash that was gone almost as quickly as it came, the two boys saw a gigantic shadowy form rear up, it seemed to them ten feet into the air.

"It's a grizzly!" Bob yelled.

"Shut up!" Joe commanded. He reached over to the bare ground beside him and grabbed a fistful of dry needles and flung them on the fire. The blaze jumped up again brighter, and for just a second they caught a flash of reflection like two sparks, from the bear's eyes, and then the great shadowy bulk dropped down and they heard a crashing through the woods, receding rapidly.

Joe threw off his blankets and piled wood on the fire till it blazed brightly. Then he looked at Bob, and laughed. The boy was still sitting up on the poncho, his blankets half off, his mouth half open, and his eyes big with fright.

"Brace up," Joe said. "He was only after our grub. They're tame around here."

"Tame your grandmother!" Bob retorted. "I don't care if they are. Do you think I'm goin' to sleep with a grizzly bear 'most under my bed?"

He began to get up.

"Where you going?" said Joe.

"Back to the hotel."

"What good'll that do? Nobody'll be up to let you in." He looked at his watch. "It's two o'clock," he added.

"Well, there's a couple of hammocks on the veranda. That's good enough for yours truly."

"Going to leave me here alone?"

"I don't give a hang what you do. You can let the old bear sleep with you if you want to. It's me for the hotel." And he began lacing up his boots.

"Well, I'm not going to stick around here all alone—besides, you'd never find your way back alone in the dark."

"That's a good alibi!" said Bob. "Guess you don't want to stay much yourself."

"As a matter of fact, I don't—not alone," Joe admitted.

They gathered up their provisions and blankets, poured the water for their morning coffee on the fire, and started back for the trail. It was hard work finding it, in the inky dark, and every time they heard a noise in the blackness around them Bob yelled, "Beat it, you bear!" with the evident idea that would drive the creature away. They knew when they reached the trail only by the feeling of hard, even ground under their feet, but at the hotel the starlight over the lake was clear and comforting, and sneaking up on the veranda, they spread their blankets in the hammocks, and went to sleep again, with the soft lap, lap, lap of the water on the beach just below as a lullaby.

Joe woke early and roused Bob.

"Say, if we don't want to be guyed for the rest of the trip, we've got to beat it from here now, 'fore anybody spots us, and get our breakfast up the shore some place."

"I know!" Bob whispered. "We'll take a fish-pole and a boat from the boat-house and catch a breakfast! We can pay for the boat when the man gets up. What time is it?"

"Four o'clock."

"Only four? Gee, it's day already, too. Come on."

They piled their stuff into a boat, took a fish-pole from the eaves of the boat-house, found some bait in a pail, and rowed out as noiselessly as they could, and up along the shore. Joe rowed, while Bob kept casting from the stern. Finally he gave a yell, and Joe saw his line go under, and stopped rowing to watch the sport. He had a big one, all right, and it fought well. Bob was fifteen minutes in landing him, but had him in the boat finally, and hit him over the head.

The fish was as much as eighteen inches long, or more, and must have weighed four pounds.

"What's it, anyhow?" Bob asked.

"Cut-throat trout," said Joe. "I saw a man catch two or three at Lake McDermott. I'll bet it's good, too. Come on—we'll have some breakfast! Good job you did landing him, too, without a reel. I thought your old line would bust two or three times."

They rowed in to the heavily wooded shore, built a fire right by the lake, cleaned the fish, and Joe fried the choicest parts, with a few thin strips of bacon, coffee and biscuits.

Then they fell to. The grizzly, the restless night, the early rise—they'd really had only four hours of good sleep—were all forgotten while that hot, sizzling, delicious breakfast lasted.

"Say," Bob remarked, as he swallowed his last mouthful, "I feel like licking my chops, the way our old cat does! You sure are some cook. I'm going to learn to cook, too, and go camping every summer. This is the life!"

"Bears and all," Joe laughed.

"Aw, forget the old bear! Don't seem so bad, now it's daylight. Say,—not a peep, remember, about that old bear."

"I won't say anything if you don't," Joe promised.

They rowed back now, and found the boat-keeper up. Bob explained why they took the boat, and paid the rental for it, and for the fish-pole. The man was good-natured and made no complaint.

"Guess it's all right," he said. "'Course, if you hadn't got a fish I'd had to charge you more."

"I suppose if we'd got two fish you'd have given us the boat free," Bob laughed.

They carried their stuff back to the stable, where the rest of the packs were, and had returned to the hotel lobby and were busily writing souvenir postcards to all their friends back at home when the party came down to breakfast.

"Hullo, boys!" everybody said. "Where's that fish?"

Bob rubbed his stomach.

"Did you really get one?" Lucy demanded. "And you've eaten it all yourselves? Oh, you mean, greedy things!"

"Well," Bob declared, "you folks wouldn't camp with us. Go in and eat your old canned peaches and hunks of whisk broom and condensed cream. Gee, Joe 'n' I have had some night, all right! Old Big Ben woke us up——"

"Careful!" Joe cautioned.

"What do you mean—Big Ben?" asked Bob's mother.

"Oh, just our name for a pet bear we've acquired," Bob laughed, ignoring Joe's caution. "A dear, pretty, tame old silver tip who came right into camp and tried to kiss old Joe, but Joe slapped his face and said, 'Naughty, naughty,' and he got real cross."

"What *do* you mean? Did a bear come into your camp? Oh, how lovely!" Alice cried.

"Lovely! Well, I must say——" Mrs. Jones began.

"What *really* happened?" Bob's father demanded.

"Yes, tell the truth, Bob, now you've put your foot in it," Joe laughed.

"Oh, gosh, I can't keep an old secret," said the boy. "Me and Joe—Joe and me——"

"Joe and I——" said his mother.

"Well, Joe and I were snoring away like a couple o' buzz saws, when snap went a stick, and woke me up, and Joe was sitting up already, and gosh all hemlock, but it was dark! And then the fire flickered, and we saw old Big Ben on his hind legs not two feet away——"

"Oh, six feet, make it six!" Joe laughed.

"Well, six, and he was ten feet tall, and growling like anything, or sort of snarling, and I said, 'Go 'way, you spoiled my dream'—just like that, and he went, and then Joe said he wouldn't stay there any more, 'cause he didn't like to be disturbed that way, so——"

"I said it! Well, I like that!" Joe cried.

Bob grinned. "Well, anyhow, you wouldn't stay after I went, you know you wouldn't," he said. "So we beat it for the hotel, and slept in the hammocks on the porch till four, and then we got a boat and I caught a four pound trout——"

"How do you know it was a four pounder?" his father asked.

"Weighed him by his own scales," Bob replied. "And then Joe cooked him, and we had *some* breakfast. Thank you all for your kind attention, ladies and gents. This concludes our portion of the entertainment."

Everybody laughed but Mrs. Jones. She couldn't get over the idea that her son had really "been exposed to a bear," as she put it.

"Was Bob as gay as this last night?" Lucy asked Joe, as the party headed toward the dining-room.

"He was not!" Joe answered. "Made me promise not to tell a soul that we'd been scared back to the hotel."

"Aw, well," Bob laughed, "I got more fun out of telling than keeping an old secret. Besides, I don't care who knows you were afraid! Come on down and see the motor boats, while they're eating their whisk brooms."

CHAPTER XIII—In Avalanche Basin, Where Bob Learns that the Story of the Englishman's Walk Before Breakfast Was No Joke

168

When Mills arrived after breakfast, he reported that the party was to spend the day going down the lake in a motor launch to the office of the superintendent of the Park, on the west shore, near the lower end, where they were to have dinner.

"That means a holiday for you, Joe," the Ranger said. "They'll spend the night here at the hotel again. But you'll get paid just the same. You're your own boss to-day."

When the launch had left, Joe began the day by visiting the barber shop and getting his hair cut, for he had not been near a barber since he left Southmead. Then he made himself two or three sandwiches for a lunch, put them in his pocket, and set off back up the trail through the cedar forest. He had never been in such a wood before, a real piece of the primeval forest, where no axe had ever been, except to clear the trail, where the trees had fought for existence in such dense stands that they had to shoot up straight and high for sun, without any lower branches whatever, and where so many had died in the struggle that their trunks lay, right and left, blocking every passage. It had always been Joe's ambition to become a forester, and this wood and these trails over the Rocky Mountains had more than ever made him sure that was the job for him. So now he headed up into the timber, intent on a long day's study of the trees, the way they grew, the effects of soil and water and winter storms.

169

It was a wonderful day he had, too, though he got only about four miles back up the range from the lake. The only part he did not like was being alone.

"If only old Spider was here!" he kept thinking. "Golly, how he'd love these woods!"

He ate his lunch on a point of rock above the forest, where he could see, down over the tops, all the twelve green, dancing miles of Lake McDonald. He made a list of all the kinds of trees he knew (for he got up above the cedars), and looked carefully at the kinds he did not know, so he could ask Mills about them. He picked forty-six kinds of wild flowers, without half hunting, watched the different birds, especially the Clark's crows (a black and white bird, a little smaller than a crow), and just lazily enjoyed himself.

Not a very exciting day, you say? But wait till you get out in the Rocky Mountains. You'll find, after you've ridden the high trails for a while, and seen the tremendous precipices, and met up with a bear or two, and otherwise had a lively time, you will suddenly want to loaf for one whole day, too, and not put your foot into a stirrup or do much of anything but lie around in the lovely woods or upland meadows, and do nothing. It's great to loaf once in a while—not too often, nor too long.

170

But Joe had one little adventure before he got back. He had sat down at the edge of an open glade in the woods, to put a new film roll in his camera, when he suddenly saw a big buck deer and two does come out of the woods across the clearing. They did not see him for a full minute, and stood feeding, quite unconsciously. Then he either made some sound or they spied him, for the buck reared his head, stamped, and all three looked at him with great, startled brown eyes.

Joe was working with nervous haste to get that precious film roll in before they ran away. He didn't dare move more than his fingers and hands, and it was hard work; but he got it in at last, and turned it to position. But as he raised the camera to sight it, they finally took fright and bolted for the woods. Joe pressed the bulb, and got a picture of their three white tails disappearing, but, alas! he didn't get their faces. It was the nearest he had ever come to photographing a wild deer at close range, and he was mad enough that they had come just when he was filling his camera, and was not ready for them.

That night Mills looked at the sky, sniffed the wind, and announced rain before two days.

"We'll beat it with an early start," he said "Everybody ready at seven-thirty. Where are you going to bunk, Joe?"

He had been told about the bear, Joe saw.

"I'm going to bunk where I did last night," Joe answered.

"In the hammock?"

"No, in the cedars."

"Good-night, nurse!" said Bob. "No more Big Ben for mine."

"Are you really?" Lucy asked. "Aren't you foolish?"

171

"Maybe," said Joe, "though it was probably a tame bear. But if I don't, Mr. Mills will gey me all summer. I'll stay there this time, if he eats me alive!"

"That's the right spirit," said Lucy. "If I were a boy, I'd stay with you!"

"I bet you would!" Joe exclaimed. "Anybody who says girls are quitters has got the wrong dope."

So he went back alone to the little camp in the woods, and though it was dark and ghostly and every cracking twig gave him a jump, he built up his fire and lay down to sleep. He did not sleep for a long time, for he could not make himself stop listening to noises, but finally he dozed off, and when he finally woke it was daylight.

"You poor simp!" he told himself. "Nothing has happened. Afraid of a tame bear, who's probably twice as afraid of you! Glad old Spider wasn't here to see!"

He fried himself some bacon, and hurried back to the stables, to help pack the horses for the trip.

"And now where is it?" the men demanded, as they all mounted.

"Depends on the weather," Mills said. "If it holds off rain, I want to camp to-night in Avalanche Basin, and maybe show you a goat or two. If it comes on to rain, we'll make for Granite Park chalet, on Swift Current Pass."

"I see—going around the circle, and back to Many Glacier over Swift Current," said Mr. Elkins, who had been studying a map. "Well, let's hope it doesn't rain. I don't see any signs now."

"I smell it," Mills said.

This day, with restocked provisions and well rested horses, they headed north, on the west side of the Divide, past the head of the lake, and up McDonald Creek, a rushing, turbulent little river which comes pouring down the heavily wooded cañon between the Lewis Range, which is the range that makes the Continental Divide, and the Livingston Range just to the west. It was a pretty ride, up the side of the stream, but the trees were so thick and tall that they could catch only occasional glimpses of the mountain walls on either side of the cañon.

After five miles or more, Mills halted, by the side of a smaller stream which came in from the east, and took a look at the sky and the peak of a mountain visible in a gap of the trees.

"I guess we can risk it," he said, and turned eastward up the bank. This side trail climbed much more steeply, and led them after a couple of miles into a box cañon, like a deep rock ditch, with just the stream and the trail at the bottom, and then into one of the wildest spots you can imagine—a marvelous bowl, almost entirely closed in except for the gap where they had climbed, with a green glacier lake at the bottom, and steeply sloping sides which went up from the shore of the lake for over five thousand feet—Cannon Mountain to the north, Brown to the south, and at the eastern end, high over their heads, the great white field of Sperry Glacier, pouring down its silver ribbons of waterfalls.

They reached this lovely wild spot, called Avalanche Basin because when the snows come in winter the sides are so steep that avalanches keep pouring down, before noon, and at once made camp, while Joe set about the lunch.

After lunch, Bob said, "Well, Mr. Mills, bring on your goat."

Mills didn't answer, but lifted his head, and scanned the cliffs.

"All right," he finally said, "there are two."

And he pointed upward.

Everybody followed his finger, to a red cliff, across the lake and far up the steep mountain wall.

"I don't see anything but some spots of snow," Bob said.

"Wait—wait—one of the spots is moving!" Lucy cried. "Is that really a goat? My goodness, how does he stick on? Why, it's straight up and down!"

"That don't trouble a goat," said the Ranger.

The two specks of snow were certainly moving. The whole party watched till their necks ached, but the goats had either seen them or were not bound for the lower reaches, anyhow, for they did not come down. Instead, they walked along the cliff wall, and presently disappeared around a headland.

"Why, they're just like flies!" one of the congressmen exclaimed. "I suppose they were on a ledge. How wide do you reckon it was?"

"Might have been two feet, might have been six inches," Mills answered. "I've seen sheep and goats go around a ledge on a sheer precipice that wasn't over four inches wide, and stop to scratch themselves on the way!"

"I'm going to climb up there and see how steep that place is!" Bob cried.

"Hooray! Us, too," said Alice and Lucy. "Come on, Joe."

Mills was smiling, and Joe thought once more of the story of the Englishman. He told the story now, and Mills smiled again.

"Is it that far, Mr. Mills—now, honestly?" the girls asked.

"Go ahead and try it," the Ranger said, still smiling. "I'll come along, like Joe's friend."

The five of them started out, worked around the head of the lake, and began at once to climb the long, steep, rough shale pile at the foot of the first cliff. Above this first cliff was another slope, before the cliff began on which they had seen the goats. It was hard going, with thick patches of timber-line scrub spruces which held you like iron and tore like barbed wire, and sharp, irregular rocks of all sizes, and slopes of loose, small stones that gave way underfoot, and even patches of snow. They toiled on, Mills in the rear this time, still smiling, until at last they reached the foot of the first cliff, and looked far down at the lake and their tents. They could see the people there, the horses, even Joe's fire pit and a tin kettle.

175

"Why, I could almost throw a stone down on 'em," said Bob, "yet I feel as if we'd come a long way."

He looked at his watch.

"Gee whiz, we've been gone 'most two hours already!" he cried. Then he looked up at the cliff above, which was almost perpendicular. The girls looked at it, too. Joe looked at it, and longed for Spider and a rope to tackle it. But he did not see how any one could safely climb it without a rope. Mills looked at the four of them—and still smiled.

"Well," he said, finally, "going on?"

"You win," Bob admitted reluctantly. "We're the goats."

"No, the trouble is, we're not!" laughed Lucy. "If we were, we could keep on."

So they started back, sliding down a snow-field by sitting down and "letting her go"—which was rapid, but very damp.

"The goats win," said Bob, as they reached camp almost three hours later.

"And yet we could see you all the way," his father said "Now I realize what Rocky Mountain air is."

That night they had a big camp-fire, and a sing—all the songs every one knew, with Val playing on a harmonica he fished sheepishly out of his saddle-bag. Then they all "turned in" early, to be ready for a long trip the next day.

176

CHAPTER XIV—Up the Divide in a Rain, With a Lost Horse On the Way, and a Howling Snow-Storm At the Top

177

Joe was still sleepy when the Ranger shook him by the shoulder.

"Get up," said Mills. "We're in for a rain before night, sure. I want to get as far as we can before it begins. Get breakfast, and put up some stuff handy for lunch, so you can get it without unpacking."

Joe crawled out into a new, strange world. For the first time since he'd been in the Park it was not a clear day. The clouds hung low, way down over the tops and sides of the mountains, gray, dull clouds, with ghostly strings of vapor moving around on the under side. Sperry Glacier was invisible, and the vapors were half-way down the wall where the goats had been. Here, in the deep bowl of Avalanche Basin, with its towering, precipitous sides, the result was that Joe felt exactly as if he were shut in down at the bottom of a huge well, a well with a gray smoke cover over it. Even the bright green water of the little lake, without any sunlight, had turned a dull, chalky green, and looked ominous and unreal, as if you would catch dead fish in it.

178

"I don't like this—I feel as if I were in a prison," he said to the Ranger, as he kindled his fire.

"You may like it less before we get to Granite Park," Mills answered. "Put your poncho over your saddle to-day—you're going to need it."

Then he woke the camp.

Everybody felt more or less as Joe did, and breakfast was curiously quiet. Even Bob stopped his gay chatter. They got an early start, and were soon down on the main trail beside McDonald Creek, and plugging north through the deep forest of pines, larches and Englemann spruce. It was dull, monotonous work, with no view at all, for when there was an opening in the woods, all they could see was a cliff wall going up into the gray cloud overhead, which shut down over them like a roof. Mile after mile they went, now and then Bob or the girls starting a song, but soon stopping it. The trail was wet and muddy underfoot, and there were some fallen trees to jump. Moreover, the packhorses were, for some reason, particularly badly behaved that day, and Joe and Val nearly lost their tempers a dozen times as they rode into the brush, to head off some packhorse which was trying to get out of line.

When they stopped for lunch, it had already begun to drizzle. Joe made coffee, and passed out the usual collection of food for a Charlie Chaplin sandwich. By the time lunch was eaten, the drizzle had settled down into a misty rain, and the trees had begun to drip. Then everybody realized why they had been carrying around slickers on their saddles. On went these slickers—long, yellow rubber coats such as are worn by the Gloucester fishermen. They fitted the men all right, but poor Lucy and Alice were completely enveloped, with the sleeves coming down over their hands.

179

Joe put his head through the hole in his poncho—and that was all right till he came to mount his horse. Then he discovered that a poncho is decidedly not the thing for horseback riding, for his knees and legs kept coming out from under, on either side, and as the trees and bushes were soon dripping wet, and the rain kept falling, he was speedily soaked almost to the waist. It grew colder, too. But there was nothing to do but plod on, through the wet, miry trail.

However, very soon after lunch, the trail suddenly left the cañon, and headed east right up the side wall, to Swift Current Pass.

“Less than three miles to camp,” Mills called back; “and three thousand feet to climb,” he added.

“Three thousand feet in less than three miles,” Joe reflected. “Let’s see, Mount Lafayette in the White Mountains is fifty-two hundred feet high, and the trail starts from the Profile House, which is nineteen hundred feet up. That makes only thirty-three hundred feet, and the trail is five miles long.”

Then Joe thought of that trail, which he had climbed only two summers before, and how steep it was, and whistled to himself.

“We’re in for it,” he thought.

And he was right. Ordinarily, this trail, while it is steep and not well graded or maintained, is easy enough for a Rocky Mountain horse; but now, with the rain pouring down, it was converted into a regular brook in places, and in other places, where the rocks were bare or mossy, it was slippery as ice.

“Everybody off, and take hold of the tails of your horses,” Mills finally ordered, after two horses had almost slipped off.

“I can’t walk up here! What do you think I hired this horse for?” Mrs. Jones demanded.

“Well, your horse can’t walk up here with you on him,” the Ranger replied. “I’m not responsible for the weather. You’ll have to walk, or break your neck.”

And Joe could see he wanted to add—“I don’t care which.”

Bob and the girls grabbed their horses by the tails, and scrambled up rapidly to the next easy stretch, but their fathers and mothers climbed up more slowly, while Mills drove up the horses. Then Dick, Val and Joe drove up the packhorses, which, of course, couldn’t be unloaded, and had a hard time. All of them were up but two, and they were breathing easier, when the next to the last horse, on a slippery ledge, bumped his pack against the upper wall, slipped out toward the edge, pawed madly with his hoofs, got no grip on the skin of wet, slimy moss and mud which covered the rock, and went over backward, with a wild whinny, and staring, frightened eyes.

Fortunately, it was not straight down here, only a very steep slope, and twenty feet below was a thick tangle of scrub pine and tall huckleberry bushes. The poor horse tipped over on his back, turned a complete double somersault, and landed crash against the pines, where he lay struggling to get on his feet again. Joe, Val, Dick and Mills all dashed down to him, and one held his head while the rest got the pack off his back. He got up on his feet, trembling, and the Ranger and Dick felt him all over.

“I guess the pack saved him, at that,” Mills said. “He fell on the blankets. Well, boys, haul the stuff up.”

They each took part of the load, and carried it to the level above, while the Ranger led up the poor, frightened horse. At the top the party was waiting, huddled in the rain. They were a sorry and comical looking lot, and though Joe’s own feet were soaked, and he was wet to the skin below the hips, and he was cold, he certainly wanted to laugh. Water was dripping from the women’s hair, Mrs. Jones’ face looked blacker than the clouds which hung in the trees just above her, Mrs. Elkins looked as if she was about to cry any minute, Mr. Elkins simply looked wet and cold and mad, and Alice and Lucy, almost buried in their enormous slickers, were trying to sing to keep up their courage. Only Bob was still cheerful. He was eating wet huckleberries—wet and half green.

It was a nasty, wet job getting the pack on again, and Mills sent the party on ahead, with Dick to guide them. But the Granite Park chalet was not far away. They were over the worst of the trail. In another half hour, after crossing a meadow which was now full of running brooks, and climbing up a last steep pitch, Joe suddenly saw the chalet emerge from the heavy cloud, as if a picture of Switzerland in his old school geography had popped out of a fog right over his head. Built partly of stone and partly of rough timber, exactly in the style of a Swiss chalet, this building was about the size of an ordinary house. Joe knew by the map that it was almost up to the top of Swift Current Pass, just below the Great Divide, but you could not have told it now. The clouds were swirling all around, and it was already so cold that the rain was beginning to freeze as fast as it hit, making a thin skin of ice on the rocks.

Unpacking the horses, and getting the packs piled under the shelter of the porch, and then taking the horses to a rough stable near by, was done in a hurry. The three men then dove into the kitchen door, into the warmth of the fire which roared in a red hot stove.

In the big front room there was another stove roaring, and around that the party were already huddled, waiting for their dunnage bags, to get out dry clothes. Joe and Dick brought the bags in, and each one went to a room up-stairs to change. Joe himself had dry underclothes, socks, and a pair of shoes, but he had no extra trousers. He and the cowboys and Mills changed as much as they could in the kitchen, but Joe had to put his wet trousers on again. When Lucy came down, in a skirt and dry shoes, she saw this at once.

"Oh, Joe, you *must* get some dry trousers," she said. "You mustn't run such a risk."

Joe laughed. "Oh, I'm all right," he said. "Won't hurt me—I've been exercising."

"But you're not exercising now. I'm going to fix you."

She went over and spoke to the manager in charge of the chalet; he nodded, and went into the little room where he slept, emerging with a pair of his own trousers. As he was some six inches larger around the middle than Joe, everybody laughed, and they laughed more when Joe reappeared, with the trousers on.

"Say, Joe, you'll need some supper to fill them!" Bob cried.

"Never mind," said Lucy. "They are dry."

The chalet now smelled of drying clothes and drying leather. Over both stoves hung stockings and trousers and even underclothes, and behind them stood rows of boots. Outside, the wind was howling and shaking the entire house with every gust. It was almost as dark as if it had been evening, though it was only five o'clock, and Bob, peering through the steamed window pane, suddenly cried, "Hi! look quick—snow!" and opened the front door to dash out.

As he lifted the latch, the wind caught the door and blew it wide open, a great gust of snow swirling in, half across the room.

"Say, is this August first or January first?" Mr. Elkins demanded. "I thought we came to a summer resort, not Greenland."

"Our mountains are just showing off for you a bit," Mills smiled, as the young people and Joe, in spite of the gale, went out on the porch to see the snow-storm driving past.

But they were soon driven in, blowing on their fingers, and brushing the snow off their clothes.

"The man who built this old shack right here gets my vote," Bob declared. "Say, ma, how'd you like to be on your prancing steed right now, up on top of the Pass, still seven miles from blighty? Eh, wot?"

"Thanks," said Mrs. Jones. "I prefer it here."

"I know!" Lucy said. "Let's have afternoon tea."

"All those in favor say aye—the ayes have it—it's a vote—Joe, go to it," cried Bob. "That's the way they put a bill through in dad's old Congress—just like that."

Joe got out the tea and the cups, and with Alice and Lucy helping, they soon had hot tea on the table, and a big plate of crackers, and a lot of sweet chocolate Mr. Jones bought at the little counter by the manager's desk.

"Let the wild winds howl; what do we care for your old August blizzards?" said Bob, as he passed his cup to Joe for a second helping.

When tea was over, Joe set about cooking a good, hot dinner, for he had a real stove to work with now, and an oven. He mixed dough for hot biscuit, got out eggs for omelettes, tins of soups, made a batter for griddle cakes, and opened his last can of preserved peaches for dessert.

While he was working, with Val sitting in a corner, telling him stories about broncho busting, there came a sudden stamping of feet on the porch outside, the door opened, and two men, covered with snow, with heavy packs on their backs, almost fell into the kitchen.

Val sprang up and caught one of them as he staggered and was about to tumble. Mills and the manager of the chalet came hurrying in from the front room. Joe jumped to his stove and poured boiling water on some fresh tea leaves.

While the others were getting the two men into chairs, and pulling off their soaked clothes, Joe steeped his tea, and brought each of them a big tin mug full. They swallowed it eagerly, and brightened up. They changed into dry clothes, supplied partly from their own packs and partly from the manager's wardrobe. "You see," the man said, "I keep old clothes here for just such emergencies."

They were from a mid-western city, and had come to Glacier for a vacation. Being fond of walking, and also wanting to do the Park as cheaply as they could, they had decided to hike from point to point. They had already come over Piegan Pass from the south, and stopped last night at the tepee camp at Many Glacier. To-day they had first visited Iceberg Lake, and then, in spite of the threatened rain (it had not rained till long after noon on the east side of the Divide, they said), they had climbed Swift Current Pass, headed for this chalet. They had run into the heavy cloud near the top of the Pass, but did not expect any trouble in finding their way, because the trail is well marked by countless horses. But in the Pass meadow they got the full force of the storm, where the snow hit them, and before they got across, the track was obliterated; the cloud was so dense they could not see fifty feet ahead, and they were almost benumbed with the cold. However, they continued to pick up trail marks here and there, and stumbled down finally till they saw the chalet looming up under the cloud mantle.

"We never expected anything like this, in mid-summer," one of them said, "or, of course, we wouldn't have climbed the Pass to-day."

"You wouldn't get it once in five years," Mills answered,— "but there's always a time, you know. That's why the chalet's here."

The two men were so tired that Joe's party offered to share dinner with them, relieving them of the task of cooking, since the regular cook employed by the chalet had deserted the day before and all guests now had to shift for themselves. It was quite a party that sat down to table, with Val as waiter and Joe turning the omelettes and tossing the griddle cakes on the stove. They ate by the light of a lamp, though up there, ordinarily, at seven o'clock it would have been bright daylight. Outside the wind howled, the snow flew, and the house shook as if hit by a giant fist as each gust struck it

But suddenly, as Joe was dishing out the canned peaches in the kitchen, he heard a cry from Bob.

"Hi, look—it's getting light—oh, gee, folks—come quick!"

When Joe came into the room with what dishes Val could not carry, he found every one up from the table and crowded at the west windows. The lamplight had paled. Into the windows was pouring the last rays of the setting sun, over behind the Livingston Range, the other side of the cañon. These rays came out of a great, blue hole in the wall of clouds, and seemed to stream like a vast search-light along the under side of the cloud wrack overhead. They pierced right through the falling snow, which turned to a dancing, dazzling veil of golden crystals between the windows and the sun. And, against the hole into the west, stood up the snow-crowned pyramid of Trapper's Peak, while, to the south, just emerging from the clouds, its great snow-fields tinged with sunset as with blood and gold, rose the beautiful cone of Heaven's Peak, shining, mysterious, magnificent.

"Dessert—peaches," said Val.

"Go 'way," said Alice. "This is better than any dessert. Oh, I'm going out!"

Peaches were forgotten—everything was forgotten. Every one piled out on the west porch and watched the wonderful display. Now the low sun was shooting a great rainbow up on the under side of the cloud right over the Divide. One end of this rainbow dropped down past the steep cliff of the Divide south of the Pass, known as the Garden Wall, and ended in a patch of snow.

"Hi—Joe, let's go down and get the pot o' gold," Bob called. "I can see just where it is."

"I would, if I had on my own pants," Joe laughed.

As if to finish off the display with a pretty touch, the snow stopped falling, so they could see plainly all the white slopes around the camp, and suddenly a deer bounded out from behind a pine thicket, circled all around below them, and disappeared at last to the north.

The sun dropped, leaving a green and pink hole in the west, enlarging every moment. The clouds were lifting. It was still cold, however, and the wind was howling. The crowd went in reluctantly, blew on their fingers, and finished their dinner.

Some one proposed games after the dinner was cleared away. Some one else proposed a story. But Bob proposed bed, and after some debate, his motion prevailed, chiefly, his father declared, because every one on the opposition side was yawning so that he could not argue.

"Are you all right? You haven't got a cold, have you?" Lucy asked Joe, as she said good-night.

"No, I feel fine," Joe answered.

He did, too, and went to sleep, rolled in his blankets on the kitchen floor, thinking of the girl—or the woman, he hardly knew which to call her—who was so thoughtful and kind.

"This is a pretty good old world, and pretty nice folks in it," was his last reflection, before he dropped asleep, with Dick on one side, and Val on the other, while the wind was still shaking the chalet.

CHAPTER XV—Tom's Chance for Adventure Comes Unexpectedly, Wearing Hobnail Shoes and Carrying a Rope

The next day's trip was an easy one. Each one of the party was tired, and Mills let them sleep late. After breakfast they set off up the quarter mile of steep trail to Swift Current Pass, through the powder of fresh snow which was fast melting, and then down on the other side, over the trail Joe had taken on his first ride in the Park. How different it seemed to him now! He sat his saddle like an old timer. He did not give a thought to the steepness—it didn't even seem steep! In fact, he hung his reins over the horn of his saddle, and unslinging his camera, snapped several pictures of the party as it rounded the turns of the switchbacks, with the girls looking up at him and waving their hands, and Bob making horrible faces.

At the usual point, Mills gave a yell, and started the race to the hotel. But it was Joe's job now to get ahead of the packhorses, and hold them back. He could not gallop with the crowd. It was almost ten minutes later that he and Val reached the tepee camp, with their eight beasts of burden.

Spider was standing in front of the tepees, and ran out to grab Joe's hand.

"Hello, old scout!" he cried. "Gee, but I'm glad to see you! How are you? All right? Maybe I wasn't worried in that rain yesterday. You all right?"

"Sure I'm all right," Joe said. "Wow—some good time, too! You'll have to stay up all night hearing about it. I'll be back soon, and get your lunch."

"Forget that," said Tom. "I've got it already. I'm a bum cook, though—haven't had a decent meal since you left. I'll wait for you. Nobody in camp just now, but some due to-night."

Joe rode on to the hotel, helped unpack, and said good-bye to all the party. It was hard, too, for after those seven days on the trail and in camp, even though he was only the camp cook and they were congressmen and congressmen's families, he felt as if they were all old friends.

Mr. Elkins drew him to one side a little. "I know you're working your way out here," said he, "and we'd all like to help you, Joe, for you've been a fine cook for us, and we've all been like a jolly family together. I don't suppose you'd let me make you a little present, would you, to show how grateful we are?"

Joe turned red. "Oh, no, sir," he answered. "Scouts never take tips, and that would be a tip, wouldn't it, sir, really? I get paid by Mr. Mills, or the saddle company. Why, I've had more fun being with you all than you've had, I guess!"

Mr. Elkins put a hand on Joe's shoulder. "That's the talk I like to hear," he said. "You've made me realize what the Boy Scouts are after, Joe, and if you ever come to Washington, and want to see how Congress works, you let me know, and you and I'll do the town!"

Every one shook hands with him then, even Mrs. Jones, who, now the hotel was in sight again, was as cheerful as a cricket.

"I just love roughing it—now it's all over," she laughed.

But Bob was not to be seen. Joe looked around for him, and wondered where he could be. He shook hands with Lucy last of all. She was sweeter and prettier than ever as she smiled at him.

"Not good-bye—au revoir," said she. "You're going to swap snap shots with us, and write me how you are, and what you see in the Park after we're gone, and some day you'll come to Washington, won't you?"

"You bet I'd like to," he answered. "Gee, you—you—you've been awful nice to me—kind of makes me homesick—"

He couldn't finish, and Lucy gave his fingers a friendly little pressure, and turned away.

Joe got on Popgun again, still wondering where Bob was, and turned to depart, when with a "Hi, there—don't go yet!" Bob burst from the hotel door.

He was bearing in one hand a jointed bamboo fish-pole, in the other a full box of tackle and flies.

"This is for you," he said. "'Course, you can't get a good, big fish without me to catch it for you, but you can cook what you do get O.K. And don't let any more bears kiss you, and send a feller some snap shots when you have 'em developed, and here's my address."

Joe took the rod and tackle. "Gee, Bob, that's white of you," he said. "Guess I'll never forget this trip."

"Me, neither. Old Pennsylvania's goin' to look like a prairie when I get back. So long, Joe."

"So long, Bob."

He waved his hand to Alice and Lucy, who watched him from the doorway, and rode off behind Mills, dropped his dunnage bag at the camp, and took Popgun to the Ranger's cabin.

"If you boys will let me, I'll grub with you this noon. Not a thing in my shack," the Ranger said.

"Fine—come on. Well, Mr. Mills, did I make good?"

Mills gave him a funny look out of his pale, keen blue eyes.

"I never pick a man that doesn't," he said. "By the way, here's your money—seven days at three dollars a day. Cooks are coming high this year."

He handed the astonished Joe twenty-one dollars—six of it in cart wheels, which you almost never see in the East.

"Say, I didn't expect so much. Is that on the level?" Joe demanded.

"Regular price this season—labor's awful scarce. I don't see why you shouldn't have all the work you want for the rest of the season."

"Gee, and it isn't work—it's fun!"

"Glad you think so," the Ranger laughed. "Yesterday struck me as work."

"Sure, but it was fun, too."

The two boys and the Ranger ate their lunch at the tepee camp, where Tom had been experimenting on the stove. Poor Tom! He wasn't much of a cook—not compared to Joe, at any rate, and he got rather sore for a minute when Mills suggested that Joe remake the coffee.

"Don't get peeved," Mills laughed. "Just take one drink of Joe's coffee, and you'll feel better."

Then Tom laughed, too. "Well, old Joe's a professional chef now," he said. "I'm only a janitor. Has he been well, honest and true, Mr. Mills?"

"Far as I've seen, he's as sound as the best," Mills answered. "Why don't you take him over and weigh him this afternoon?"

"I will," said Tom.

And he did. They found some scales in the basement of the hotel, and Joe got on. He had gained five pounds that week, in spite of the hard work of the trip! Spider gave a shout of glee.

"Hooray!" he cried. "I told you the old ozone would do it! We're giving the bugs the knock out. Now, when an M. D. comes along, you're going to get the once over again, and see if you can climb."

"I—I——" Joe began, looking rather guilty. "Well, Tom, I did climb a glacier, and fell in, too!"

"It would have served you right if they hadn't fished you out—tell me all about it."

All that afternoon, after Joe had given his money to Big Bertha, to keep in the office safe for him, the two boys sat by the lake shore, on a little point of rocks, taking turns fishing with the new rod, while Joe narrated the story of his trip. They caught only two smallish trout, hardly enough for a good mess, but that didn't matter. It was too much fun telling and hearing about the wonders of the Park.

"And you've just had to stick around here, old Spider, working for me," Joe exclaimed, penitently. "To-morrow, I'm going to see Big Bertha, and get him to let me run the camp for a while, so's you can take a trip."

"Yes, and who'll go with me?" said Tom. "Can't go alone. Besides, didn't we come out here for you to get well? Forget it, wifey."

"Oh, I don't care what you call me to-day," Joe laughed. "I've had too good a time—and I'm going to find a way for you to, now. You wait—something will turn up."

Something did—and that very night, just after the party Tom expected went into the chalets, too tired to camp.

Yet the turn-up did not look a bit promising when it arrived. It was a small man, with big steel spectacles, enormous hobnail boots, a huge pack, a blanket roll, and a coil of curious, soft rope around his waist. He was a man about forty years old, and didn't look as if he could carry such a load two miles. Yet he came down the trail at six o'clock erect and brisk, and said casually he'd come that day from the Sun Camp, over Piegan Pass.

"That's twenty-two miles!" the boys exclaimed.

"Is it?" said he. "I should hardly have called it so far. Have you a cook here?"

"Why, yes," said Tom. "Joe's a cook. Folks at camp generally get their own meals. I'd hardly know how to charge."

"I hate my own meals," the man said. "That's why I always take a pocket full of raisins for lunch. You get me dinner and breakfast, and I guess we can reckon out a fair payment. Am I alone in the camp to-night?"

"There was a party coming," Tom said, "but they were so tired, they went to the chalets. I don't expect anybody else."

"Too bad," the man said. "Not that I pine for company, but I do want to find somebody to climb with me. Here I've brought an Alpine rope all the way out here, and I can't find a soul to shin a precipice."

He wriggled out of the coils of the soft, braided rope, which was almost as pliable as silk, and laid it on the table.

"You don't know of anybody, do you?" he added.

"Why, no sir, I don't," Tom answered, fingering the rope curiously, to feel its soft, strange texture.

"I do," Joe spoke up.

Tom and the man both turned toward him.

"Who is it?" they said.

Joe simply made a gesture toward Tom.

"You?" the hiker asked. "You look like a strong, capable boy, but have you had any experience with rock climbing?"

"Joe's talking through his hat," Spider stammered. "I couldn't go. My job's to take care of this camp—"

"I can fix that," Joe cut in. "I'll look after the camp. Besides, here's somebody comes to the Park looking for a climb, and it's up to the Park to find somebody to go with him."

"That seems settled," the man smiled. "But have you had any experience rock climbing?"

"No sir, not really, I guess," Tom said. "I climbed the head wall of Huntington Ravine on Mount Washington once, when we scouts took a hike in the White Mountains, and Joe and I have climbed some little cliffs around home, with just a common rope, and I got a box of spikes for my shoes, but of course, I've never been in the Alps, or anything like that."

The man had now laid off his pack, and was inspecting his tepee as he listened.

"The head wall of Huntington Ravine isn't a bad little climb," he said, "though one of the side walls is better. But it hardly qualifies you as an Alpine guide. However, if you'd care to come with me, and we could get somebody to tell us where there's an interesting wall, I'd be glad of your company to-morrow."

197

"Oh, gee, I'd like to go!" Tom cried, "if I can get off."

"You can get off," said Joe, "and after supper I'll go get the Ranger to come and tell Mr.—Mr. ___"

"Kent is my name," the little man said. "At home I'm Dr. Kent, but out here I wish to forget it."

"—Mr. Kent where there's a good cliff. Would you like an omelette for supper, Mr. Kent, with some chicken soup and fried potatoes and griddle cakes and coffee?"

"That sounds very nice," said he. "But I warn you I sha'n't know what I'm eating. I've had nothing since breakfast but a couple of raisins."

Joe went busily about getting his supper, while Tom set the table, got fresh water, put some extra blankets in his tepee, and ran to the supply store for some jam or canned fruit for dessert.

"Now, you be sure to explain to Big Bertha that I'm going to take your place if he'll let you off," Joe whispered. "He knows I can do it. If he makes any kick, I'll go up after supper."

When Tom came back, he reported that it was all right, Big Bertha had not kicked at all.

"He's an old peach," Tom added. "Asked me why I hadn't suggested such a scheme before."

"I knew that would be all right," Joe laughed. "After grub, I'll get Mr. Mills, and he'll go, too, maybe. Gee, he's dandy on a trip, and he knows how to use a rope."

The two scouts now devoted their entire attention to the single guest at the camp. When Joe called, "Come and get it!" Tom set a camp chair at the table, and brought the steaming food from the stove. While Dr. Kent was eating the soup, Joe made the omelette just right, and kept the fried potatoes sizzling, and with them sent in a pot of piping hot coffee and a plate of rolls. Then he made griddle cakes—five helpings of them the man ate, too, four thick cakes to a helping! He topped off with preserved peaches. When he had finished, he drew a cigar case from an inner pocket of his old, worn leather jacket, lit a cigar, came over to a seat by the camp-fire which Tom had now lighted, stretched out his short legs, which were clad in great, heavy, square-toed boots, blue woollen stockings that were in wrinkles, and worn woollen knickerbockers of a once rather startling brown and green striped pattern, sighed contentedly, looked at the two scouts, and remarked:

198

"Tom and Joe—those are your names, eh? Well, I never fared so well, boys, in the Savoy in London or the Waldorf in New York. Joe, I knew what I was eating all the time, it was so good. I don't know how you chaps ever got way out here—I can tell you both come from New England. But I'm glad you came. I think maybe the Lord sent you for my especial benefit. What do you think about it?"

"Tom thinks you were sent here for his special benefit," Joe laughed. "He's not had a chance to see a bit of the Park yet."

"Why, Joe—I do not!" poor Tom cried, getting red.

199

"Well, it looks mutual," the man admitted. "Now, where's this Ranger? I like to get to-morrow all settled while it is still to-day."

Tom went up to the cabin for Mills, while Joe was getting a bite ready for Spider and himself. Mills appeared in less than ten minutes. Tom introduced the two men, and went into the cook tepee, to eat with Joe, while they both strained their ears to hear the plans.

"Well," the Ranger was saying, "there's a mighty nice climb at the head of Iceberg Lake. I was never up it, but I know where the goat trail starts. Might be good sport to follow that trail."

"Chimney work, or mostly shelf?" the other man asked.

"Mostly everything, I should reckon. I don't now recall any real chimney, till the top. The goats sort of switchback on ledges. Guess you'll need sharp toe-nails, here and there."

"Any ice work?"

"Nothing sticks on that wall!" said the Ranger.

"And the height?"

"Oh, maybe two thousand."

"You mean two thousand, all cliff?" the man demanded.

"Sure," said Mills. "Well, maybe you can knock off two hundred for the shale slide at the bottom. It goes right up to the crest of the Divide."

"Well, that sounds like a climb!" Dr. Kent exclaimed. "Suppose this boy Tom here can do it?"

Tom and Joe, pretending to eat, stopped their forks half-way to their mouths to listen. Tom was almost trembling.

200

"He can if you know your business," Mills answered, laconically. "They've got good heads, both

those boys—and heads count on a goat trail.”

The doctor looked at Mills rather sharply. Evidently he was not used to being spoken to in just that way.

“I have climbed the Matterhorn,” he replied.

“We got a different kind o’ stone out here,” said Mills. “It ain’t reliable. What’s the matter with me going too? I ain’t had a good climb since I hunted bighorns last, five years ago. And we can all ride up to the lake on my horses, and I can see how the trail’s standing up after the rain.”

“Three on the rope are better than two, of course,” the other said. “And I’d be glad of your experience. I have at least climbed enough to know that it is safer to have a guide who knows the cliff.”

“Stranger,” Mills smiled, in his quiet way, “you seem kind o’ sore at me. But I’m the Park Ranger for this district, and Uncle Sam don’t want no accidents in here. You may be the next thing to a mountain goat, but I’ve never seen you climb, and it’s up to me to be kind o’ what you’d call sceptical. Now, wouldn’t you act so, if you was here for Uncle Sam?”

The doctor put out his hand. “I’m ready to climb anywhere you say we can get,” he said. “You’re the sort Uncle Sam needs everywhere. Shake, and say we’re friends.”

201

The boys saw them shake hands, and then they heard Dr. Kent calling.

“Tom,” he said, “Mr. Mills is going with us to see that we don’t break our necks. We leave to-morrow at five o’clock. Is that too early, Mills?”

“Not a bit,” said the Ranger.

“Joe, can you have breakfast ready then?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Mills, will you breakfast with us?”

“Thanks—I sure will if Joe makes the coffee.”

“Then it’s settled. Now, Tom, you can go to bed as early as you like. I’m going to turn in right away.”

(“Sounds like a hint!”) Joe whispered.

Tom nodded. He saw that the camp was all right, bade the doctor good-night, and with Joe and Mills walked up the path toward their camp.

“Well, Joe,” Mills said, “they’re keeping you busy, eh? Sorry you can’t come along to-morrow—we might find a hole somewhere for you to fall into.”

“I’ll let Spider do a few flipflaps now,” said Joe. “I’ve had my turn.”

“If anybody tumbles, I hope it’s the M. D.,” Tom laughed. “He’s just a little bit fond of Dr. Kent,—strikes me.”

“Sh! You forget he’s climbed the Matterhorn,” said Mills.

He went on to his cabin, and the boys settled down in their own tent.

“Well, old Joey, here you are home!” Tom cried, giving him a slap. “Gee, wifey, it’s been lonely for a whole week without you!”

202

“And it’s some nice to get back,” said Joe. “It sure seems like home, this little old tent, and Mr. Rogers’ little old cot. Slept on the floor last night, and on the ground all the other nights. Oh, you cot!”

He sank luxuriously down, wrapped in his blankets, and let Tom blow out the lantern.

“Home!” he sighed, sleepily. “Just a little old tent, but home—with old Spider snoring in the other bunk.”

“I don’t snore!” Tom retorted. “It’s you who snore.”

“You may if you want to,” said Joe. “It would take more’n a snore to keep me awake to-night. Oh, you cot! ‘Night, Spider.”

“‘Night, Joe.”

If either of them snored, no one knew it, except the porcupine that came sniffing around the tent, and then, disappointed, went off through the forest.

CHAPTER XVI—Tom Goes Up a Two Thousand Foot Wall, With an Alpine Rope, and Learns the Proper Way To Climb

203

The scouts were up again before five, and hurried to the camp, where the doctor was still sound asleep.

"Sound is right!" Spider laughed.

But he woke when he heard them getting breakfast, and by the time he was dressed and breakfast was ready, Mills came up, followed by Popgun and the packhorse, both saddled.

As soon as breakfast was over, the two men and Tom stowed away in their pockets the sandwiches Joe made for them, made sure that all the spikes were in their boots, and swung into the saddle.

"Good-bye, old Joey," Tom called. "Have some good hot dinner ready when we get back."

"Yes, and you come back with your neck whole, to eat it," said Joe, waving his hand and watching the three riders trot up the trail in the cool, level, early morning sunlight.

It was a fine, clear day, a real Rocky Mountain day, when you could almost see the buttons on a man's coat a quarter of a mile away. And it was Tom's first trip away from Many Glacier, into the high places, though he had walked around the camp as far as he dared, and even climbed a little way up a steep shale pile at the base of the cliff behind the chalets. However, hikers were apt to show up at any time of the day, and he had never been able to venture more than a mile or two. But now he was bound for Iceberg Lake, and then up the very main precipice of the Great Divide, the backbone of the continent, with the Park Ranger and a man who had climbed the Matterhorn!

It was only a short ride to Iceberg Lake—about six miles. The trail was a fine one, of easy grade, and for some distance wound through the woods, over tumbling brooks, and through beds of wild flowers. The doctor seemed as much interested in these flowers as he was in the coming climb.

"I never saw such a profusion," he kept saying. "So many kinds all together, and such beautiful masses of color. Well, well, how little we Americans know about our own country. Tom, I want you to go back East and tell your schoolmates this is a pretty fine land we live in."

"You bet I will—if I go back," said Tom. "I like it so much here I may stay forever, and be a ranger, like Mr. Mills."

"After one winter, you won't like it so much," Mills said.

Gradually the trail climbed above the tall timber, and the view opened out. Tom could see they were headed for a big semicircular amphitheatre, cut into the towering rock walls of the Divide, and before long they entered the open end of this titanic stadium. It was a wild, beautiful spot. At their feet was a meadow, covered with yellow dog-tooth violets like gold patterns in a green carpet, and with little pines in it like people walking about. On three sides of them, sweeping around in a semicircle at the end, was a vast precipice, seemingly perpendicular, except for the big shale piles at the base. The top of this cliff was a "castellated ridge," the term mountaineers give to a summit which is long and level, but broken into little depressions and towers, like the battlements of an ancient castle. At the upper end of the amphitheatre lay a round lake, about half a mile across, and at the upper end of that, right under the shadow of the head wall, was the glacier.

This glacier, snow covered on top, showed a thirty foot wall of green ice on the upright edge, and chunks of this ice were constantly breaking off and floating away in the green water. Hence the name Iceberg Lake.

They rode right up to the shore, and Mills took the horses into a little clump of trees, where there was some grass also, and tethered them.

"Now," said he, coming back, "to the job. There's the cliff."

He led the way, with long easy strides, around the right hand side of the lake, through steep rough going, without any path and amid stubborn timber-line evergreens, till he reached the base of a huge shale and snowslide that stretched right up at an angle of about fifty degrees, Tom estimated, to the base of the jagged precipice. Looking up this shale slide to the towering cliff above, Tom saw the staggering task ahead of them—and his heart went down into his spiked boots for a minute. He could see how they could get up part way, all right, for at first it wasn't quite perpendicular, and it was full of ledges. But then there seemed to be a sheer rise, with not even a toe hold—"and if you fell—good-night!" he whispered to himself.

But Mills and Dr. Kent were studying the cliff quite calmly.

"I've seen the goats come down to that snow-field at the top of this shale, half a dozen times," the Ranger was saying, "and go back the same way. If we can find their trail, I guess we can make it, though they'll use an awful narrow ledge sometimes. They get into one or the other of those two big gullies, too, on the way back."

"There seems to be ample footing," the doctor remarked.

There did not seem to be any footing to poor Tom, but he did not say so. If they were going up, he was! But those two thousand feet of rock didn't look much like the three hundred foot slope the scouts used to climb back in Southmead. It was the Great Divide in a single jump, and Tom felt about as small as a fly must feel on the side of the Washington Monument—and a good deal more helpless, because the fly has suckers on his feet, and wings beside.



Iceberg Lake and Glacier

Mills now led the way up the shale pile, just a smooth, insecure slide of sharp, broken stone, mostly in small, irregular, flat pieces something like rotten slate. It wasn't as slippery as a pile of coal would be, of course, but there was a good deal of tiresome back-slide under one's feet, none the less.

Close to the top was a snow-field, and Mills examined it.

"They've been here—within a day," he announced, pointing to fresh hoof tracks, and also pointing to spots where the goats had evidently taken bites out of the snow, probably as a dog does when thirsty. Above the snow-field Tom could see just the faintest hint of a trail over the shale, which led up to the base of the solid cliff.

"There she is—this is the way!" the Ranger called.

The three of them now halted directly under the tremendous wall, and looked up. Again Tom's heart sank. It wasn't so nearly perpendicular as it looked from the lake below, but he could see stretch after stretch where a climber's face would be ticklishly close to the spot where he'd got to put his feet next time—and the great, ragged wall, in long, wavy horizontal strata belts, stretched up and up and up and up!

Did you ever stand in Broadway below the Woolworth Tower, and look up? Imagine that tipped over a little from the perpendicular, and four times as high, and you'll have an idea of what Tom looked at.

"Well, now, this is worth coming for!" the doctor cried, cheerfully, as he took off his coil of rope, and made it ready. "Mills, will you take number one place for a way? I'll be number two and anchor, of course. Tom can dangle off below, like a tail to the kite. How'll you like that, Tom?"

Tom's face must have shown what he was feeling, for the doctor suddenly changed tone.

"Come, come," he said. "It's not bad—only long. A Swiss guide wouldn't even consider this dangerous. All you have to remember is to test all your hand- and foot-holds before you put your weight on them, and watch for falling stones. This shale pile means the rock may crumble easily in places. Come on—be a scout!"

"I'm game!" Tom answered, biting his lip. "I guess I won't be stumped by an old goat!"

Mills laughed. "Wait till you see a goat perform," he said, as he made fast one end of the rope around his waist. As he adjusted it, he added, "This is a better rope than I ever used. Where'd you get it?"

"Switzerland," the doctor answered. "I have several I've brought over from time to time. You can't get soft, flexible, braided rope here in this country. We don't go in for mountain climbing enough to make it."

Tom was now fastened on the lower end of the rope, and the doctor in the middle, and the ascent began.

"You watch me use the rope," the doctor said to Tom. "It will show you how to do it, if you ever have to be second man on a climb—and it will keep you from looking down, also!"

Spider was almost as anxious to learn how to use the rope properly as he was to get up the cliff. He had hoped to climb, when he came to the Park, but he never dreamed he would be climbing with a real Alpine rope, manipulated by a man who had been up the Matterhorn, and with the leader of the party an old goat hunter.

For the benefit of the boys who are reading this book, I want to tell just how Dr. Kent used the rope. No boy, or man, either, should ever try to climb a cliff without a rope, and without proper shoes, with plenty of strong, sharp spikes. The rope must be strong enough to hold the weight of three or four men, at the very least, and it must be soft and pliable. If you cannot get such a soft rope, boil an ordinary one in a wash-boiler till it loses its stiffness. But, even when you have the

rope, you must not use it on a cliff until you have learned the proper methods, preferably under the guidance of some man who has climbed in England or the Alps or the Rockies.

Now in rope climbing up rocks, the leader has the hardest job because he has to find the way up, and to climb without any rope to help him. But the second man has what is perhaps the most important job, for he is the anchor; it is on him that the life of the leader may depend, as well as the life of the man below.

Suppose three men are fastened on the rope almost fifty feet apart, as Tom, Mills and Dr. Kent were, for the average rope is about a hundred feet long. The first man starts climbing, and when he gets up nearly to the full play of his fifty feet of rope, he finds some ledge where he can rest, or some firm projection where he can throw his end of the rope over, take a half hitch, and thus make a firm line for the second man to climb with. The second man comes up to him, and the leader starts up again. But now he is starting well up from the ground, and if he got any higher and should fall, it would be bad, so the second man, before the leader starts up, takes a half turn around the firm projection with his end of the stretch of rope between himself and number one, or, if it is very steep and dangerous, perhaps giving the leader a play of only fifteen or twenty feet. Then if the leader should slip and fall, instead of dragging off the second man with him, he would fall only the distance between himself and the point where the rope was secured to the rock. If the rope was strong, it would bring him up short, dangling against the cliff, and would not yank the second man off with him. Of course, after three climbers are well up the face of a cliff, if the leader should fall without the rope being anchored between him and number two, he would drag all three men off with him, probably to death. That is why number two position is so important in rope climbing.

And Tom was not long in realizing this. He saw Mills go up easily to a shelf forty feet above, and both the doctor and he scrambled up after him, without needing the rope at all. The next stage was not difficult, either, though the Ranger, as soon as he was well above the shale pile, began to test his hand-holds and foot-holds with the utmost care, keeping in the faintly discernible goat track whenever he could. But when they were up a hundred and seventy-five feet or more, all three of them on a ledge about three feet wide, they found themselves directly against a perpendicular wall at least twenty-five feet high.

Mills was studying the situation. "Coming down, the goats jump it from that shelf above," he said. "You can see their tracks here where they land. But they can't climb it going up. They swing off to the left, by this ledge—and look at it!"

Tom and the doctor looked. To the left the ledge shrank to a cornice actually not over six inches wide.

"Do you mean to tell me the goats walk around on that?" the doctor demanded.

"Sure," said Mills. "It probably leads to an easy way around to the shelf over our heads, but we can't make it—at least, I don't want to try, unless I have to."

Tom looked at the six inch ledge, and the hundred and seventy-five foot drop below it, and said, "Amen!"

"All right—straight up," said the doctor. He looked for a firm projection of rock, and took a turn with the rope, while Mills picked up the slack and tested it.

The Ranger studied the wall in front of him, and made a try. Anchored by the doctor from below, he got up ten feet, but at that point he could not find a single handhold higher up which would bear his weight. After a long try, he descended to the ledge again.

"No use, we've got to go around to the right, and climb that big gully," Mills said. "If this wall stumps us, we'd find a dozen worse ones before we got to the top."

To get to the gully to the east of them, they had to go along the ledge on which they stood. It was wider to the east than six inches, which was its width in the other direction, the direction the goats took at this point, but it wasn't any too wide for comfort, and in places the precipice above actually overhung it, and seemed to be crushing you down. In one place they had to crawl on their hands and knees under this overhang. In another place they came to what the doctor called "a real transverse"—that is, a very narrow shelf leading them around a projection from the ledge they were on to another one, with a sheer drop below it.

This transverse ledge was about fifteen feet long before it widened. It may have been eighteen inches wide, but to Tom it looked about six. It was level enough, and firm, but it was cut out of the side of an absolute precipice, and the sheer drop, before you hit any ledge or slope below, to break your fall, was at least a hundred feet.

"Dizzy?" the doctor asked Tom, noting the expression that had come over the scout's face.

"No," said Tom. "But I feel as if I would be if I looked down."

The doctor eyed him sharply. "I guess you're all right," he said. "Remember, you'll be anchored fast, and look hard at your footing, focus on that, and don't see off at all. All ready, Mills."

The Ranger walked out on the ledge quite calmly, a little sideways, so he could lean back toward the cliff, and tested each step to see that the ledge was firm and his spikes were gripping. Then the doctor went, even more coolly than Mills. Tom swallowed a lump in his throat, called himself a "poor mut," and when he had the signal, followed the others. He kept his eyes on the ledge, as the doctor told him, though there was a horribly fascinating and indescribable temptation to peep from the corners of them down over the edge. He could feel the doctor taking up the slack of the

rope as he came, so that with each step his fall would be shorter if he fell. Then, suddenly, he was over! He had been cold before he started, with a chill in his back as the wind evaporated the perspiration. Now he was suddenly hot again, and the sweat came out on his forehead.

The doctor was smiling at him.

"That's your real initiation in rock climbing," he said. "You're going good. Keep it up!"

The new ledge brought them to the big gully (the one you see, filled with snow, in the picture). It still had some snow in places when the party reached it, but for the most part it was clear, though there was a tiny trickle of water at the bottom. It was a great, rough, jagged trough scooped out of the cliff by ages of running snow water, and inclined at an angle not very far off the perpendicular. 214

"Not quite a real chimney," the doctor said briefly. "It's too big and open, and you can't stretch from side to side. Looks as if we'd have to watch out for stones, too."

"You will," said Mills.

Even as he spoke, they heard a noise above them, and the Ranger yelled, "Jump for shelter!"

All three sprang to one side of the gully, below a projecting shelf of rock, and past them, thundering down the chute, went a stone as big as a bucket, just loosened by melting snow above.

Tom watched it go past, and began to think the last place on the rope was not the softest berth he could imagine.

The doctor now turned to him. "You see what you've got to look out for, Tom," he said. "For each fresh climb, we'll pick a place where there is shelter for the man waiting below. But you've still got to be on the watch, and dodge quick. This is going to be a regular climb!"

It was! For the next three hours Tom did the liveliest and the hardest work he had ever put in. He had no chance to get dizzy looking down, for he never even dared to look down. He looked up, never knowing when the next stone or even shower of stones would descend upon him, and prepared every second to spring to right or left to dodge them. They climbed by sending Mills out from under a protecting ledge and letting him shin up his fifty feet. Then the doctor would follow, and when he was up with Mills, Tom would emerge from under the shelter, and join them. Then they would repeat the process. But even with Mills and the doctor standing still above him, Tom had to look out for rocks. They were always coming down, loosened by the melting snow above, as well as by the feet of the climbers. 215

And it was hard work, too. Not only was the gully tremendously steep, but it was rough, in places wet and slippery, and finally half full of snow. When they reached the snow, their worst troubles came, for they had no ice axes to make steps, and without steps they could not climb on the snow, it was so steep. They had to work up the side of the gully, by whatever toe holds they could find. The gully was steeper than a flight of very steep stairs—in places, indeed, it was almost perpendicular,—and Tom's breath began to come hard and his legs tremble with weariness. But Mills kept plugging upward, and the towering, upright pinnacles of the summit began to loom nearer and nearer.

Finally Mills, without warning, turned out of the gully, close to its top, and swung out on a wide ledge right under the final two or three hundred feet of the climb. On this ledge, which didn't show from below, was a regular little garden of moss campion and Alpine wild flowers.

"Goat food," said Mills, shortly. He had hardly spoken a word since the first bad place, and the doctor had been equally silent. They sat down to rest on this wide ledge, and looked off at last upon the great prospect below them, with the lake, like a little green mirror now, far beneath. 216

"Wonderful!" the doctor exclaimed. "A magnificent balcony seat we have in this amphitheatre, and no ushers to bother us. Mills, you're a good climber—you don't talk."

Mills smiled. "Never knew a safe mountain man who did talk on a cliff or a glacier," said he.

"No, you can't watch your footing and gabble at the same time. Bah! how I hate a talker on a climb!"

"A man came out here once in a big party," said the Ranger. "I took 'em up Cleveland. When we hit the real climb, he fetched out a sign from his pack, and hung it on his back. It read, 'I'm not very sociable when I'm climbing.'"

The doctor and Tom laughed, and the former added, "There's a wise man!"

The ledge on which they sat, which was like a little secret garden hung up here two thousand feet above the lake, was covered with goat tracks, and Mills pointed out several little caves, too, under overhanging rocks, where, he said, the kids were probably born. Above them, the last three hundred feet of the cliff went up perfectly straight, and Tom didn't see how they were going to get any farther.

But Mills presently rose and led the way to a "chimney," which is the name given to an open cleft in a rock wall. This chimney was so narrow that a man could brace his back on one side, and his feet on the other, and climb it just as you climb a well. Of course, it was rough, with plenty of projections to cling to. Mills had the hardest job here, for he had no rope to help him. 217

The doctor spoke in here, breaking his rule.

"Do the goats use this chimney?" he shouted up.

"Sure," Mills replied. "Can't you see the marks of their hoofs? They jump from side to side right up it."

"All I can say is, I'd like to see 'em," was the somewhat sceptical answer.

The chimney work was great sport, but it was also hard work. Tom's back was sore, his hands bruised, his arms weary, before they reached the top. But finally he saw Mills disappear over the rim, and then the doctor; and finally he himself crawled out of the cleft, and stood on the very summit of the precipice. And then Tom gasped, and forgot he was hot, forgot he was tired, forgot his hands were bruised by the rough rocks, forgot the moments when his heart had been either in his boots or his throat, forgot everything but the bigness of that prospect! He almost forgot to look at his watch; but the doctor didn't.

"Four hours and a half to go two thousand feet!" the doctor said. "That's the hardest rock climb I ever made. You don't need to go to Switzerland for real mountain climbing, Mills. You've got it here, right in your back yard."

CHAPTER XVII—Tom Sees Both Mountain Sheep and Goats Do Their Wild Leaps Down Dizzy Ledges

218

Below the great wall up which they had climbed lay the little green lake, and now they could see a horseback party which had come up to the shore, see them with the utmost distinctness, like tiny toys. Out beyond the lake stretched the green cañon, back to camp, and all to the south the piled up peaks and white snow-fields. But it was to the north that the view was best. The spot where they stood was not on the Divide, but a spur, or spine of rock running east from the Divide. This spine was only thirty or forty feet wide in places, and plunged down to the north, not quite so steeply, but quite steeply enough, to another little lake, and beyond that lake shot up the ragged gray and brown and red battlements of Mount Merritt. Merritt also stands just east of the Divide, so that they were looking into a second horseshoe amphitheatre, and on the high, steep sides of this amphitheatre, extending almost to the top of Mount Merritt, were no less than five glaciers. It was a wild, desolate picture, far wilder than the Iceberg Lake cirque, because there was less verdure, and not a trail or human being in it—only glaciers and precipices and wild, tumbled, jagged mountains.

219

The doctor gazed in silence for several minutes, and then he said,

"Tom, how do you like it?"

"Oh, it's wonderful! I never knew anything in the world could be so—so big and lonely and sort of endless."

The doctor smiled. "My family and a lot of my friends think I'm crazy to risk my neck climbing," he went on, "but they don't know. They don't know the fun of pitting your human cunning and will power against a precipice, and then, when you've conquered it, reaching a wild spot like this and seeing the whole world spread out at your feet. There's nothing like it. I give my patients pills, but this is the medicine I take myself."

They now ate their sandwiches, which were pretty well mashed up in their pockets, and quenched their thirst as best they could by eating snow. Then they explored along the ragged ridge a bit, finding in the centre of the spine, winding in and out amid the rough battlements, a distinct game trail, like a foot-path. In spots it was so plain that you would have thought men walked over it every day.

Mills presently went on ahead, softly, and after a while they saw him beckoning to them, and cautioning silence. He was at the edge of the cliff, peering over. Tom and the doctor tiptoed up and looked over, also.

There, not a hundred feet below them, on a wide ledge, were five goats! There was an old billy, standing on the edge, looking off and down, evidently inspecting with some suspicion the party which was now lighting a camp-fire for luncheon down on the lake shore. There were two nannies, one eating moss and one scratching herself with her hind leg. And, finally, there were two kids, as playful as kittens, jumping around. Now and then one of the kids would give a leap and go up the cliff to a rock projection higher than his head, jump from that to another, and so climb ten or a dozen feet. Then he would jump off, head foremost, and land beside the old goats.

220

The three unsuspected human beings watched them for several minutes. It certainly was a pretty sight, and the most wonderful part of it to Tom was that these kids were born up here, thousands of feet above the level earth, and perhaps would never get lower in their lives than the shale slide above Iceberg Lake!

"You always have to get at 'em from above," Mills whispered. "They don't seem to expect danger from that quarter. It's below that they watch out. Want to see 'em dive?"

The doctor nodded, and the Ranger suddenly gave a loud shout.

The old billy did not even look up. He simply went head foremost over the edge of the shelf,

where he had been standing, and disappeared. One by one, in exactly the same place, the others followed him, a kid going last. From where the men lay, a hundred feet above, the goats appeared to be dropping off into space, and to certain death.

"Good gracious!" Dr. Kent exclaimed. "Where'd they go to?"

Mills didn't answer. His eyes were scanning the cliff wall below. Suddenly he pointed to the left, at least two hundred yards away and lower down the slope. There were the five goats, trotting along like three big snowballs and two little ones, on a shelf not a foot wide. They went around a sort of cornice on a shelf so narrow that the men, a quarter of a mile away, actually could not see it at all—the goats seemed to be just moving like flies on a wall—and disappeared. A moment later they came in sight again, farther around on the cliff, climbing rapidly up a gully, or chimney, by sharp, quick leaps from side to side, each leap landing them higher, and at the top they reached a shelf which led to the summit, and disappeared.

"They'll go down on the other side, and be over on Mount Merritt in an hour," said Mills. "Oh, you get a lot of exercise hunting 'em!"

"We could have got a shot at 'em at the very start, before you scared them," said the doctor, "and after that there wasn't a spot they took where a man could follow till they were out of range, or a spot where he could have shot one without its falling so far it would smash the head to bits. If I hunted, that's the sport I'd like! The game has a better chance than you do. But I don't hunt, thank the Lord."

"You'd better not, in the Park," Mills laughed. "I wish I could show you a bighorn, now. They beat the goats at diving, though they don't climb up so well, or no better."

The men went back to the place where they had left the rope, and decided it was time to begin the descent. But before starting, the Ranger made another little trip along the top, in the opposite direction, in the hopes of seeing a sheep, for he said he knew sheep were around there.

"If I signal, bring the rope along," he said, "and come softly. We might be able to make one take a good jump."

He must have been nearly a quarter of a mile away when he waved his hand, and Tom and the doctor hurried toward him. Again he was peering over the cliff, this time on the north side, at a point where it was very steep. It dropped straight down about forty feet to a ledge, and on this ledge was a fine old ram, with magnificent curling horns, two ewes, and one lamb. They were all feeding, quite unaware of danger, evidently secure in the knowledge that no prowling mountain lion would drop down those forty feet of precipice from above. The ledge on one side led out to an easy slope. On the other side it narrowed to about four feet, and then ended abruptly.

"Quick!" Mills whispered, taking the rope. Softly, without a sound, he hitched it around a rock pile, and held the free end. "Now, the instant I throw this over," he whispered again, "you and Tom go down it. The sheep will be cut off, and have to jump from the other end of the ledge. They'll go quick, and you'll have to, also, to see 'em."

The doctor and Tom stood by, Mills dropped the rope over the edge, and first Dr. Kent and then Tom slid down it, so fast their hands burned. But the sheep were quicker. Before they reached the ledge, the last one was overboard. Tom and his companion dashed to the end where they had jumped, lay on their stomachs, and peered down over.

It was a drop of twenty feet or so to the first shelf below. On this shelf were the two ewes and the lamb. The old ram had already jumped to the next one, another twenty feet lower. This second shelf was tiny, and would hold only one sheep at a time. More than that, it was not directly under the first, but six or eight feet to the left. As the man and boy reached the edge, they saw the ram leave this shelf head foremost, and go down the cliffside, kicking the wall as he went with his hoofs, and land on a third ledge, seventy-five feet below them. No sooner was he off, than one of the ewes jumped for the shelf he had just deserted. She, too, kicked the wall with her hoofs, striking hard, incredibly rapid blows, and these kicks, very carefully directed, propelled her just far enough to one side as she fell to enable her to reach the shelf. When she landed on it, with all four feet bunched, it looked from above as if her shoulders were coming up through the brown wool on her back. She seemed to bounce as she hit, and with the bounce went right off again, to the ledge below, which the old ram had already left, and was now on a safe, wide shelf far beneath, and trotting off toward the slopes that led around to the wall of the Great Divide. The second ewe followed her, with exactly the same tactics, and then the lamb went bouncing down, as if it was all a game, landed almost like a rubber ball, bounced off to the next ledge, kicking the cliff wall with his little hoofs faster than a cat can strike with its paw.

In much less time than it has taken to tell it, all the sheep were on the slope a hundred feet below, and before the doctor and Tom could get up on their feet again, the little flock was out of sight around a shoulder of the cliff!

"Well! I've seen chamois in the Alps, but I never saw anything like that!" the doctor cried. "The cool nerve of that lamb! Why, they go right off into space, and their eyes are so accurate and their feet so quick that they kick themselves six feet to one side in falling twenty, and land safely on a shelf not big enough for a boy to stand on!"

The two climbed back up the rope to Mills.

"Get a good show?" he asked.

"That was the most interesting and thrilling exhibition of animal strength and skill I ever

witnessed," Dr. Kent answered. "And what a handsome creature the old ram is, with those great, curving horns! Why, a monkey in a tree isn't so active and daring! Besides, the monkey has branches to fall into, and the sheep have only space, with sure death below. Aren't they ever killed? Don't they ever miss?"

225

"Oh, yes," said the Ranger. "But in all the years I used to hunt 'em, I never saw one miss badly enough to be killed on a cliff he knew. It's when they get surprised and have to jump on a strange wall, maybe on the way to some new feeding ground, that they hit an impossible dive. On their regular beats, they seem to know every foot of the rocks. Sometimes the snowslides catch 'em in winter, though."

They were walking back, or, rather, scrambling back, toward the point where their chimney came up, as Mills talked. It was getting along in the afternoon now, the tourist party was leaving Iceberg Lake and winding down the trail like ants, and the three, without further delay, prepared to descend.

And now, for the first time, Tom learned the use of the doubled rope, in the descent. The doctor's rope, which had seemed clumsily long to him on the way up—a hundred feet for only three men—now was not long enough! They did not fasten themselves to it at all, except on the dangerous transverses. Instead, they hung it at the centre around some firm rock, dropped the two ends down the cliff, and then, grasping both strands, slid down them to the farthest ledge below which they could reach. That meant a possible slide of fifty feet, of course, with a hundred foot rope. Then, when all three were at the bottom, all they had to do was to pull on one strand, and the other side would go up till the end was freed from the rock above and came tumbling down. By this method they could take straight drops down the very steepest places, when, on the ascent, they had been obliged to work in the gully, with falling rocks threatening them. It amounted to descending by fifty foot jumps, and as soon as Tom learned to keep both strands of the rope equally firm in his hands so that there was no play whatever, he felt quite confident.

226

Of course, to let go of either strand while you are descending the doubled rope means that all your weight comes on one side, the top will slip, and down you will go. To avoid that, either Mills or the doctor came last for several hundred feet, keeping a hand on the rope while Tom slid down. But they soon saw he had the hang of it, and let him go first, or last, or in the middle, as it chanced, without any more worry.

By this method, their descent was rapid. Of course, it took time, for they had a long way to go, and you never hurry on a dangerous cliff. You go cautiously, deliberately, and sometimes you have to hunt three or four minutes to find a strong enough hold for the rope. But it was much faster than the ascent, and even though Tom's hands were soon red and burning from sliding down the rope, for he had no leather gloves, he enjoyed this new sport more than anything he had ever done.

They reached the top of the shale pile at last, at half-past six, having kept to the goat trail all the way down, out of the gully. They coiled up the rope, and went lunging down over the loose shale and then through the scrub trees and bushes, to the brook which flowed out to the lake. Here, as if on a signal, all three of them dropped on their knees on the stones, buried their faces in the ice water, and drank, and drank, and drank.

227

"So much perspiring, and such rapid evaporation in the wind up there, certainly does use up the water in your system," the doctor said, as his face emerged dripping from the brook, and he put on his glasses again. "Free ice water, too. Look at the chunks of ice floating around in it—and here it is August, and flowers growing on the bank!"

Mills got the horses, and they mounted. Tom could hardly have truthfully said he "vaulted into the saddle," however. He got up with considerable difficulty, for he was stiff and lame, and his arms were trembling from such long, hard strain in going up and then down the rope. But it was certainly good to be in the saddle, once you got there, and find yourself being carried, instead of having to do the work.

The Ranger at once began to trot. The trail to Iceberg Lake is such a good one, and the grade is so easy, that you can trot over a good deal of the distance, and Mills did not let any grass grow under their feet, especially as the horses were fresh. When they reached the woods near home, and the trail was almost level, he broke into a gallop, and with the doctor (who was not a good rider) wildly hanging to the horn of his saddle, they tore past a party just coming in from Swift Current, and dashed up to the tepee camp, where Joe was waiting for them.

228

The camp was full of hikers—a whole party of men and women, ten or a dozen. They were busily cooking on the stove, and the doctor looked anything but pleased.

"Where do I come in, Joe?" he asked, as he climbed from his horse.

"I thought maybe you'd rather come down to our little camp for supper," said Joe. "I can't use the stove here till this gang gets through, and Tom and I have a rough sort of table at our camp, and I have supper all ready to cook there, and I planned to have Mr. Mills come, too. Tom and I will sort of give a party."

"Well, now, that's fine!" said the doctor. "Mills and I accept. Let me wash up in my tepee first, and I'll be with you."

He went into his tepee.

"I'll take the horses up to the cabin," said the Ranger, "and be with you in a jiffy. Say, Tom," [he

added this in a low tone] “we had his number wrong. He knows the climbing game from the bottom up—he’s careful, he’s got nerve, he can pick a hold every time, and he don’t gas. He gets my vote.”

“Mine, too!” Tom answered.

“Everything O.K. here?” Tom asked Joe. “These people got wood, and cots, and everything?”

“Sure—beat it, and wash your mug. Gee, you’re dirty!” Joe laughed.

“Well, I guess you’d be if you’d been kissin’ an old precipice all day,” Tom retorted. “Oh, gee, Joe—this is the life! Some climb! Some old goats and sheep! Some Park!”

“Yes, and go and wash up if you want some supper.”

Joe made sure the hikers had everything they needed or wanted, and hurried down the path to the scout camp, where he began to cook the supper, while Tom was having a wash and getting into dry underclothes and shirt. He had been to the chalet store that afternoon and restocked the larder, and secured a piece of a big, fresh steak which had just come in by motor bus. This he now broiled over as good a bed of coals as he could get from his soft wood fire. He had coffee already boiling, and hot soup, and some nice canned beans, and French fried potatoes, and a surprise for dessert—nothing less than four plates of fresh huckleberries, which he had stumbled upon while taking a walk that noon, and picked into his hat.

When Mills and the doctor arrived, this supper was all ready, and the two men and two boys sat down on the log seats around the rough table of boards, and ate and talked, and talked and ate, while the evening shadows crossed the lake and the lights of the big hotel could be seen twinkling through the trees. It was a jolly meal, and a good one, and Tom had never in his life felt so hungry, and deliciously lame and sore and tired, so that a long draught of hot coffee seemed to go warming and tingling through all his body.

After supper, Joe would not let him go back to the tepee camp, but went himself to see that everything was fixed for the night. Tom just sat by the blazing camp-fire, while Mills and Dr. Kent smoked, and listened to the talk of the two men, who swapped yarns about mountain climbing. The doctor had been up rock crags in the Austrian Tyrol, thrilling precipices steeper than the wall of Iceberg Lake, and he had climbed over ice and snow, also, where you had to cut steps with an ice axe. But Mills, who had never been east of Omaha in his life, had once ridden down a mountain on a snow avalanche, (needless to say, without intending to!) and had seen a mother goat standing over her kid on the ledge of a precipice fighting off a bald eagle. Tom listened with ears wide open, and though he was sleepy and tired, he was sorry when the men rose to depart.

“I’ll come here for breakfast, boys, if you don’t mind,” the doctor said. “Those hikers may be an estimable collection of citizens and citizenesses, but I came out here to get away from folks. Good-night, Tom. We’ll have to have one more climb before I go—day after to-morrow, I guess. To-morrow I’m going back to Iceberg Lake and look at the flowers more carefully. Good-night, Joe. Good-night, Mills. Thanks for coming to-day. You Rocky Mountain goat hunters don’t need any course of training in the Alps.”

“Good-night,” the scouts called, as the two men disappeared in opposite directions.

Tom told Joe all that had happened as they got ready for bed, and ended by declaring he was too excited still to go to sleep.

Joe laughed.

“I thought I was, the first day over Piegan,” said he. “But the old Rockies fooled me. I slept, all right. So’ll you.”

And Tom did. In fact, it is doubtful if he heard the tail end of Joe’s sentence.

CHAPTER XVIII—Joe Gets Good News From the Doctor, And The Scouts Name Their Camp, “Camp Kent”

The next morning Dr. Kent arrived, rather cross, at the boys’ camp, for the hikers had waked him up early, and he told Joe nothing but a good breakfast would set the world right. Joe did his best, and then put up some lunch for him, and he went off presently in better spirits, to spend the day, as he put it, “loafing with the wild flowers and inviting my soul.” Joe also cooked his dinner when he returned at night. The next day, he said, would be his last, and he insisted that Tom go with him up on Grinnell Glacier.

“We’ll have a little more practice with the rope,” he said, “and you can see if you can tumble into a crevasse the way your friend Joe did.”

So Joe, for a second time, took charge of the camp, and Tom left with the doctor, bright and early. It wasn’t a hard climb up to the glacier, and they crossed it, using Tom’s scout axe for cutting steps when necessary, and the doctor sent Tom ahead a little way up a cliff, and then reversed positions on the rope, and let Tom take number two position. They climbed far enough up on the great gray shoulder of Gould Mountain to look down on the glacier, on the lake far

below that, on the green meadow, and then returned leisurely to camp.

On the way back Tom got up courage to ask Dr. Kent what he had been longing to ask him ever since he learned of his profession. That was, to examine Joe. He told his new friend of Joe's condition, and why they were in the Park, and how he was responsible for him, and did not want him to go on trips and do hard work if it wasn't safe.

"I'll see if I can borrow a stethoscope from the hotel," Dr. Kent said. "There must be a house physician there. Then I'll give him the once over, gladly. Anybody who can make coffee like his mustn't be allowed to die! But he doesn't look like a sick boy to me."

True to his word, he got the instrument, and before dinner took Joe into the scouts' tent, stripped him, and examined him very carefully.

"Who told you you had tuberculosis?" he finally said.

"Dr. Meyer," Joe replied.

"What Dr. Meyer—not Julius Meyer?"

"Yes, sir, in Southmead."

"Well, if *he* said you had, then I suppose you did have," Dr. Kent replied. "But, frankly, I can't find any trace of it in your lungs now."

"But ought he to do hard work?" Tom asked.

"I wouldn't let him over-strain," the doctor said, "and if he climbs, make him climb rather slowly. But out here in this wonderful land I don't believe he need worry much any more. If you can keep him here for a few months more, living this outdoor life, and then if he is careful when he gets back, I think he'll be a well man by the time he gets his full growth."

"But we have to get back to go to school," Joe said. "I couldn't let old Spider lose out on school, even if I did."

"What are you planning to become? What are you studying to be?" the man asked.

"We want to go into the forest service," both scouts answered.

"Oh, fine! That's a coming job, boys, but one that Joe can't take, if he isn't cured thoroughly. Think of this—your life out here is the best training you could have for the forest service. You can afford to miss six months of school to learn how to live in the big woods and the wild places. If you should camp with Mills till Christmas, say, you'd really be going to school, and Joe would be taking tonic twenty-four hours a day. Think it over, boys."

That night, after dinner, which he again ate at the scouts' camp, the tepee camp being again filled up with hikers, he paid Joe at the regular rate of three dollars a day for cooking his meals, and paid for the food, all except the dinner Joe had got ready the night of the first climb, which the scouts declared was their treat. Then he picked up his Alpine rope and handed it to Tom.

"How'd you like this for a souvenir?" he asked.

Tom gasped. "For *me*!" he exclaimed. "Oh, Dr. Kent, I—I—why, what'll you do?"

"I'm taking the bus out in the morning," the doctor said. "I've other ropes at home. You boys might like to do a little climbing. But promise me you'll pick easy grades to learn on, unless Mills is with you."

"Thank you!" Tom cried. "I—I never guessed I'd own a real Alpine rope. Feel of it, Joe—ain't it soft?"

"I move we name this shack of ours Camp Kent," said Joe.

"Carried!" Tom cried. "Camp Kent it is—and I guess we won't forget whom it's named for in a hurry, either."

"Thanks, boys," the doctor laughed. "And I won't forget you. I wish I were going to stay here a month, and use the rope with you. But I've got to get back to the sick people who can't come to the Park for a tonic. Good-bye—and good luck. Joe, keep up the good work—live out-of-doors, keep dry, don't worry, and you'll live to be ninety-nine. Tom—don't forget to test your anchor stone! I'll be out in the morning early, and get my grub at the hotel. Good-bye."

"Good-bye," the boys said.

And when he was gone they looked at each other, at the coil of soft, strong, beautifully braided Alpine rope, and Tom exclaimed:

"Well, by gosh! you never can tell. When he blew in, with those funny old blue socks on, and the spectacles, and his talk about the Matterhorn, I thought he was a freak or hot air artist, and so did Mr. Mills. Instead of that he's a prince—that's what he is, a prince!"

"I never said anything at the time," Joe answered. "But I liked him all along. Gee, I bet he's a good doc, all right."

"I bet he is, too—and he says you're all right now!" Tom cried, giving Joe a punch and a hug. "We can go climbing with this old rope together pretty soon. By jiminy, we *got* to carry our cameras up a cliff and get some goat pictures. Say, that's the sport! And I'm going to see Mr. Mills about staying on with him, and write home about school, and we'll just stay here and see the snow come, and get our skis sent on, and, gee, it'll be wonderful!"

"If we do that, I got to get busy and earn money," Joe replied. "I'm going over to the Saddle Company offices at the hotel to-morrow and see about another cooking job."

"Go to it," said Spider. "I'm willing, now the doc says it's O.K."

But he didn't have to go over to the hotel. That very evening a bell-boy from the hotel came for him, and he set out the next morning with a party on a four day trip. They went over Piegan Pass again, then up into the Red Eagle country south of St. Mary Lake, then up on to the top of the Divide over Triple Divide Peak, where the water from the snow-fields flows in three directions—to the Pacific, to the Missouri River, and so to the Gulf of Mexico, and to the St. Mary River, then the Saskatchewan River and so to Hudson Bay and the Arctic Ocean.

237

They descended to the headwaters of the Cut Bank River (so called because of its steep banks) and camped in a lovely cañon. Then, for the next stage, they climbed practically over the old war trail of the Blackfeet Indians, who went across the Divide over Cut Bank Pass to attack their foes, the Flathead Indians, on the west side. Then, for their final stage, they took the so-called Dry Fork Trail, to Two Medicine Lake. This was a thrilling trip, over a portion of the Divide that truly deserved the Indian name of the backbone of the world. At one point the knife-blade ridge was only thirty feet wide, with yawning precipices on either side. The chief guide said, "This is the place where they say you can spit down into the lake three thousand feet on the east, and throw a stone more than that on the west." Joe didn't have to get off his horse and try, in order to believe him. And he was glad enough there was not a gale blowing, too!

The trail finally led down around the base of old Rising Wolf Mountain to the Two Medicine chalets, on the lake, where the party spent the night.

Early the next morning, the party left for the railroad by bus, and Joe went with them to Glacier Park Hotel, where he caught the Many Glacier morning bus back to his own camp. It was a fine trip, with splendid scenery, but he missed Mills as the chief guide, and still more he missed the friendly companionship of Bob, Alice and Lucy, who had made his first trip so much like a family party. On this second trip he was just the cook for a group of three men and their wives. But it meant twelve more precious dollars for his fund—or, rather, it meant six dollars for his fund, and six to send home to his mother.

238

When he got back "home," as he called it, he found Tom had carved a sign, "Camp Kent," on a piece of board, and nailed it to a tree by their tent. He also found Tom full of an exciting piece of news.

"There's going to be a Blackfeet Indian pow-wow here at Many Glacier to-morrow," he said, "and it's going to end with a barbecue, which Big Bertha says is almost as good as a Hi-yu-Mulligan-potlatch."

"As a *what*?" Joe demanded.

"No, not a *what*, a Hi-yu-Mulligan-potlatch," Tom laughed. "Big Bertha says out in Washington, where he comes from, when they want to give the Indians a good time they give 'em a potlatch, which means a free feed, and a Mulligan potlatch is one where the free feed is Mulligan stew, and a Hi-yu-Mulligan-potlatch is just a jim-swizzler of a potlatch that makes an Indian yell, Hi-yu! Get it now?"

"I get it," Joe laughed. "But what's a pow-wow, and why's it being held here?"

"I guess a pow-wow is short for an Indian good time, and it's being held here to give the folks at the hotel something to look at—as if the mountains weren't enough. The hotel is crammed full, and so are the chalets, and I had three people in every tepee last night. I've been doing nothing since you left but chop wood, and haul water, and air blankets."

239

"Poor old Tom," said Joe. "Well, I got twelve cartwheels in my jeans—feels like a ton o' coal, too. That'll help toward the autumn. Now I'll help you get the camp ready for the hikers that are coming in to-night."

"It's all ready," Tom answered. "The crowd last night got away early this morning. The Indians are going to get here this afternoon, and set up their tepees down on the flats below the falls. We're going to walk down there now and see 'em come in, so hurry up and get yourself some grub. I've had mine. I was up at five to-day and couldn't wait for your old bus to get in at one-thirty."

"I'll be with you in fifteen minutes," said Joe, as he put some bacon in a pan.

CHAPTER XIX—The Indian Pow-Wow—Tom and Joe Get Into The Squaw Dance

240

The Indians were arriving when the boys reached the meadows below the falls, and were already beginning to set up their wigwams, or tepees, beside the Swift Current. The chiefs and braves, in their Indian dress, with feathered head-gear and bright blankets, were on horseback, and so were most of the squaws and children; but the tepees were being transported from the reservation out on the prairie in motor buses, and there was even an entire Indian family in a touring car, with the brave at the wheel!

"Gee whiz, times change all right," said Spider. "Even the Indians have automobiles."

Nearly a hundred Blackfeet arrived, all told, fine looking men and women for the most part, although the older squaws were fat and huddled up in their blankets, looking like funny bears. What struck Joe and Tom first of all, however, was the good nature of these Indians.

"I always thought Indians were silent and sort of grouchy," Tom said to Mills, who was on hand to help the Indians get settled in camp and see that the hotel, which had induced them to come, provided enough for them to eat.

241

"Not at all," the Ranger answered. "They are always laughing and joking, as you see. They are a very happy people, and they have a mighty hard time of it, too. They don't know how to raise cattle or grain, because they've always been hunters. Now the government has taken the Park away from them, and won't let 'em hunt here, and they half starve every winter. I tell you, I'm sorry for 'em."

The boys moved among them freely, listening to their strange language, and watching the tepees go up. Some of these tepees were made of tanned skins, mostly elk skins, but one or two very old ones of buffalo skins. They were stretched around a frame of lodge-pole pines, leaving a hole at the peak where the smoke could rise, as through a chimney. On the outside were painted in various colors bands and designs, and in the case of the chiefs, funny figures of buffalo and men chasing them on horseback, and other men being killed in battle. These pictures, Mills said, were painted by the chiefs themselves, and depicted the life history and exploits of each warrior.

"Good idea," Tom laughed. "You sort of paint your autobiography on the outside of your house."

"I suppose when you get home, you'll draw a picture of yourself climbing a cliff, over your front door," said Joe.

"And you can draw yourself falling down the cellar hatchway," Tom retorted.

By late afternoon, the tepees were all up, smoke was ascending from the peaks, the horses of each brave were tethered near their master's lodge, in the centre of the camp was a large, flat open space, to be used later for the dances, and here the little Indian children were now playing. When the flap of a lodge was lifted, you could see women inside, cooking or laying beds of skins and blankets. The funny Indian dogs, mongrels of all shapes, sizes and colors, were roaming around. Beside the camp flowed the Swift Current, green and foaming, and behind it rose the towering walls of the cañon sides. Except for the tourists who had come down from the hotel to watch, and the one Indian automobile parked near by, the camp might have been an Indian village of two hundred years ago, before the white men ever came. Tom and Joe were reluctant to leave, it all seemed so like a picture out of the past, the picture of a life and a race now fast vanishing from the earth. They took many pictures of the camp before they finally went back to their own camp, to see if any hikers had arrived.

242

A party was coming down the trail just as they got there, and Tom was soon busy. But when supper was over, he and Joe went back, taking the hikers along, to see the camp again. As they drew near, they heard strange noises, the TUM-tum, TUM-tum, of Indian drums. The pow-wow had begun.

"It won't amount to much, though, till to-morrow," Mills said. "They just get worked up a little to-night."

There was a big fire going in the central dancing ground, and near it, dressed in all their finery, two of them stripped bare to the waist with their skins covered with yellow paint, were the three makers of music, each holding a shallow skin drum in one hand and beating it with the other, in a regular, monotonous, unvaried rhythm, a two-foot beat, heavily accented on the first foot—TUM-tum, TUM-tum, TUM-tum, over and over, rather slowly. As they pounded out this rhythm, they kept laughing, emitting yells and calls, and sometimes sang. Meanwhile some boy or young brave would spring out into the fire-light, in the centre of the ring of braves and squaws and children squatted or standing around, and dance to the music, going through strange gestures, brandishing a decorated spear, stooping, bending, circling around, but always, the boys soon detected, adhering to some formal plan, although they didn't know what this dance might signify, and always surprisingly graceful.

243

"Some of those dances are very intricate," Mills said to them, as an Indian boy, after finishing a hard dance, dropped panting back into the circle, while the older braves applauded and another took his place instantly. "It takes a boy weeks to learn them, and each one has a meaning. It may be the boy's medicine dance, part of the ritual which will keep harm away from him."

Even after the scouts left, they could hear the TUM-tum of the drums, till the roar of the falls drowned it. The next day they hurried back, as soon as the camp work was done, and found the Indians dancing again, in broad daylight now, of course, with a great crowd of tourists around watching them. They were still at it when the boys came back after luncheon, seemingly untiring. But presently they stopped, and an old chief stepped out and began to make a speech.

244

"What's he talking about?" Tom asked Mills, edging in close to the circle.

"Don't ask me—I can't talk the language," the Ranger answered. "Hi, Pete, what's old Stabs-by-Mistake saying?"

This last question was addressed to a half-breed who was standing just in front of them, in the Indian circle.

Pete, who was dressed in cowboy costume, but without any hat, turned with a grin.

"He says they are going to take my white man name away from me, and give me a Blackfeet name," Pete replied. "He says the white men give the mountains foolish white man names, but I'm part Indian, and they're going to take my name, Pete Jones, away from me."

Stabs-by-Mistake (that was really the name of the old chief, and not a joke of Mills') now beckoned Pete into the middle of the circle. Two or three young braves danced around him, while the drums beat and all the Indians shouted and sang, and then the braves seized him, pretended to grab something from him with their hands, and ran with this imaginary thing to some bushes outside the camp. They disappeared in these bushes, speedily reappeared holding up their hands to show they were empty, and came back to the circle.

245

"I suppose they dropped his old name in the bushes!" Joe laughed.

"Sure," said Mills.

Now Stabs-by-Mistake rose to make another speech. Pete stood before him, and he talked for two or three minutes right at him, with many gestures, while the Indians listened. The boys could see that he had not yet given him a new name, and all the Blackfeet were waiting, excited, to see what the new name was going to be. Finally, Stabs-by-Mistake laid his hand on Pete's shoulder and spoke very solemnly. Then he spoke the new name. As he spoke it, he gave Pete a great slap on the back as a sort of period to his oration, and at the same instant the entire circle of Indians broke out into shouts of laughter. Pete looked sheepish, and came back toward the Ranger, red and grinning.

"Well, what's your name now?" Mills asked.

"He made a big talk about giving me the name of a great chief, gone to the Sand Hills long ago, and then he said it was Lazy-Boy-Afraid-to-Work. That's why they are all laughing."

Mills laughed, too. "He's got your number, Pete," said he.

Now another chief was making a speech, and Pete grinned at Mills.

"You're in for it now," he chuckled. "Yellow Wolf says they're going to give you an Indian name."

"Oh, help!" Mills exclaimed.

He was led into the circle, looking uncomfortable and shy with so many tourists gazing at him. But the boys knew he would rather have cut off his right hand than hurt the Indians' feelings by refusing. For him, the ceremony was much more serious. There was no laughing, and Yellow Wolf made a grave and evidently impassioned speech to the tribe, who listened and applauded. They did not go through the comic ceremony of taking the Ranger's old name out into the bushes, but instead they sat him down in a smaller circle of the chiefs, and passed an Indian pipe around. Then, standing once more, they danced and sang, and finally Yellow Wolf gave him his new name, with a slap on the shoulder, while the crowd expressed approval. Then a gorgeous feathered head-dress was put on his head, instead of a hat, and when he finally rejoined the boys, he was still wearing this.

246

"What's your name?" Tom asked.

"What is it, Pete?" said Mills.

"Tail-Feathers-Coming-Over-the-Hill," said Pete. "He was a fine Indian, too—medicine man."

"I thought so," Mills answered. "I thought I recognized it. Well, boys, I suppose I'm a Blackfoot now! You know" (he added this in a lower tone) "they are grateful to me because in the hard winter last year I didn't prosecute one of 'em for killing a sheep, but got the government to send 'em some food, so they wouldn't have to poach. Tail-Feathers-Coming-Over-the-Hill was a fine old Indian. I'm proud to have his name."

"It's some name!" the scouts laughed.

247

Now that these ceremonies were over, the Indians fell to dancing again, and the beat of the three drums, the calls and songs, rose on the air. Seeing the crowd of tourists about, and filled with fun and good spirits, the Indians started the squaw dance, the dance in which the women and even the larger children of the tribe take part. The three drummers stood in the middle, pounding their sheepskin drums, and around them, in a ring, holding hands or linking elbows, everybody facing inward, the Indians revolved by a curious little side step with a bend to the right knee, in time to the *TUM-tum*, *TUM-tum*, of the drums. Every moment or two a couple of chiefs or braves would dart out of the circle, seize some white woman or girl, and drag her laughing back into the ring. Then the young squaws began to run out and grab white men. Two Indian maidens seized Joe, while Tom got his camera hastily into action.

"Now, look pleasant, Joey!" he laughed. "We'll have this picture enlarged for the Scout House—Joe and the Indian maidens!"

The girls placed Joe in the circle, and he began to revolve with the rest. One of the girls beckoned at Tom, as much as to say, "Shall we get him?"

Joe nodded, and the girl spoke to another squaw maid on her left, and the two of them left the line and seized Tom, also, keeping fast hold of his hands and dragging him with much laughter into the revolving ring.

Before long as many as two hundred people, Indians and white, old folks and young, men, women and children, were all revolving in a great circle about the three drummers, who were beating

248

violently, singing, shouting. The Indian women began to sing, also, a strange tune, with only one phrase, repeated over and over. Of course, the boys could not understand the words, or even tell for sure sometimes whether there were any words. But the tune got into their heads. They could never sing it afterwards just as the Indians did, for the Indian scale, the intervals, are different from ours, but they could come somewhere near it, as they danced around their camp.

The squaw dance lasted until the "pale faces" began to get tired and drop out of the ring. Then the Indians went back to their former solo dances, their other songs, their general jollification and curious games. But the three drummers, without any rest, kept right on pounding and shouting and singing, as if nothing could tire them. They were still at it when the scouts had to return to their duties at the camp, and all that evening, too, they kept it up.

The next day the steer was to be roasted, in a fire pit dug and prepared by the Indians themselves, but Joe did not see that, for he received word that evening to start out early the following morning with a party over Swift Current Pass, and down to Lake McDonald. Tom went to see the beginning of the ceremony, but the process of roasting an entire steer isn't very pretty, nor very tempting, and he didn't stay. Beside, he had a big party of hikers to look after, and his own meals to cook now Joe was away. He returned to Camp Kent, looked longingly at his coil of Alpine rope, took his axe, and went at the task of replenishing the wood supply.

249

CHAPTER XX—The Scouts Start on a Trip Together at Last, To Climb Chief Mountain

250

Joe was gone five days, coming back over Gunsight and Piegan Pass, the reverse of the route he had taken on his first trip. But this time, he was getting so at home in the saddle that he could manage the packhorses without worrying, could throw a diamond hitch as well as the next man, and cook for a crowd without having too much left over, or not enough prepared—not that there is ever much danger of having anything left over in the Rocky Mountains! Everybody eats while there's food in sight. But Tom was pretty lonely without him, especially as the Ranger was away, too, for the first three days.

But on the fourth day Big Bertha called Tom up to the chalet office, and told him something that made him very happy, though it didn't seem to please Big Bertha at all.

"Tom," said he, "I've got to fire you."

(This isn't what made Tom happy. It made his heart drop into his boots for a second, before he realized that the man was trying to get a rise out of him.)

"Yes," the manager went on, "there's a party of men from Washington at the hotel. They came over Piegan, and they've been up to Iceberg Lake to-day, and now they want to climb Chief Mountain. Somebody's told 'em about it, and nothing for it but they must go up there. There's no cook for 'em till Joe gets back, and the Saddle Company is short on guides anyhow, and hasn't anybody who knows Chief Mountain. Mills says he'll lead the party, if he can have you and your rope. He won't go otherwise. Now, that puts me in a hole, because I'll have to go short handed and send one of my boys down to look after the tepees. But these Washington guys are big bugs of some sort, and I suppose we gotter please 'em. So day after to-morrow you start, if Joe gets back."

251

"Hooray!" Tom shouted. "Old Joey and I'll be on a trip together!"

"Yes, and what about me? You don't seem sorry for me at all," said Big Bertha.

"I'm not," Tom laughed. "I'll cut up enough wood to-morrow for a week, and clean the stove, and fix everything up. Guess you can worry along."

"You are a heartless, ungrateful creature," said Big Bertha, in his funny, high voice. But Tom knew that he was really glad to give him this chance to see Chief Mountain.

The next day Mills and Tom got together and made all the arrangements for the trip, for they knew Joe would not get in till late, over the twenty-two mile Piegan trail. It was to be a long expedition—probably a week—and needed considerable planning, for they were going north, where there were no chalets, no stores nor camps, and they had to carry everything. Fortunately, there were only three men in the party, so Mills, Joe and Tom were the only guides necessary. But it meant tents, provisions, blankets, and that meant packhorses—good ones, too, which were hard to pick, for the season was late, and the horses were all getting thin and tired.

252

Joe came in late, as they expected, and though he, too, was tired after the long ride over Piegan, he gave a whoop of joy at Tom's announcement. Tom made him sit down, however, and got the supper himself.

"And you're going to bed early," he added. "This is the real thing ahead of us now—Chief Mountain, maybe the Belly River Cañon, and Mills says maybe Cleveland, the highest mountain in the Park, if the weather is good. He says, though, it's getting time for a storm again. Anyhow, we'll see old Cleveland. Gee—it'll be great to be on a rope again!"

"You talk as if you'd climbed the Matterhorn all your life," Joe laughed.

The next morning at six o'clock the Ranger and the two boys were at the hotel, and beginning to pack the horses. For this trip they took but two tents, one for the three men, one for themselves. Enough food was the main requirement. They got everything, including blankets, on four horses, saving a fifth horse for the dunnage bags, which the men speedily brought out.

Of course, Joe and Tom looked at these men carefully. When you are going to be on the trail and in camp with people for a whole week, you are pretty interested to know what sort of folks they are, and whether you are going to like them. One of these three was young, not over twenty-two or twenty-three, the son of the oldest man in the party. The father, whom Mills addressed as Mr. Crimmins, had gray hair, but he looked hardy and strong, with a quick, sharp way of talking and quick motions. He and his friend, Mr. Taylor, a man of about forty, were both connected with the State Department at Washington, Mills said. The young man, Robert Crimmins, was just out of college.

"They look good to me," Joe whispered to Tom.

"I ain't saying a word," Tom answered. "Not after Doc Kent. Wait and see."

The fifth horse was now packed, and the expedition started.

But instead of turning up any of the trails toward the range, Mills led the way straight down the automobile road, toward the prairie. It seemed funny to Joe to be setting off on a trip in this direction, right away from the high places, but the horses liked it. They liked the comparatively smooth going, gently down-hill, and swung along at an easy trot.

Down the road they went, mile after mile, until they emerged from the lower end of the Swift Current Valley, out into the rolling prairies, with the whole range behind them. Then, as the road swung up over a knoll, Mills paused and pointed north.

"There's old Chief," he said.

Everybody looked. About twelve miles to the northwest, thrust out eastward far from the Divide and with the wall which rose out of the prairie growing steeper and steeper till the last two thousand feet were sheer precipice, stood a magnificent tower of a mountain, shining whitish in the sun as if it were composed of limestone. At the back, it seemed connected by a spine with the range behind, but to the prairie it presented an unbroken front, like some great Gibraltar of a tower, with the prairie grass and forest beating like surf at its feet. All alone it seemed to stand, like a sentinel of the range behind, a lone outpost.

"Is *that* what we've got to climb?" the three men exclaimed, in one breath.

"Well, we won't take you up the east wall," Mills laughed.

"Oh, couldn't we get up it?" Tom cried.

Mills looked at him, and grinned again. "About to-night you won't feel like climbing *anything*," he said. "Remember, you're not saddle-broke, the way Joe is."

They now turned north, away from the motor road, ate some lunch under the shade of an aspen and willow thicket, amid the Persian carpet of prairie wild flowers, and then all the afternoon pushed on toward the great limestone tower, with the whole pile of the Rocky Mountain chain beside them for company. Late in the day they reached a rushing stream, which came down from a cañon just south of the big mountain. This was the north fork of Kennedy Creek, and they turned up it by a trail, the lowering cliffs of Chief now rearing up almost over their heads, and went into the mouth of the valley, and up till the main tower of Chief was east of them, and they were under the south wall of the spine which connected the peak with the main range behind. Here they made camp, in a little meadow beside the stream, with pine woods all about, and while Tom and the Ranger pitched the tents, with Robert Crimmins giving enthusiastic help, Joe built his fire pit and began to get supper. The two older men, who were pretty sore after the thirty mile ride, hobbled about snipping some boughs for their beds.

It was a good supper Joe gave them, however, and the camp was in as delightful a post as a man could ask, and around the big fire, when the food had all been eaten, the whole party sat or lay on the grass, in the fine democracy of the open trail, the assistant Secretaries of State beside the boy scouts from Southmead, and the jokes and stories went around.

But Mills "sounded taps," as he called his bedtime order, very early, as he planned a six o'clock getaway in the morning, and that meant getting up at half-past four. The next day they were to climb Chief. The Ranger looked long at the stars before he came into the tent he and the scouts were using.

"Boys, a good day to-morrow," he said, "but it looks like a storm after that."

"Well, let her rip, after to-morrow," Tom answered. "To-morrow, though, I'm goin' up old Chief, even if I have to climb with nothing but my hands, and I feel now's if I *would* have to!"

"Poor old tenderfoot!" Joe laughed.

"Gee, it isn't my foot," said Tom, so comically that Joe and the Ranger roared with mirth, as they rolled up in their blankets.

How Mills managed to wake up just at the time he wanted to, without any alarm clock, the scouts never were able to fathom, but he always could. He was awake and shaking them at four-thirty the next day. Joe was up on the instant, and putting on his outer clothes, but Tom groaned when he tried to move, and fell back into his blankets with an "Ouch!"

"Your sick friend strikes me as better than you are," Mills taunted him.

"Why wouldn't he be? He's been weeks in the saddle now," Tom retorted, stung into sitting up. "I'll be all right by to-morrow—you see if I'm not."

"Well, I'm sorry you're too lame to climb Chief to-day," Mills said, with a wink at Joe.

That brought Tom out of his blankets entirely, and on to his feet. "Too lame, your grandmother!" he cried. "I'd like to see you get my rope without me!"

"Oh, it's been climbed without a rope, many a time," Mills laughed.

Tom was up now, and thoroughly awake, and began to see the joke. He grinned rather sheepishly, and went out of the tent with his towel. Meanwhile, Joe beat reveille on a frying-pan, and lit his fire.

By six o'clock breakfast was eaten, the horses packed again, and the party on its way. They went up the trail but a short distance, and then turned sharp to the north, and began at once to climb the long spine which connects Chief Mountain with the main range to the west. It was a little over a mile to the summit of this spine, rising from 6,000 feet to 7,400. A horse does not trot up such a grade, but neither does he have to climb like a goat. In an hour, they were at the summit, and could look at last not only eastward, along the ridge, to the limestone tower of Chief which was their goal, but down the slope on the north side to the valley of the Belly River, and across it to the eastern shoulders of Cleveland, the highest mountain in the Park, 10,438 feet.

Here, in the open, grassy ridges at timber-line, the horses were unsaddled and unpacked, so if they lay down to roll, they could do no damage, and the party, with Tom's rope and the cameras, set out along the ridge due east toward the towering cliff of Chief, which looked like a huge castle battlement, or watch-tower. It was not over a two-mile walk to the shale pile at the base of the summit precipice, by an easy grade, though the going was sometimes rough. The topographical map Joe carried showed that they rose from 7,400 feet to over 8,000, at the top of the shale pile, and as the mountain is 9,056 feet high, that left about a thousand feet of cliff for the final ascent.



Chief Mt.—the Sentinel of the Prairies

At the top of the shale they paused, while Mills and Tom consulted. This great limestone rock was not such a hard proposition as parts of the Iceberg Lake cliff, and after a careful survey of the ground, they decided the best way to handle six people on the rope was to send a leader up with the end, to anchor where he could find strong anchorage, and then let the rest use it as a rail, rather than fastening it around each person's waist.

Tom went in number one position, with the Ranger as number two, and Joe was stationed at the

bottom, to brace and throw a loop around anybody who might, by chance, slip. In many places, Mills played Tom out nearly the whole length of the rope, where the incline was sufficiently off the perpendicular, and the rest had almost a hundred feet of rope rail to climb by. In only a few places was there real vertical climbing, and those as the summit was neared. Before noon they were all over the last pitch, on the summit.

Robert Crimmins ran to the outer edge of this summit at once, and looked out over the vast green prairie, stretching mile on endless mile to the east, like waves of the sea, and shouted.

"Father, come here!" he called. "Say, this is just like riding on the bowsprit of a tremendous ship!"

Everybody hurried over, to feel the same sensation, all except Joe. "I tell you what it feels like to me," he said. "It feels as if I was on the front edge of the earth crust when it rode up and over the other edge. This must be the very end of the overthrust."

"That's so," Mr. Crimmins agreed. "I've been reading up on this geological formation. This cliff under us—it must be three thousand feet down to the shale slide—was the front edge of the overthrust. You can see that. The Belly River has carved away one side, Kennedy Creek the other, but this old lump of limestone has resisted all the bombardments of frost and water, glacier and storm, and the weather has carved it into a watch-tower of the prairies, an outpost sentinel of the Great Divide."

["Some speech!" Tom whispered to Joe.]

But Joe did not laugh. He felt exactly what Mr. Crimmins meant, and it was very thrilling. It seemed as if he could see exactly what happened myriads of years ago when the earth cracked, and one edge of the great crust was shoved forward on to the prairie, and as if he could see what had happened since, to carve the crust into peaks and valleys.

Mills, meanwhile, had been walking about. Now he called to them, and they all went over where he stood, and saw him pointing to the bleached skull of a large animal on the ground.

"What's that?" the men asked.

"Buffalo," he answered.

"How on earth did it get up here?" said Mr. Crimmins. "There are only three things, without wings, which can climb this cliff, surely,—goats, mountain sheep, and men. You needn't try to tell me a buffalo could climb up here!"

"Shan't try," the Ranger answered. "A Blackfoot brought that up."

"What for?" Joe asked.

"To use for a pillow while he was getting his medicine. You know, when an Indian boy gets about the age of you scouts, he has to take a sweat bath (made by putting hot stones in a closed lodge and pouring water on 'em) to purify himself, and then he goes off to some wild, lonely place and just waits there, naked, without any food, till he has a vision. This vision tells him what his special 'medicine' is to be, which will bring him good luck. Old Yellow Wolf told me we'd find the skull up here. He knew the brave that brought it up for a pillow. He said the young Indian stayed four days on the summit before he got his 'medicine.'"

"Say, if I stayed up here four days, naked, I'd need some medicine when I got down!" young Crimmins laughed. "Let's take the skull for a souvenir."

"Oh, no!" Joe cried, forgetting that he was only a cook and guide for the party. "That would be—be desecration! Let it stay here, where the Indian left it!"

Mr. Crimmins looked at him sharply but kindly. "Joe is right," he said. "Let it stay here as a record of a race too fast vanishing. I like to think of that naked Indian boy, all alone, climbing this great rock tower and for four whole days sitting up here far above the world, waiting for a vision from his gods. You wouldn't catch one of our American boys doing anything like that. Yet we think we are vastly superior to the Indians!"

"But his vision, after all, probably came because he was dizzy for lack of food, and it was a superstition that it could furnish him a 'medicine' to bring good luck," Mr. Taylor said.

"Superstition or not," the other replied, "it represented the instinct to go out alone, and meditate on solemn things. Didn't it, Joe?"

"Yes, sir!" Joe answered, his own heart full of enthusiasm for this picture of the lone, naked Indian on top of the watch-tower of the prairies.

But Tom and Robert Crimmins, who had less imagination, had wandered away to an edge of the cliff, to toss stones over into the depths below, and suddenly the rest heard them shouting, and ran to the edge.

One of the stones they had thrown over had landed on a ledge some seventy-five feet below, and scared off a golden eagle, which was now sailing away from the cliff face with tremendous beats of his huge wings, each beat taking him up, it seemed, fifty feet, till soon he was soaring in circles out over the prairie, and sweeping back, with wings at rest, far overhead, evidently alarmed but intent on finding out what had disturbed him.

Crawling to the edge, and looking over, the party could see a big nest on the ledge below, with white things in it, and beside it, like bones.

"I'm going to have a photograph of that!" Tom cried. "Gee, I wish there were some little eagles in it!"

"You might be sorry if there were," Mills answered briefly, as Tom fastened the rope under his arms. "I'm not even sure of the bird now the young are out. Here, take my revolver, and if it comes at you, let him have it."

Tom put his camera in one pocket, the automatic in the other, and the men above lowered him over the edge, where he swung almost free, and had to kick the cliffside with his feet to keep himself from spinning and keep his face outward. The eagle still circled above, now and then swooping nearer till they could hear the wing beats, but it was evidently afraid to attack. Tom finally reached the ledge, landing, in fact, with both feet in the nest. It was a huge affair of sticks, lined with dry prairie grass, almost as high as his shoulders, and four feet across. He climbed out, watching the eagle with one eye, and took a couple of snapshots of it, then picked up some of the bones and examined them, grasped the rope just above his face, to ease the strain under his arms, and gave the signal to those above.

As he began to rise from the nest, the eagle swooped ever nearer, now lower than the men on the summit, so they could see its vast wing spread, its brown back and rusty colored head and neck.

Tom let go of the rope with his hands, and got the pistol out of his pocket. To tell the truth, he was beginning to get uncomfortable. As the eagle swooped within fifty feet of him, and he could see its glinting eyes, he lifted the gun and fired. Naturally, you cannot shoot a rapidly moving object with a pistol, while you yourself are dangling and spinning on the end of a rope, with any great precision of aim. He did not hit the bird, but he frightened it. With an incredibly quick change of tack, it tilted up on one wing, soared outward and upward, two hundred feet overhead, and far out from the cliff. The men hauled Tom back over the edge.

"Well, I got my picture!" Tom exclaimed. "Say, but that's a whale of a nest! And side of it is a little skeleton, either of a kid or a baby lamb, and lots of small bones like rabbits and birds, and a fresh, half eaten ground squirrel. That's what the old eagle was eating when we disturbed him, I guess. Gee, it's a regular bone yard down there. Don't smell very good, either. I don't think I care for eagles much."

"I didn't care for that one, when he was coming at you!" Joe said, his face still white.

"I didn't myself," Tom admitted. "Wish I'd had the nerve to photograph the old birdie instead of shooting at him."

"They don't like to have their pictures taken," said Mills, with a short laugh.

After this excitement, the descent of the mountain began. Half-way down, Joe left the rope, at a wide ledge, and went some distance along it, to one side, to get a photograph of the whole party on the cliffside. After he had snapped it, he kept on along the ledge a way, just to see where it went to. After a hundred feet, it turned a sharp corner, and as Joe rounded this turn, he suddenly was face to face with a big old ram! He was quite as astonished as the sheep, but he instinctively pointed his camera and snapped the bulb, just as the ram lowered its head as if to butt.

Joe flattened himself against the wall, not wishing to be knocked off fifty feet to the slope below. But the sheep decided not to butt. Instead, he turned tail, dashed a few feet back on the ledge, and went over head first. Joe ran to the spot in time to see him land on a little shelf twenty feet lower down, bounce off that to a ledge still lower, and then trot around an easy slope and disappear from sight. Not having had time to roll his film, he couldn't take another picture. But he returned to the party in triumph. Tom might have a picture of an eagle's nest, but now he had one of a live bighorn! The fact that his camera was focused for a hundred feet, as he had just taken the party on the rope when he met the sheep, and so his close-up of the old ram would be somewhat blurry, did not occur to him till long after, when the film was developed.

After a quick lunch, mainly of Charlie Chaplin sandwiches, the horses were packed again, and they descended the north slope of the ridge, by an easy grade, getting rapidly into timber, and after five miles or so reached the valley of the Belly River, turned up that, and presently made camp at the mouth of the Glenns Lakes, two long, narrow, green lakes reaching in toward the Divide, with the towering walls of Cleveland, which they had seen clearly from Chief, rising right out of these lakes, but now, they saw to their sorrow, going up into clouds.

"I thought so," Mills said. "Bad weather. It don't look to me as if we could tackle Cleveland tomorrow. I wanted to try him from this side, too—go up on that long shoulder that comes down south, and then east, toward us. We could get up on that and make a base camp. Well, we'll camp here to-night, and if he's still under to-morrow, we can go over Ahern Pass to Flat Top, and then try him from the west side. That's the side they usually go up, anyhow."

So they pitched their tents in a meadow by the Belly River, with the clouds gradually shredding out overhead till they finally wrapped the tower of Chief, and hid it from sight, and the cold grew uncomfortable, so that everybody save Joe set about chopping a big supply of wood. Night came early under the cloud mantle, and with no glimpse of the stars, or the tops of those great walls towering up overhead, it was a lonely spot. As Joe was dropping to sleep he heard a coyote barking somewhere out near the horses, a weird, sad sound, like the coughing laugh of an idiot. He shivered at the sound still more, and tried to roll his blanket tighter.

"But you've got to get used to it, old scout, if you are going to be a forest ranger," he told himself.

Certainly it did not trouble Mills, who was already sound asleep.

The next day the mountains were still under. It wasn't raining, but the clouds were a dark, gun metal color, and seemed to rest like heavy smoke on the rocks overhead.

“Nothing doing,” said Mills. “They may be over for two days yet, and it will surely rain. We'll keep the trail over Ahern Pass, and make Flat Top to-day. All out!”

And it was a strange day that followed. The trail was none too good, with much fallen timber to drive the packhorses around for the first two or three miles, and it very soon got up into a wild, desolate, narrow cañon under the southern wall of Mount Merritt, with the water of Lake Elizabeth beside the path, looking in this gray light under the lowering clouds a sort of dead, chalky green. Beyond Lake Elizabeth the cañon grew steeper and narrower, the cliffs of Mount Merritt went sheer up into the clouds, and on the other side of the valley rose the equally steep walls that were the reverse side of the Iceberg Lake cliffs Tom had scaled. But the tops both of Merritt and these cliffs were hidden in cloud, that swirled and raised and lowered as the upper wind currents hit it. When they reached Lake Helen, at the head of the cañon, where the trail began to switchback up the wall of the Divide, they could see, just under the clouds, poised, it seemed, almost over their heads, no less than four glaciers, one of them apparently hanging on a shelf and ready to fall off at any moment. In fact, a huge cake as big as a house did fall off, and crashed down with a great roar to the rocks below, even as they watched.

“The mountain gnomes are bombarding us!” Mr. Crimmins laughed.

They went steadily and steeply up, on the switchbacks, and reached the top of the Divide at noon. But half an hour before they got to the Divide they were in the clouds, in a thick, damp, chilling fog, that was not rain and yet covered their clothes with drops of moisture, made their hands wet and cold, and of course obscured every vestige of a view.

“Well,” said the Ranger, “here we are on the backbone of the world. Over there is Heaven's Peak. Just to the left, only a mile away, Tom, is the top of the Iceberg Lake head wall. If it was clear, you could take Joe over and show him where you climbed. But I guess as it is we'll get down as fast as we can, and not even wait for lunch.”

“Anything to get out of this,” the men said, blowing on their wet, numb fingers.

So they dropped down on the west side of the Divide, getting out of the cloud below timber-line, and stopped while Joe made hot coffee. Then they pushed on down still farther, picked up a better trail in the deep woods in a cañon beside a stream—Mineral Creek Cañon; and turning sharp north, began slowly and gradually to climb again. It was the kind of a day when nobody does much talking, and even the horses seemed to plug dejectedly along. After two or three miles, however, they began to go up more rapidly, out of deep timber, into a region of meadows and low balsams. Joe was the first to smell the balsams, and sniffed eagerly.

“I'm going to have a real bed to-night,” he called to Mills, “if you don't look. I know it's against the rules to cut bough beds in the Park.”

“I won't look, if you won't tell,” Mills called back. “We have to make that rule to protect the trees, but way up here in the wilds Uncle Sam won't miss a few twigs, I guess.”

They were now nearly under the clouds again. To their right a steep débris pile rose, and ended in a jagged cliff wall, which disappeared in the vapor. To the left was a wooded slope, and ahead the trail climbed sharply to a ridge which could barely be seen under the clouds.

“We're almost at the north end of Flat Top Mountain,” the Ranger said. “That cliff to the right is the Divide, and dead ahead that ridge you see is the Divide turning sharp left and running across to the western range. From here on into Canada the western range is the watershed. We could climb to the top of that ridge—only half a mile, and camp on the Divide, if you want to.”

“And spend the night in the cloud? Excuse me!” Mr. Crimmins said. “This is bad enough.”

“All right—all off,” the Ranger answered.

He called to Joe and Tom, and the three of them pitched the two tents in a sheltered spot, in the centre of a grove of balsams about twenty feet tall.

“And peg 'em down hard,” he said. “Anything may come out of those clouds to-night. Now, Tom, get a good big supply of wood, and stack it up dry, under a pack cover, while I turn out the horses.”

While Joe was getting supper, the three tourists gathered balsam boughs for beds, following Mills' orders to take only a few twigs from any one tree.

“It's against the rules,” he said, “but we may need to sleep as warm as we can to-night.”

“I believe you,” Robert Crimmins replied, blowing on his numb fingers.

Tom, meanwhile, combed the region all around for dead wood. The supply was none too large, for they were perilously close to timber-line; and under the cloud darkness was coming on early, to make the job harder. But he finally found a large dead tree, down in a sheltered hollow by the stream, and got four or five good logs out of that, and a lot of smaller stuff. The two tents were pitched facing each other, with a camp-fire and Joe's fire pit between, and with the surrounding evergreens for a windbreak and the tent flaps open to catch the heat, they were pretty

comfortable that evening, though every one wore his sweater, and Joe and Tom, who had brought their mackinaws, were glad enough to put them on, too.

Nobody undressed that night at all, except to take off his boots and put on an extra pair of socks instead. The wind was rising steadily, the tents shook, the evergreens over them sighed and whistled, and Joe lay awake for the first time since he had been in the Park, with a curious feeling that something was going to happen.

He got to sleep at last, but he woke up presently—it seemed to him that he woke up immediately—and peering through the tent flap saw no sign of a fire. At least, he thought, the embers ought still to be glowing. He slipped out of his blankets as softly as he could, climbed over Mills, who was sleeping nearest the entrance, and started to unbuckle the flap. As he did so, a gust of wind hit the tent, half lifting it off its pole, and blew the flap wildly in. As it blew in, something soft and cold and stinging hit Joe's face. Snow! He stuck out his head for an instant, and all he could see was a kind of swirling, waving, hissing white darkness. It was bitter cold, too, and the fire was out. Dimly he could see the outline of the other tent, and the roof of it was white with drift. No use trying to build up the fire in that! He fought the wind to close the flap again.

But the swirl of the snow in his face had waked the Ranger.

"What's the matter?" he said.

"A blizzard," Joe replied, as another gust of wind strained the canvas and rattled the guy ropes. 273

"I thought something would come out of this," said Mills. "Hang it, we ought to have camped lower down. I'd rather be drowned than frozen."

Tom woke up now, and they lighted the camp lantern, to peep out into the night.

A voice, half drowned in the roar of the gale, came across from the other tent.

"Say," it called, "what had we better do?"

"Keep in your blankets and hang onto your tent!" Mills shouted back.

"I wonder if he thinks we can call a taxi and drive to a hotel!" he added in a normal tone, that couldn't have been heard two feet beyond the tent flap.

Nobody slept any more in either tent that night. They were too cold, and too busy bailing out snow that drifted under the tent walls, or trying to peg down the walls or stop up the gaps with the balsam beds. Finally, toward morning, there came a perfect hurricane of wind. The tent the scouts were in swayed, tugged, seemed about to leave its moorings, and in the midst of the gust the occupants heard a snapping sound outside, and a smothered yell.

Mills sprang out into the storm, and a moment later came back with Robert and the two men, all wrapped in their blankets, and powdered white by the brief crossing.

Their tent pole had snapped, and the tent had come down on top of them! There was no chance of getting it up again then, so the six people all huddled in the one tent, and waited for daylight.

"Anyhow, the more we are, the warmer we can keep," said Robert, who was rather enjoying the adventure. "Go on, Joe, keep your knee in my back, I like it! It's as good as a hot water bottle." 274

The storm began to abate presently, and as the light brightened outside, Mills, peering out, reported that the snow had stopped falling. With the diminution of the wind, too, the cold lessened, and the noise, and nearly everybody, in spite of the cramped quarters, fell into a troubled, rather restless sleep.

What woke Joe up was the bright daylight hitting him in the eye through a crack in the tent flap.

He extricated himself from between Robert and Mr. Taylor, and pushed his way out. It was a transformed, a wonderful, a beautiful world he looked on! Evidently the sun was up over the prairie, for far down Mineral Creek Cañon he could see the top of Cannon Mountain, snow covered, pink and rosy with the light, and Heaven's Peak, a little nearer, was like a great pyramid of gleaming rose crystal. On the ground about him, half covering his fire pit, was almost a foot of snow, which hung on the balsams, was drifted over the fallen tent, covered the rocks, and through which, here and there, rose the stems of wild flowers, their blossoms nodding above the white carpet!

He gave a shout.

"Don't miss this!" he cried. "Gee, it's worth a lost night's sleep, and then some!"

Sleepy, stiff forms emerged from the tent behind him, and gazed at the sunrise over a world that was white with winter, and yet was summer. Everybody exclaimed with delight—except the Ranger. 275

"This will make Cleveland hopeless," was all he said, as he began to pull the fallen tent up out of its drift.

"Well, I'm going to name this old camp Valley Forge," Robert Crimmins laughed, as he stamped his feet and blew on his fingers, before picking a wild flower for his buttonhole!

It was a hard job digging the camp out of the snow, and only the fact that Tom had covered the wood and weighted down the canvas to hold it on gave them dry fuel to cook with. They had no snow shovels, using frying-pans and dippers to clear away the drifts from the fire pit and their packs.

"Valley Forge is the right name," Mr. Crimmins laughed as he stamped his feet and blew on his fingers, as Robert had done.

But the sun was now up, the air was rapidly warming, and while Joe got the breakfast, Mills and Tom waded out through the snow in search of the horses. They had to go a long way, too, for the wise beasts had simply wandered down the trail into the woods, and kept on descending until they had got below the snow line into rain, where the grass was not covered and they could feed. It was almost two hours later that the Ranger and Tom came driving them back, cross, hungry, and with boots soaked by the snow and clothes soaked by the wet bushes.

So they got a late start that morning.

"We'll go up the Little Kootenai Cañon," said Mills, "as far as the old cabin of Death-on-the-trail Reynolds, and see how the land lies for a try at the west wall of Cleveland the next day. If it isn't promising, we can make an afternoon trip up to Waterton Lake, and then come back the next day. If it does look like a try at the big mountain, we can push up the side a way, and make a base camp."

277

So they mounted, and pushed up through the soft, rapidly melting snow to the top of the ridge where the Divide crosses from the eastern to the western range, and after a short trip through the snow-filled, open meadows of Flat Top, with the little pines and balsams looking like Christmas cards, they began to drop down a more than two-thousand foot slope into the cañon of the Little Kootenai River, which flows due north, with Cleveland on the right, and Kootenai and Citadel Peaks on the left. Especially Citadel Peak was superb in its snow mantle, a great, glistening white fortress towering thousands of feet up from the cañon.

They reached the old cabin of Death-on-the-trail Reynolds at one o'clock, and found there the ranger for that district.

"How about Cleveland?" Mills asked.

"Getting sort of tired of life?" the other ranger inquired.

"That's what I thought," Mills replied. "Any chance to-morrow?"

"Not much. She'll melt on the lower slopes to-day, but the peak'll not begin cataracting snowslides till to-morrow morning, about ten A.M. Day after you might make it."

278

"No use—we can't wait that long," said Mr. Crimmins. "I'm sorry, but even the State Department can't control nature."

So, after lunch in the cabin, they left the packhorses behind, and free to travel at a good gait, trotted down the trail to Waterton Lake, a long, narrow, beautiful sheet of green water which stretched away north ten miles, into Canada, and being warm with the ride the two scouts and Robert had a swim—or, at least, they went into the water. They came out before they had swum far, their bodies stung red as boiled lobsters by the cold.

"This Park reminds me of the poem," Robert said,

"Water, water everywhere, but not a place to swim."

Back at the Ranger's cabin, they had a big, leisurely supper, with the Ranger as their guest, and after supper he told them tales of Death-on-the-trail Reynolds, an old mining prospector, who had first built the cabin, and when the Park became national property was made a ranger, and true to his name died in the saddle on one of the trails he had followed so long. This old trail from Waterton Lake south over Flat Top and down Mineral Creek to McDonald Creek, and so to Lake McDonald, was a regular smuggler's route in the old days, the Ranger said, and many a horse had been driven down it in the dark, before the American rangers on one end and the Canadian Northwestern mounted police on the other put a stop to that sort of thing.

That night they slept in the cabin, and early the next day went back in their tracks—the first time they had repeated a trail—reaching "Valley Forge" camp at noon. The snow was about all melted here now, and when Mills pointed up the cliffs to the east, and said Chaney Glacier lay just on the other side, it was voted to camp here once more, and spend the afternoon on the glacier, and the peak above.

279

"I've never been up that peak," Mills said, "but I have a hunch there'd be some view up there."

Lunch was eaten quickly, Tom got out his rope, and they started.

It was an easy climb, and could have been made without the rope, probably, though the rope was a great help in making speed. After a long grade up a shale slide, and across a snow-field, they reached the base of a rough, jagged cliff, and by picking out upward slanting ledges on this cliff, Tom led the way rapidly upward, Mills keeping the rear of the rope anchored, while Tom anchored the upper end, thus making a rope railing on the outer edge of each ledge. In less than

an hour they reached the spine of the Divide, at a col between two higher peaks. This spine was a knife blade, not over ten feet wide, and directly on the east side, with its upper edge so close you could step off on to it, lay Chaney Glacier, a vast field of snow now, with little ice showing, a mile in extent, and sloping downward till the lower end disappeared over the rim of a precipice. Out beyond this precipice, they saw the Belly River Cañon, looking straight down it, over the green waters of Glens Lakes, to the spot where they had camped, and beyond that to the green ocean of the prairies. From here, too, they got a superb view of Cleveland, rearing up, still snow covered, a great pyramid of white.

"Want to go out on the glacier?" the Ranger asked Joe.

"Oh, I don't mind," Joe laughed. "The rope's strong."

Every one did want to go out on the glacier, so Mills roped them all, keeping last place himself, and they ventured out over the apparently unbroken field of snow. But this snow was light and rapidly melting, and they had not gone far before Tom, in the lead, with a sounding staff he had cut before they left camp, detected a frail snow bridge and sent it crumbling down into the crevasse, disclosing the green ice walls. One look down this well into the ice decided the party not to venture far over the treacherous field, and they returned to the firm rocks of the Divide, and climbed on up another eight hundred feet to the top of the peak to the south.

The summit of this peak was only about the size of a big table, and to the east it fell away absolutely sheer for three thousand feet to a tiny lake far below, out of which, on the opposite side, shot up the cliff wall of Merritt. The wind was strong up here, and the peak so small that all six lay on their stomachs to peer over the precipice.

"Say, that's a hole in the earth!" Mr. Crimmins exclaimed.



Mt. Cleveland and Glens Lakes

Robert spit over the edge. "I never spit three thousand feet before," he said. "Want to climb up that cliff with your rope, Tom?"

Tom shook his head. "It couldn't be done, not even by a goat," he said, wisely.

"As a matter of fact, you're right," Mills laughed. "I never even knew that cliff was here, either. This Park hasn't been more'n half explored yet."

From almost the very top of this peak, a long, very steep shale slope led to the "Valley Forge" meadow, and down this they descended, by the aid of the rope, sending showers of stones ahead, so that the leader was in constant danger, and wearing down the spikes and soles of their boots rapidly. They camped that night in the old spot, using their former fire pit, but there was no storm, and the next day they had an uneventful passage back down Mineral Creek, up to Swift Current by the trail Joe had first climbed in the rain, and so on back to Many Glacier—a long trip of twenty-four miles, but to Joe, who by this was as hard as nails, not very tiresome. At Many Glacier the boys bid the two men and Robert good-bye, and as darkness was gathering, once more cooked their supper in Camp Kent, which by now was like home to them.

"Well," said Tom, "that was some trip, old wifey—let's see, we were six days out, and we didn't meet a soul after we left the road till we got back to Granite Park, except the ranger up under Cleveland. The real wilderness stuff, eh?"

"You bet!" said Joe. "And eighteen dollars more for me and ma."

"You're getting terribly practical," Tom laughed.

"I'm getting self-supporting," Joe replied. "No more grafting off you."

"You're getting *well*," Tom cried. "That's the real thing. Gee, you're harder'n I am now! You never seem to get tired."

"Bet I can hit the little old cot, though," Joe laughed, as he began to make up the beds in the tent.

CHAPTER XXIV—The Boys Prepare for Winter in the Park, and Learn Why the Timber-Line Trees Are Only Three Feet Tall

283

It was now September, and already a rain in the valleys meant fresh snow on the peaks and high passes. The hotel was still full, however, and Tom was busy at the tepees, while Joe had steady work as a camp cook, once on a fishing trip, when, in three days, he cooked so many trout he said he should be ashamed ever to look a fish in the face again, and sick if he ate one.

"I didn't think it was possible to get fed up on trout," he declared.

"Wait till next April, and you'll be out whipping up Roaring Brook, all right, all right," Tom laughed.

Of course school had begun back in Southmead, but Tom did not feel like quitting his job before the season was over, and, besides, after long talks together, and consultations with the Ranger, and letters home to their parents and Mr. Rogers, the boys had decided to stay on with Mills, in his cabin (paying for their own food, of course, which would be a very small item), until Christmas. It would mean that they'd lose the whole school term instead of a month, but, in return, Joe would have that much more outdoor life, they could do a lot of reading evenings, and, above all, they could learn from Mills some of the duties of a forest ranger in winter, and learn how to handle themselves in the mountains and big woods after all trails were closed, all tourists departed, and the Park had gone back to its primitive wildness.

284

Mr. Rogers agreed with them, and evidently persuaded their parents. "After all," he wrote, "you'll really be taking a term in practical field forestry, and Joe can never hope to get a position as a forester if he hasn't fully recovered his health. The government won't take a sick man on the job. Learn all you can, especially how to take care of yourselves."

So the boys sent home for their very warmest winter clothes, mittens, pull down hats, ski boots and skis and some school books and stories to read evenings. Mills said he could get them real Indian snow-shoes in the Park, and elk skin sleeping-bags. He was even more delighted at the prospect of having them than they were at staying. It meant he would have company till nearly Christmas, and the scouts knew how lonely he usually was in the winter, because that was one thing he had never talked about.

The tepee camp closed about mid-September, when it got too cold for many hikers to come over the high passes, and the next two weeks Tom worked as a regular guide, with a license badge from the Park superintendent. Joe also had a couple of jobs with camping parties, but he had had his badge from the start. All the hotels and chalets closed on October first, and then the boys moved into the Ranger's cabin.

285

They were glad to move, too. Already winter had begun to come, up on the Divide. The snow that fell did not melt, and the line of it was creeping down the bare, rocky slopes of Gould. The nights were cold, and water froze in a kettle, and ice formed on the edge of the lake on a still night. Before the last bus had departed, all three made a trip out to Glacier Park station and laid in supplies for the winter.

"The next trip we make may be on snow-shoes," the Ranger said. "That's fifty miles afoot, packing your sleeping-bag on your back."

The horses presently were sent down to the prairie to winter, and Joe got some of the hens from the hotel, which otherwise would have been killed or taken away, and installed them in the stable.

"We'll have fresh eggs for a while, anyhow," he declared.

"What you going to feed 'em with?" the Ranger asked.

"I got two barrels of feed," said Joe, "and our table scraps. When the feed gives out, we'll live on fricasseed chicken. Anyhow, I'll keep one good one alive till Thanksgiving, and we'll have some fresh meat that day."

286

In the weeks that followed, Tom and Joe lived a hardy, active life afoot, sometimes going with the Ranger up the high trails to inspect where the early snows first slid, so that he could get a line on the spots in which the most danger to the trails lay.

"My idea is," he said, "that in some places where we have trouble, making us a lot of work in the spring, the government could plant Arctic willow or limber pines, to hold the snow from sliding, and save a lot of money. I'm going to study snowslides this winter, and make a report."

Sometimes, too, the scouts went hunting with him, not for sheep or goats or deer, of course, but

for the animals which prey on the sheep, goats, deer, etc. The worst pest, perhaps, is the coyote, which is a sort of cowardly fox-wolf, and as the snow gradually pushed down the slopes and drove many animals with it, the coyotes grew more numerous around the cabin, so the boys could hear them barking at night. Now all the tourists were gone, Mills gave each boy a gun, making them his assistants, and especially on moonlight nights, when they heard the coyotes barking, they would go out where some bait had been placed and shoot two or three.

"Every one you bag saves the life of a dozen ptarmigan hens, and probably a lot of lambs and fawns," said Mills.

It wasn't long before the side of the barn was covered with coyote skins.

"But what you really want is a lion's skin," said Mills.

"What I want is a silver tip skin," said Tom. "I want a coat like yours."

"Nothing doing," Mills laughed. "Mr. Silver Tip is protected now."

"Well, then, bring on your lion!" Spider replied.

"We'll get one yet," Mills answered.

Until the snow got well down toward the valleys, Tom and Joe used to go off for a day at a time, also, with the rope, climbing up cliffs for practice and still oftener, with their cameras, seeking out the upland slopes where the wind kept the snow blown off, and lying in wait for sheep, to photograph them. The sheep, they found, came to such places to feed. But it was cold work waiting, so they finally hit on the idea of packing up their sleeping-bags on their backs, and lying in them, under the shelter of some rock or timber-line pine. In this way, they got several photographs at close range.

They got something else, too; they got a real idea of why the trees at timber-line are only a few feet high. It was mid-November when they had gone up a shoulder of Mount Wilbur, early in the morning, to a bare upland pasture where they believed that sheep would come to feed. The sun was shining when they left, and there was no snow to speak of down in the valley. But they took snow-shoes, to keep their feet dry up above, and their sleeping-bags.

Before they reached the pasture, however, which was at the extreme upper edge of timber-line, the sun was overcast, and the wind was rising to a gale. They kept on, in spite of it, and picking out the lee side of a rock, where a tree grew about three feet tall, till it got above the rock and then turned at a right angle and trailed out parallel to the ground, they got into their bags to wait. No sheep came that morning, but as the wind rose and shrieked and howled, and snow began to fall, they were too interested to go back down.

If they raised their faces the least bit above this rock, smash! came the gale to hit them, and the snow particles cut like ice, while in the wind they felt little stinging particles of rock dust that actually hurt when they hit you.

"I don't blame this tree for not growing any higher!" Joe exclaimed. "It's like us—just cuddles down behind the rock."

"Sure," said Tom. "If a branch does grow up over in summer, a wind like this the next winter just cuts it off like pruning shears."

The scouts were now beginning to get covered with snow, and in spite of the fascination of lying up here with the storm howling over them and feeling why it is the trees at timber-line grow only a few feet, or even in some cases a few inches, tall in a hundred years, they realized it was time to be getting down.

The instant they stood up, and got the full force of the gale, they were almost knocked off their feet. The snow was coming fast now, and it was all they could do to keep their footing over the treacherous rocks. They had no rope, as they had not supposed they would need it, but when Joe was suddenly bowled over, and went nearly fifty feet down a long drift before he could dig in his heels and stop, it began to look grave.

As soon as they got off the partially bare shoulder, into a trifle less windy reach, they put on their snow-shoes, and fought along toward the Swift Current trail, almost blindly in a brief time, for the snow was increasing till it shrouded them like a cloud.

"Say, I'm getting nervous!" Joe cried. "We ought to be at that trail by now."

"Shut up," Tom said. "If you get a funk, it lets down your vitality, and then you'll get cold and freeze your ears or feet or something. We can't miss it; we got the pitch of the slope to go by."

"That's so," Joe answered. And as he realized that the slope would guide them, so they couldn't go in a circle, he suddenly felt warmer. He realized how important it is to keep your head.

Once on the Swift Current trail, which, though snow covered, showed plainly, they descended rapidly on their snow-shoes, which gripped well. There was not yet snow enough here to start a slide, but they weren't sure there might not be, and they kept an anxious eye above them all the way down. Once in the woods at the bottom, they hurried on to the cabin, not even stopping to make tea.

"Say, you poor boobs," Mills exclaimed, "I was just coming after you. Why don't you pick a wild, windy, stormy day to go climbing Wilbur? What are you trying to do, commit suicide?"

"No," said Tom, "to see why the timber-line trees are so dwarfed."

"Yes, and we found out," Joe added.

CHAPTER XXV—Protecting the Deer Yards—The Scouts Wait in the Moonlight and Bag a Mountain Lion

291

That storm lasted two days, and it brought the snow to the valley, laid at least sixteen inches of it on the level in the woods, and swept it across Lake McDermott against the hotel, till the drift reached the top of the first story. As soon as it stopped, the scouts and Mills were out on their snow-shoes, tracking through the woods.

"I want to find out where the deer yards are going to be this winter," the Ranger said. "We'll want to know, so we can keep an eye on them, for lions or wolves, and protect the herds if we can."

"What's a deer yard?" the boys asked.

"Big game, especially in winter, don't travel very much," the Ranger answered. "They pick out some place where the feeding is good, and learn to know it well, not only where to get food, but where to turn quick and hide from enemies. When winter and deep snow come, they begin packing down the snow with their hoofs in a sort of yard—moose, deer, and sometimes even sheep do this—and as the snow grows deeper, their packing raises them higher and higher up, so they can feed on taller and taller bushes, and even finally get up to the limbs of trees."

292

Mills decided that the protected southwestern slopes of the mountain along which the trail winds to Iceberg Lake was a likely field, so the party split up, and each one went his own way through the woods and across the open parks, looking for tracks, and following any that he discovered. They were to meet at one o'clock on the shore of the lake.

Joe was soon out of sight and sound of the others, and as he was lowest down, close to the brook at the bottom of the cañon, he was also in the thickest woods, where the fir-trees, covered with snow like Christmas cards, shook their "frosty pepper" into his nose as he pushed through. The brook was partially frozen, and he often found it easiest to walk on the snowy edge. Presently he came on deer tracks leading into the open water, and not emerging. The deer had walked upstream, in the water, evidently—several of them, and recently. He hurried on, beside the brook, and suddenly, rounding a little cover of pines, came full on a herd of five, walking in the water. He had not heard them, because of the gurgle of the brook, nor they him. He stopped dead in his tracks and watched them a second, before they got his scent, or in some other way detected him, and turned to look. He did not quite know what to do, but the deer quickly decided. They stepped out of the brook and into the woods, as if to let him pass. He went on, and looked back. The deer had walked into the brook again, and were slowly coming on, browsing on overhanging shrubs as they came.

293

So Joe moved some distance from the bank, and then followed them. After half a mile, they left the stream and entered a thick, small wood where, just outside, was long, dried grass under the snow. He saw that they had been here before, pawing away the snow to eat this hay. He followed into the wood, stampeding them out on the farther side, and found already the signs that they had begun to stamp down paths through their "yard." Walking around the grove, he looked for tracks of coyotes or lions, but there was nothing but the track of a snow-shoe rabbit. The deer, so far, were safe. Indeed, they even now stood about three hundred yards away, watching him with alert curiosity, their heads raised, a pretty picture over the white snow.

He carefully took note of the spot, and hurried on to report. Tom and the Ranger reached the lake about the time he did. The Ranger had found a yard, also, and Tom had found a mink track, and seen a snow-shoe rabbit, in his white winter dress.

They built a fire on the snow, beside the white snow-field which was the lake (the water was now frozen solid), and as they made their tea, they watched a herd of goats low down on the cliff that Tom had climbed, evidently quite content up there, on the ledges too steep for snow to cling, and finding something to eat.

"It must be dry picking," Tom declared. "Why, there was little enough in summer."

294

"And no tin cans," Joe laughed. "You might have left 'em a few tin cans, Tom, when you climbed the wall."

"Never thought of it," Tom answered, "and now it's too slippery."

From then on it became the scouts' almost daily task—or, rather, pleasure—to visit the deer yards to see how the herds were getting on. There were five deer in one yard, and eleven in the other, and before long they got so used to the boys that if they happened to be "at home," as Joe put it, they would hardly go a hundred yards away while the scouts inspected their methods of feeding, looked for enemy tracks, and sometimes left bundles of hay on the tramped snow—hay which Joe had discovered he could dig out in a sheltered spot near the chalets. It wasn't much, but it served to make the deer tamer.

Often, now, the scouts came on their skis, for two more storms had put three feet of snow on the ground, and it elevated them above the underbrush. The run home was thrilling, with long, fast

slides down open parks and hard, Telemark stems at the bottom to keep from crashing into trees or rocks. But they couldn't get the Ranger on skis.

"No, sir!" he said. "You boys know how, and can keep from breaking your necks. But I'm too old to learn."

It was the day after Thanksgiving, when Joe, true to his word, had killed a hen and cooked the nearest thing he could to a real New England Thanksgiving dinner, that he and Tom, visiting the first of their yards early in the morning, came upon a tragedy.

295

There were no deer in sight as they approached, and on entering the packed path under the trees they heard no sounds. Pushing on, they came suddenly upon all five beautiful creatures, lying dead on the snow! There was blood on the snow, too, and one or two bodies had been somewhat eaten. But three of them had merely been killed wantonly, and not eaten at all.

The boys were furious. They cocked their rifles, and began a rapid, angry search for tracks. Yes—there they were—big, catlike paw tracks! The lion had crouched in the evergreens, sneaked up in the night when the herd were huddled close for mutual warmth, and laid them all low!

They circled the grove till they found the tracks leading away, and followed them as fast as they could. But, being on skis, they were soon baffled, as the lion had made at once for the steep, rocky cliffs. So they rushed to the other yard. Here the herd had not been disturbed. They were all browsing on a new path they had packed among some willows.

"Come," Joe cried. "Back to see Mills and find out what to do! The old lion may get the other herd to-night."

That night there was a moon, and the Ranger and the boys, clad in all their thickest clothes, with four pairs of woollen socks in their big, easy moccasins, with sweaters, fur coats, fleece-lined mittens and bearskin helmets, advanced on snow-shoes up the valley.

296

"The lion may come back to the carcasses, or wolves may scent 'em and come," Mills said, "or he may attack the other herd. Then, again, he may do nothing, and we'll have to watch every night for a week. You two take the dead herd, and I'll watch the other. Approach it up wind—don't get on the windward side at all, and if you can find a good rest in a tree, get up in that, with a clear view of the opening. Let the lion get in close before you fire, and let him have it in the heart and head. There ought to be light enough to-night. Better have your guns in rest, pointed at the carcasses, so you won't have to make any noise lifting 'em."

The Ranger and the scouts now separated, and Joe and Tom, making a wide circle to get sharp to leeward of the yard, moved silently over the deep snow, in the cold, clear, almost Arctic moonlight, with the great peaks of the Divide rising up like silvery ghosts far overhead. There was no noise in all the world, and no living thing except themselves, except once when a startled snow-shoe rabbit leaped across an opening, white as the snow he was half wallowing in.

"Say, this is spooky!" Joe whispered.

"You bet," Tom whispered back. "The little old electric lights in Southmead Main Street are some way off!"

They drew near the wood where the yard was, and crept stealthily into the dark shadows of the pines. The dead deer lay in a tiny opening, five black objects on the moonlit snow. The boys, still keeping down wind, each picked out a tree, and with their rifles carefully locked, climbed up through the scratching, snowy branches till they could work into some kind of a seat, and get their guns pointed out, with an opening along the barrel to sight.

297

"Say, I hope the old lion don't take too long," Tom whispered. "My seat's about two inches wide, and sharp on top."

"Gosh, I'd sit on a needle all night to save those other deer," Joe answered. "But don't talk. He may be coming any minute."

In cold and silence, they waited. There wasn't a sound, except now and then a muffled groan or creak of a tree limb, as one or the other of the boys had to shift his position. It grew later and later. Joe's eyes ached with watching the five black objects on the snow, and the patch of white moonlight around them. They ached, and would close. He was bitterly cold, too. He did not know whether he would be able to pull the trigger if the lion came, or pry his lids wide enough apart to see the sights. Every time he tried to sight the gun now, it was just a blur of shining blackness. And he knew Tom must be feeling the same way. Mills certainly had not fired at anything—they could have heard a rifle shot for ten miles in that deadly still Arctic hush.

Then, so suddenly it almost made him fall off his branch, something dark and long and lean came sneaking into the patch of moonlight. It was the lion, its paws sinking down, its body crouched over them, till it seemed to creep like a snake. In this ghostly light, it looked about ten feet long, and Joe suddenly felt hot blood go through his half-frozen veins.

298

The lion gave a low, angry snarl, and stopped dead about three feet from the body of a deer, raising its head a little. Evidently it had heard Joe or Tom moving his rifle barrel to sight. But he had no time to retreat. Almost as one shot, the two guns blazed, with two flashes of red out of the evergreens, and a report that seemed to shatter the cold night silence.

The dark form of the lion gave a leap into the air, and landed kicking in the snow.

At the same instant two figures literally fell out of the trees, and rushed toward it, going in up to their waists, for neither waited to put on his snow-shoes again.

Tom was the first near it.

"Look out!" Joe yelled. "He's not dead! He may come at you!"

But Tom had his gun up, and at pointblank range, with his sights in full moonlight, he deliberately took aim, and fired again, at the lion's heart.

The body gave a last kick, and fell on its side, stone dead, its blood slowly running out on the snow.

"He'll never kill any more deer!" Tom cried.

They turned the lion over, and examined it. One bullet had hit him in the front leg, one in the jaw, shattering it, and entering its throat. But which shot was whose, nobody could say.

"I guess it was yours that got his head," Tom declared, "'cause I was so sleepy I couldn't see to sight."

"My hands were so cold, I almost couldn't pull the trigger, so it must have been yours," Joe answered.

"After you, my dear Alphonse," Tom laughed. "Anyhow, we both hit him, and that's some shooting at a hundred feet, in the middle of the night, even if it is moonlight. We better get our snow-shoes on, and drag him home. Wonder if Mr. Mills will come, or stick it out at the other yard?"

"I bet he comes," said Joe. "He must have heard us fire."

They made an improvised sledge of a big, broken pine bough, to keep the body up on top of the snow, and were tying it on to this with their handkerchiefs knotted around the feet, when they heard a far call.

"He's coming!" said Joe, and making his hands into a trumpet, he answered the call.

They had the body out of the yard, and were crossing an open park with it, tugging hard, when the Ranger's halloo sounded much nearer, and shortly after he appeared in the moonlight, coming fast.

"You got him, eh?" he said. "That's good work. I heard your two shots, and then one more. That was to finish him at close range, I bet."

"You win," said the boys. "Gee, but he's heavy to drag."

"That's a bum sled," the Ranger laughed. "Either of you got your axe on?"

"No, we haven't," the boys said.

"I'll find a fallen pole, then. Drag him along to the next stand."

The Ranger went ahead, and found a small fallen tree from which he broke the dead branches and made a pole. Slipping this between the lion's paws (which were knotted together with handkerchiefs) he picked up one end and Tom the other, the lion hanging down between them. Joe took the rifles, and they started home.

The moon was setting behind the Divide and the world growing dark under the frosty stars as they neared the cabin. Once inside, the boys got a rule, and ran back to measure their prey. He was exactly eight feet long, with three feet more of tail, and by lantern light they could see his yellowish-brown color, his gray face and dirty white belly. He looked like some gigantic, elongated house cat.

"Is that what used to be all over the country, and was called a panther?" Joe asked.

"I suppose it is," the Ranger said. "Probably this type that lives in the Rocky Mountains looks a bit different, but it's the same breed o' cat. You don't have panthers out East any more, do you?"

"No, they say one hasn't been seen in Massachusetts for fifty years or more," Tom answered. "Don't know that I'm sorry. I like the deer too well."

"Speaking of deer, to-morrow we'll go up and rescue the good carcasses he didn't eat, and have some fresh meat," said Mills. "Now to bed. Do you know it's two o'clock?"

"Most time to get up!" the boys laughed, as they cleaned their rifle barrels and made ready for bunk.

CHAPTER XXVI—A Hundred Miles in Four Days, Over the Snow, Which is a Long Trip To Get Your Mail

The next morning Mills was up at the usual time, but he let the boys sleep, and it was the sound of the breakfast dishes that woke Joe, who was usually first up to do the cooking and get the stove red hot. Joe himself slept in a separate little room partitioned off at the back, so he could have his window wide open without freezing out the whole cabin. He got up now and hurried out, still sleepy.

"I had a funny dream last night," he said. "I dreamed we were bringing the lion home on the

sledge Peary took to the North Pole.”

“Not a bad idea!” the Ranger exclaimed. “We might make a sledge to get the deer meat home on. Suppose we do that to-day, and to-night we’ll take turns guarding the yard from possible wolves.”

In the Ranger’s cabin was a kit of tools, and outside was plenty of wood. A sled like Peary’s, however, was impractical in the soft snow, and, moreover, they soon found that without small hard woods to work with it would be impossible to build any kind of an enduring sledge.

“Why don’t we make a toboggan?” said Tom.

“You need hard wood for that, too, to curl the end—and it takes time to steam the wood and get it bent, anyhow,” Mills replied.

“Wait—I have it!” Joe cried. “You folks be getting three or four strips of board ten feet long planed down thin, with the under side smooth. I’ll come back presently.”

He put on his skis and vanished down the trail, with a shovel over his shoulder.

While he was gone Tom and the Ranger took two boards left over from the stable, each about six inches wide, and made another by hand-hewing it from a fallen log close to the cabin. Before this was done, Joe had returned, bearing triumphantly a twenty-five pound butter box.

“I saw it behind the hotel, on the trash pile, when I got the hens,” he said. “I went down there and dug where I thought it was. Had to make three holes and a tunnel before I got it—but it’s hard wood, and all curled.”

When the third board was hewn out, and all three planed smooth and thin, they were laid side by side and connected with light crosspieces. Then the bottom was removed from the big butter box, the side drum severed, and one end securely fastened under the front end of the toboggan bottom. Thus the butter box curled up and around like the front of a real toboggan. The loose end was secured with thongs, and rings were put on either side of the boards, to run ropes through to hold on a load. Finally, a rope to pull it by was made fast.

“There!” Tom said. “That’s a regular toboggan, and she’ll ride on top of the softest snow.”

“I wonder if she’ll buck when we throw a diamond hitch?” Joe laughed.

As soon as supper was over, Joe went alone, with his rifle, up to the yard, and watched over the dead deer till eleven o’clock, when Tom relieved him. Tom watched till three, and then the Ranger guarded till daylight.

But before daylight Joe was up, cooked some breakfast, roused Tom, and taking food for Mills and pulling the toboggan, they hurried over the snow, now well packed into a trail by their frequent trips to the yard. All that morning they worked skinning the deer, to save the valuable hides for moccasins, thongs, and similar uses, and quartering the carcasses which the lion had not molested after killing them. The meat, of course, was frozen now, and would keep indefinitely. It was a great load of skins and meat they finally packed upon the toboggan, piled high and fastened securely on, but a very dirty, bloody, tired lot of people to drag it home, and they were glad enough that the yard was above the cabin, not below it.

But that night, after they were washed, they sat down to a fresh venison steak, and forgot their weariness, as only men can who have lived largely on canned goods for many weeks.

“M-m, m-m!” said Tom. “This is good! Somehow I ain’t so mad at that old lion as I was!”

“What did you kill him for, then?” Mills laughed. “You might have had eleven other deer to eat if you’d let him go.”

“Kind o’ mixed, isn’t it?” Tom confessed. “I sure would kill him every time—but I’d rather eat the deer than leave ‘em for the wolves, just the same.”

“If you want something good to eat, get one of your lion friends to kill a sheep for you, and bring us some mutton,” said the Ranger. “I haven’t had a piece of mutton for ten years, I guess. Before this was a Park, and we used to hunt here, my! the feasts I’ve had!”

“Well, I could stand tinned beef all my life, to see the sheep alive,” Joe declared. “I’m glad it’s a Park now.”

The next day the hides were spread to cure, and the meat was all cleaned and hung, and the three then overhauled their equipment and packed up to make a start the next day for Glacier Park station. No mail had come to anybody since October, they had been able to send no letters to their parents, and the Ranger had not even been able to report to the Park superintendent, or the boys to send telegrams since the storm before Thanksgiving, because the telephone wire between Many Glacier Hotel and the railroad had been broken. As a rule, Mills used this wire in winter. One of the objects of their trip was to see about this break.

The trip out to the railroad, which was about fifty-five miles by automobile road, could now be reduced to about forty-five, because they could cut cross lots, over the deep snow, shaving the end of Flat Top Mountain (not the Flat Top of the Valley Forge camp, but another on the eastern edge of the overthrust), and by good hiking reach Glacier Park station in two days. They planned to take the toboggan, loading on it their provisions, sleeping-bags, a small tent, axes, and the scouts’ snow-shoes. The boys planned to wear skis for a good part of the trip, and to put Mills on the toboggan on the down grades, thus saving time. He laughed at the idea, but as the shoes were light made no objection.

That night was clear and cold, and the next day promised to be fair. Joe and Tom sat up late, getting letters ready to send home, and Joe spent an hour on a letter to Lucy Elkins, telling her about his life in the Park, and promising to send snow pictures as soon as he could get them developed. But they were up long before the sun in the morning, and set off by starlight, all three on the ropes of the toboggan, down the trail.

When they came to the first long, snowy slope, Mills said, "Let me see one of you go down it on your skis."

Tom dropped the rope, and ran, gaining speed as he went, the snow flying out from under the prow of his skis, and a moment later was waving his hand from the bottom.

"Saves time, all right," the Ranger agreed, "but what's to become of me?"

"Get on the back of the toboggan, let one foot hang out and steer with it, and come along," Joe laughed. "It's easy."

"I never steered one of the blamed things," said Mills.

"Here, you sit on top of the bags, and hold my skis. I'll show you."

Joe took his skis off, put Mills on the front, and pushed the toboggan over. A cloud of snow rose over the curl of the butter box prow, powdering the Ranger in the face, and they flew down the hill in Tom's tracks, and stopped at his side.

"Well, I'll be darned—here we be!" was all Mills said, as he brushed off the snow.

"Tom, I believe there's something we can teach Mr. Mills!" Joe laughed. "I believe he was afraid of a toboggan!"

Mills' blue eyes twinkled a little.

"By gosh, I'll go down the next one on your skis, just for that!"

They pushed on steadily down the Swift Current Valley, taking the easiest way over the frozen lake, into the sunrise, and then, at the valley's mouth, swinging south and cutting across toward the end of Flat Top. Mills did put on Joe's skis at the next favorable slope—and the scouts had to dig him out of the snow half-way down!

"Take your old skis," he spluttered, grabbing for his snow-shoes again. "I'll stick to what I'm used to—and the toboggan. I don't have to balance the toboggan."

After that, he steered the toboggan down the hills, while the scouts ran on skis.

For the up grades, the boys put on their snow-shoes, also, because even on a gentle slope you back-slide with skis if you are pulling a load. They reached the ridge over Lower St. Mary Lake at noon, ate lunch, lowered the toboggan down the slope to the lake, and then ran on the white, level snow surface above the ice inshore, due south, till at evening they had passed St. Mary Chalets at the foot of Upper St. Mary Lake, and went on into a stand of thick woods, where they decided to camp.

The tent was pitched in the most sheltered spot, on packed snow, facing a rock, and on logs laid across the snow packed in front of the rock they built a roaring fire. With the heat of this fire, Joe was able to cook supper without his mittens on, though he could not go far away from it without them. When supper was over, they built the fire up afresh, laid in a big supply of wood, and crawling into their sleeping-bags, under the shelter of the tent, itself sheltered by the evergreens, with the flap facing the fire left wide open and the rock reflecting the heat in to them, they were surprisingly warm, when you consider that they were sleeping on snow, with the mercury in the thermometer outside playing tag somewhere below the zero mark—or it would have been, if there had been a thermometer outside.

It was "anybody's job," if he woke up, to crawl out and throw more wood on the fire, and Joe twice did this. Both times, however, must have been long before morning, because when he finally woke up there was a faint hint of dawn in the sky, and the fire was practically out—only the logs they had placed on the snow for a fire base were smouldering.

He crawled out again, and built a new fire. Then he took a kettle and went to see if he could find any brook open, it was such a slow job melting snow. When he got back, the others were up, stretching and warming themselves by the blaze. The coffee certainly tasted good that morning! And how fragrantly the hot bacon sizzled and spluttered in the pan!

They made the second stage of their journey chiefly over the prairie, more or less following the motor road, but cutting off all the corners they could to reduce mileage, and getting dozens of wonderful ski runs over the treeless slopes, while Mills, who by now had become quite an expert steering the toboggan, came on behind.

"When I get back," he kept saying, "I'm going to learn to use those blooming things, too—but on a little hill first!"

The early twilight was deepening into night, and the northern lights were playing when they came over the final slope and saw the railroad signal lights—the first sign of other human beings than themselves they'd laid eyes on since October.

Half an hour later they were at the station, Mills was telephoning to Park headquarters at Lake McDonald, and the boys were getting their accumulated mail—letters from home, newspapers for two months past, a big box of cakes and sweet chocolate for Tom from his mother, and, for Joe, a

long letter from Lucy Elkins, enclosing the pictures she had taken on their trip.

That evening they slept in beds at the house of the station agent, after they had spent the evening hearing the news from the outside world. The mass of newspapers they kept to read in the long evenings back in the cabin. Laying in some additional provisions, and carefully packing their precious papers, they started back in the morning, over their old tracks, which, except in windy places where they were drift covered, afforded now pretty easy sledding for the toboggan. They made camp again in the same spot, and were up before daylight for the last stage, Mills looking scowlingly at the sky.

"Don't like it to-day, boys," he said. "We're in for a storm. Let's beat it home, if we can."

And that day he gave them little rest, driving on at a fast pace, with the toboggan rope straining over his shoulder. The sun went under before noon. By mid-afternoon, as they entered the Swift Current valley mouth, the peaks of the Divide were lost in a cold, gun metal cloud, and the wind was rising. They faced this wind all up the valley, with no chance now to coast—only a steady, grinding up-hill pull.

It was dark long before they got to the cabin, and the snow had begun to fall in fine, stinging flakes. They were a cold, weary lot when finally they tugged their load up the last grade to the level of the lake, passed into the trees at the tepee camp, and a few minutes later tumbled into the cold cabin, and began to pile wood into the stove.

"Well, Joe, get a hunk of that venison out, and let's forget this day!" Mills cried. "Light up the big lamp, Tom. We've got kerosene enough, too. Let's be cheerful."

The roar of the logs in the stove, the light of the lamp, and presently the smell of food and coffee, acted like magic. They were soon laughing again, while the wind rose outside, and the trees groaned and creaked, and the snow drove with a kind of hissing patter against the windows and the roof.

"A hundred miles in four days, over four feet of snow, and pulling a toboggan—gosh, if anybody'd told me old Joe could do that last May, I'd have thought he was crazy," said Tom.

"You couldn't have done it yourself last May," Joe replied.

"And," said the Ranger, stretching out his legs and rubbing them, "by golly, *I* don't want to do it again!"

"Ho," said Tom, "I feel fine!"

But he was the first to propose bed—although it must be admitted nobody quarreled with his suggestion.

CHAPTER XXVII—The Ranger and the Boys Get a Ride Down the Mountain on a Snow Avalanche, and Don't Look for Another

The following day the storm was still raging, and it kept it up till night, too. The drifts were piled half-way up the windows, shutting out their light, the rear door, leading to the stable, was completely barricaded by a drift, and they had to make periodic sallies with a shovel out of the front door, which opened on a veranda four feet above ground level, to keep that clear. It was too bitter cold, the wind too penetrating, to invite further expeditions. Even clearing the veranda in front of the door was a job they quarreled over, and finally had to assign at intervals of one hour, each person taking his turn while the other two peered out of the window to see if he did a thorough job.

But they had plenty of dry wood inside, and the accumulated newspapers of two months to read, so the day didn't drag, after all.

"And," said the Ranger, "about to-morrow, or next day, the slides will start, the real slides, this time. That'll be something worth coming out here for. There is so much of this snow that the steep places can't hold it all, and the first sun will send it down."

That night, toward morning, Joe was awakened by a sound like thunder, and sat up in his sleeping-bag, astonished.

"What's a thunder-storm doing in December?" he thought.

There was no lightning, however, and he could see outside the brilliant starlight.

"Slides!" he suddenly remembered. And as soon as it was light, he was up, getting breakfast. Breakfast over, he and Tom lost no time in getting on their snow-shoes and hurrying out, free of the woods, on the white surface of the frozen lake, with no less than eight feet of snow under them. The sun was now up over the prairie, and sending its rays up the Swift Current Valley and hitting the snow-covered peaks till they glistened rosy. And all around, from the steep walls of Gould, six miles away, to the upper precipices of the two mountains hemming in the lake over their heads, the snowslides were leaping and booming with a noise like soft thunder. It was a wonderful sight. You had no idea where or when one was going to start. A steep precipice, covered with snow, would suddenly show signs of life, the snow high up would start slipping, and

as the mass descended it would grow in volume, sweeping the slope beneath it and sending up a comet's tail of snow-dust, till it ran out with a boom and a roar upon the less steep slopes below. All around the slides were running, and the steep places seemed fairly to smoke with the comet tails of snow-dust.

"Of course," said Mills, when he was ready to set out, "these slides now are just top snow, the latest fall sliding off the very steep places, and doing little or no harm. In spring the bad ones come, when the whole winter mass, and all the ice and rocks it has gathered up, come down. Then, once in a great while, a third kind will descend—the accumulated snow and ice and rock dust of maybe half a century or more. That kind always chooses a place where there hasn't been a slide before, wipes out forests as it comes, and sometimes houses and people in the valleys. The slides to-day all follow regular channels. I know where there'll probably be a good one."

314

He led the way up toward the Divide, by a side tributary of the Swift Current. They climbed steadily a long way up toward the steep head wall, leaving the deep brook bed at the danger point, and working on the side slope above it. Finally they reached a point where they were almost under the steep wall, and separated from the brook channel by a mass of rock. Here they waited. They had not long to wait. Suddenly, without any warning, the snow almost above them started slipping, and in a few seconds was coming down the brook bed at a tremendous rate, pushing all the last snowfall and some of the old ahead of it as it came. By the time it reached the point just below Mills and the two scouts, it was apparently going thirty miles an hour, with a head about forty feet high, the whole mass maybe fifty or a hundred feet wide and two hundred feet long, and churning, foaming, falling over and over itself with a great, booming roar and sending out a perfect gale of snow-dust.

315

As it rushed past, the noise was so great that no one heard a lesser roar behind him. Without any warning, a smaller slide had started just above the three observers, no doubt caused by the jar and shock of the first, and suddenly the snow boiled up under their feet, they were launched downward on this second slide, and found themselves on the tail end of the big one.

Then followed the wildest ride any of them had ever had, or ever wanted to have.

Of course, it was only their wide western snow-shoes that saved their lives. In a second, they were on the tail of the big slide, riding on top of fifty feet of boiling, churning, racing snow, that was by this time going down-hill at close to a mile a minute. If you have ever run logs on a river, you know what a slippery job that is. But imagine the logs leaping up and down as well as rolling around, and traveling a mile a minute down-hill into the bargain, and finally casting up a deluge of powdered snow-dust into your face, and you will have some idea of the job that confronted Mills and Tom and Joe.

No one dared look at the others. No one could speak, or make himself heard six inches from his mouth if he did open it. Each of them looked at his own feet, or tried to through the blinding snow powder, and just trod snow desperately, to keep upright. To fall down meant to be churned in under the boiling mass, and probably suffocated, or crushed to death.

After about one minute that seemed like an hour, the slide had descended to less steep ground. Here it hit a little pine wood, and Joe just could see, through the flying snow, the trees go crashing down in front, and those on either side (their tops level with his feet!) bow and bend in the wind made by the rushing slide. A second later a tree came boiling up out of the snow right under his feet—or a log, rather, for all its branches were stripped off. He jumped madly to avoid it, and it missed him only by a hair's breadth.

316

Beyond the wood, the slide ran out into an open park, went up the incline on the further side by its own momentum, and there spread itself out and came to rest.

Joe wiped the snow-dust from his eyes and looked to see what had become of Tom and the Ranger. He was still on his feet, but they were not. The final slump of the slide, with the tail end on which they rode telescoping over the centre, had flung them down and half buried them. For some reason Joe had been able to keep his feet. He sprang to help them up, crying, "Are you hurt?"

They both rose, dazed, and wiped their faces.

"I—I dunno!" Tom said. "I haven't had time to find out!"

The Ranger was red with rage.

"It had no business to start there!" he exclaimed. "We ought to have been in a safe place. Teaches me a lesson—you can't bank on slides any time o' year. That drift above where we stood is always anchored till spring."

"Well, I guess it's lucky we're alive!" Joe exclaimed. "Wow! that was some ride! I never was kept so busy in my life!"

317

"And I never want to be again," Mills said. "Boys, had enough slides for to-day? Seen how they work?"

"I sure have!" both exclaimed, in one breath.

"Let's go home. What I'd like to see now is a Chinook wind, to take some of this snow away. There's too much of it."

"Do Chinook winds come before spring?" Joe asked. He had heard of the dry, warm wind which comes over the ranges, from the warm Pacific current, raising the temperature sometimes sixty

degrees in as many minutes, and evaporating the snow like magic.

"Sometimes," Mills said. "And we need it now, or all the animals will starve."

They were all too weary and even a bit shaky after that terrific ride, to do much more that day. Mills did go over to try his telephone, which he found the storm had put out of commission again, and then they sat around the cabin and talked over the two minute excitement, which had seemed, while it lasted, nearer two hours.

For supper that night Joe got out a can of lobster he found in the storeroom. He thought it would be a special treat, and it was to Mills, but Tom didn't like lobster, and Joe himself didn't care much for it, either, when he came to taste it. So Mills ate it all.

"Came near death this morning—might as well risk my life again to-night," he laughed.

CHAPTER XXVIII—Tom Starts on a Long Hike in the Deep Snow, Over the Divide, Risking Snow-Slides, to Save the Ranger's Life

318

The Ranger spoke in jest, but in the night the boys were awakened by his groans, and they found his words were anything but a joke. He was suffering terrible pain, in his stomach evidently, and they had never seen anybody look so sick. They scrambled into clothes; Joe made up the fire and put on water to heat, while Tom got out their first aid kit, and made an emetic, which they got down the poor Ranger's throat. The results eased his pain a little, but the boys were certainly scared.

"We *got* to get a doctor," Tom cried. "We *got* to—a doctor or somebody who knows what to do. I got to get over Swift Current, and down to Lake McDonald, to the Park superintendent's office. That's all there is to it."

"You can't—you can't!" Joe exclaimed. "Think of that head wall if a slide hit you! Besides, it's thirty miles to the hotel at the head of the lake, and you don't know the way. I do. I'll have to go."

"A lot I'll let *you* go! No such over-exertion for you, and you just well. Besides, I know the way over the pass and down to Mineral Creek. Then I turn south, through the woods, and just follow the one trail. I couldn't miss it, and if I did, all I'd have to do would be to take the creek bed. I can start before daylight, get to the head wall at sunrise, be over the pass and down the other side before noon, and have five hours of light to make twenty miles."

319

"What if there shouldn't be any caretaker at the hotel at the head of the lake?" said Joe.

"I'll break in and use the 'phone, and make a fire. Anyhow, I'll pack my sleeping-bag on my back, and get to the superintendent's camp the next morning."

He flew to make his preparations, putting on all his warmest clothes, with extra socks and mitts stowed in his sleeping-bag, while Joe put him up tea, bacon, matches, raisins and sweet chocolate, in the smallest possible space, got his axe and compass, and extra snow-shoe thongs in case of accident, and finally cooked him some bacon and made tea.

"I'm coming with you to the foot of the Swift Current switchbacks," said Joe. "I *got* to know whether you get up to the top safe!"

"But the Ranger?"

"I can't help him much if I stay—and I guess he's in no more danger than you'll be. Oh, Spider, I *got* to know if you get up there safe!"

Poor Joe was close to anxious tears as he spoke, and Tom grasped his hand.

"I'll get there!" he cried.

Mills was now only half conscious, moaning on his bed, and the two boys slipped out into the starlight and pushed up the Swift Current trail. It was bitterly cold. Joe carried the pack all the way to the foot of the switchbacks, so that Tom could be as fresh as possible. Then, at the foot, as day was beginning to redden in the east and give light enough to follow the windings of the trail by, for, on this steep slope, even such a deep snow could not quite hide the cuts the trail made in the bank, the two scouts shook hands silently, and Tom started up.

320

"It's Mills' life, or mine," he said, grimly.

Joe watched him go up, slowly, carefully, following the trail wherever he could detect it by the contour of the snow. Two or three times his snow-shoes started a small slide of loose snow, but as he was above the starting point, it left him secure, rushing down past Joe with a whirl and shower of snow powder. But on this slope, steep as it was, the tiny trees and shrubs seemed to anchor the snow, and there were no large slides at all. After an hour, from far above him, Joe heard a faint, thin, "Hoo-oo!" and knew that Tom was beyond danger.

His heart seemed to come back into his breast again, and with a great sigh of relief he hurried back in the level sunrise light, to the cabin, to do what he could for the sufferer.

There followed for Joe a long vigil, almost helpless, with a very sick man. He gave him hot water to drink, and improvised a hot water bag with a hot stone wrapped in flannel, but he had no

medicines, and could do little but watch the poor Ranger suffer, and wonder, and wonder, how Tom was getting on, until a great, dark, ugly cloud suddenly began to come over the top of the Divide, from the west, and his wonder changed to fear and then almost to terror. It looked as if the worst blizzard of all was raging already on the west side of the range, where Tom was tracking, all alone, miles from any human being, in the deep forests of the cañon!

CHAPTER XXIX—Tom Tramps Down McDonald Creek in a Chinook Wind, and Reaches Shelter Almost Exhausted

Meanwhile, Tom had been losing no time. An hour after he had yelled to Joe from the top of the danger zone on the wall, he had gone over the pass and reached the Granite Park chalet. Here he paused a few moments for breath, and looked across the shadow-filled cañon to the great white pinnacle of Heaven's Peak, rosy-white with the sunrise. Then he plunged down the trail, with little fear of snowslides on this side because of the trees to anchor the drifts, and in another hour reached the Lake McDonald trail at the bottom. Without any pause, he plugged steadily along through the tall, silent, lonely forest, over such deep snow that he was elevated far above the underbrush and had difficulty sometimes in spotting the trail, and kept at it till noon. Then he paused to build a fire of dead pine limbs on trodden snow and cook himself some bacon, roasting it on a stick.

It was not till this lunch was eaten that he noticed the dusking of the sun, and looking up saw a great, ugly, dark cloud coming over the range to the west.

His heart, like Joe's back in the cabin a little later, went down somewhere into his moccasins. But, he kept telling himself, he had only a dozen or fifteen more miles to go, he was in the protection of woods, and he couldn't get lost because the cañon walls would always show him the way. Besides, he had his sleeping-bag. He could crawl into some hollow tree with it, if the blizzard got too bad. But he must not stop if he could help it.

"Mills' life or mine!" he kept saying. "It's up to me to save the Ranger!"

And he shouldered his pack once more, and pressed on, with one anxious eye on the trail, one on the cloud above, which was rapidly spreading across to the eastern range and enveloping the Divide. Every second he expected to see the first white, driving sheets of the blizzard, for the cloud was racing now, the wind up there was blowing hard. Yet no snow came. In fact, Tom began to get hot. He thought it was the exertion of trying to increase his pace. But when he stopped to rest his weary shoulders a moment, he was still hot. The wind was certainly beginning to come roaring down into the trees above him now. At last it hit his face. It was a hot wind!

Then, suddenly, he realized what was coming. "The Chinook!" he cried aloud.

It was the Chinook! In half an hour, Tom was in a wringing perspiration, and his fur coat had taken its place on his pack. Under his feet a miracle was being performed. The level of the snow was steadily sinking—slowly, to be sure, here in the woods, but steadily. It was sticky on his snow-shoes, but not half so sticky as he thought it would be. The wind seemed so dry that it just soaked the snow up, instead of melting it.

On and on Tom plodded, wearily, almost exhausted now, going on sheer nerve, till close to five o'clock he got a hint of the lake. Then he picked up other snow-shoe tracks, and Robinson Crusoe could not have been more delighted at the sight of a human footprint.

"There's somebody at the hotel!" Tom cried, again aloud.

This sight gave him a second wind, and he plugged on, with clear hints of the lake through the trees now, and what seemed like open water. But the trail kept off to the east of it, and it was getting rapidly dark when he finally came into a clearing and saw the hotel.

The hotel was dark, but near by, in a smaller house, there shone a light! Tom hurried, with his last ounce of strength, to the door, and pounded.

The door was opened, and Tom almost fell in. A strong hand caught him, and steadied him while he got off his snow-shoes, and then steadied him to a chair.

"Well, who be you, and where'd you come from?" a voice asked.

Tom could see little but the warm lamplight. The room, the face of the man, were all a blur.

"Many Glacier, over Swift Current," he gasped. "Mills ate something last night—he's awful sick—telephone to the superintendent—or somebody—send a doctor."

"You mean to tell me you've come over Swift Current since last night, in that snow, and then through the Chinook?"

"Yes—'phone for a doctor—quick!"

"Why didn't you 'phone from Many Glacier?"

"Wire's on the bum—can't you hurry and 'phone?" Tom almost wailed.

"Easy, son, easy," the voice steadied him. "Nobody can start back now till mornin'. I want to get

this right. I can hardly believe it.”

“Oh, you *got* to believe it!” Tom cried.

The man rose and began to work at the stove. Presently he brought Tom a big cup of hot coffee, and a plate of food, and stood by while he drank and ate.

As the hot coffee and the food began to revive him, Tom told the whole story over again, more calmly, and the caretaker listened, his eyes big.

“Well, son,” he said, “you’re all to the mustard. Now, if you’re able, we’ll go ‘phone.”

He led the way, and Tom repeated his story to the Park superintendent’s office.

“Be ready to start back at daylight,” a voice said. “If the Chinook’s cleared open water enough for the launch to get up the lake, we’ll pick you up where you are. Otherwise, meet us at the fork of the east and west trail at the head of the lake an hour after sunrise—that is, if you are up to going back with us.”

“I’ll be there!” Tom said.

His new friend now took him back into the warm, lighted room, made him undress and give himself a good rub, and then put him to bed on a couch in the corner.

“If you’re goin’ back over that trail to-morrow,” he said, “you’ll need all the sleep you can get to-night.”

“I guess you’re right,” Tom answered, as he fell wearily, helplessly, upon the soft spring, and almost immediately felt his eyelids close of their own accord. That was the last he remembered till a hand on his shoulder was shaking him,—it seemed about five minutes later.

CHAPTER XXX—Tom Gets Back with the Doctor, and Mills Pulls Through—Then the Scouts Have To Leave for Home

“Time to get up,” said the voice of the owner of the hand.

Tom opened his eyes. The room was still lighted by a lamp, but something told him it was morning, perhaps the gray light at the window. He rose stiffly, and helped his host get breakfast. Going out, he found the Chinook wind had passed, but it had been blowing, apparently, a good while, for the lake was open water all the way inshore now, except for a fringe of ice cakes piled up like ragged surf along the eastern side.

“The lake hadn’t frozen yet very far out, anyhow,” the caretaker said. “But the Chinook’s sure taken the snow down!”

It had. As if by magic, the eight or ten feet of snow that yesterday had covered everything except the trees was reduced to less than two. The air, too, while it had the sting of winter again, was not bitterly cold—just a nice winter temperature.

As the sun was beginning to redden the peaks above the lake, Tom heard the *put-put* of a motor boat far off, and in half an hour a launch had worked in through the floating ice to the end of the pier and a ranger accompanied by a young man threw their packs on the pier and climbed out.

“*You* the man that came over Swift Current yesterday?” the Ranger said, looking at Tom. “Why, you’re only a boy!”

“Well, I did it—and I’d do more’n that for Mr. Mills!” Tom answered.

“You were takin’ chances on the Swift Current head wall,” the Ranger said. “I’m mighty glad the Chinook came, before I have to go down that trail.”

“I got sort of used to slides,” Tom said, as they all fastened on their packs, and waved farewell to the caretaker. He told the Ranger and the doctor about their ride on the snowslide.

“Say, you’ve been havin’ an excitin’ time up there,” the Ranger laughed. “Wonder what’s happened since you left?”

“If Mills has ptomaine poisoning, nothing has happened,” the doctor said. “He’s simply been wishing it would!”

They grew silent as the grind began up the cañon trail through the forest. Tom’s tracks of yesterday, melted less than the unpacked snow, showed plainly, and often he had been way off the trail, taking short cuts ten feet up where he was clear of underbrush.

“Didn’t intend to,” he said. “But the snow was so deep I couldn’t always see the trail, and just steamed straight ahead.”

At noon they paused an hour for lunch and rest, and then picked up their loads again. The low sun was sinking behind Heaven’s Peak when they reached the top of the pass, and took off their snow-shoes, for the Chinook had stripped all the snow from the Divide, where the wind had previously blown it thin. On the head wall, they found only a few inches, and they were able to slide from one switchback to the next lower, thus cutting off the turns and descending with great

rapidity.

But even so it was dark before they reached the cabin, and once more Tom was traveling on sheer nerve. So was the doctor, for that matter, though the Ranger seemed as fresh as when they started. They had been on the trail for twelve hours, with only one hour rest.

But Tom was the first up the steps and in the door.

Joe sprang up from a chair to greet him, and by the lamplight he could see Mills, on the couch, and heard him say, in a weak voice, "Hello, Tom."

"Thank God!" Tom cried, and slumped down weary and exhausted on his pack.

The doctor went to work at once. "What have you done for him?" he asked Joe.

"Nothing much I could do," Joe said. "We gave him an emetic as soon as he was sick, and I gave him physic and hot water. The hot water seemed to ease him a little."

"Good," the doctor answered. "You couldn't have done better. He'll come around all right now. Sick, were you, Mills?"

Mills groaned for reply.

"When the Chinook came," Joe laughed, "I told him I thought a blizzard was going to hit us, and he said he hoped it would blow the cabin into the lake!"

Joe now hurried about getting supper and making up beds for the tired men, while Mills lay feebly on the couch and made Tom sit by him and tell about his trip.

"You shouldn't 'a' done it, boy," he kept saying. "You shouldn't 'a' risked it for the old Ranger."

But that night they were roused by hearing poor Mills in the throes of another attack. The doctor hurried to him.

"It's brought on a sort of acute indigestion," he said to the others. "I didn't realize he was so bad. It's lucky I'm here, for you can't let such attacks go on, or they get you."

All that night he and Joe sat up with the sick man, and all the next day, and the day after that, he kept the Ranger in bed, and doctored him.

The third day Mills was feeling better, and grew restless.

"You stay where you are," the doctor laughed, "and thank young Tom who got me, and Joe who dosed you till I came, that you're alive at all! I've got to go to-morrow, but Jerry will stay with you and feed you according to schedule till you're O.K. again."

"I suppose that means the boys are going to-morrow, too," Mills answered. "They—they got to be home for Christmas. Say, doc, can't you make 'em just sick enough so they'll have to stay?"

The doctor laid a hand on his shoulder.

"Maybe I can get you transferred to headquarters till you're all right again," he said. "Then you won't miss the boys so much."

But if it was hard for the Ranger to part with Tom and Joe, it was scarcely less hard for them to leave him, even if it did mean getting home to their families for Christmas, yet they could not put it off a day longer, because already they had just time to make connections at Chicago and reach home on Christmas morning. The Ranger's sickness had delayed them.

So Tom and Joe began to pack. They had long realized they would have to leave some day, and in mid-winter, so they had sent home by express all their summer clothes and their balloon silk tent and their folding cots, in their trunks, by the last bus out in October. But they still had a big load. All the books, except a few school books, they left for Mills. Most of their clothes they put on. The two sleeping-bags and the snow-shoes, which belonged to the Ranger, they were to leave with the station agent. Their bearskin caps and coats, which Mills had procured for them, he made them keep as a present, and Tom, for a present to him, left his skis behind. Joe left as his present the warm, soft bed puff he had used ever since he came to the Park, and his aluminum coffee-pot, to take the place of the battered old tin one Mills used.

They packed the toboggan that night, to be ready for an early start, and then sat around the stove for the last time, in the little cabin. The doctor and the other Ranger did all the talking. Mills, who lay on the couch, and the boys did not feel like saying a word.

The next morning Joe cooked the last breakfast. Poor Mills was not allowed to drink any coffee.

"I'm goin' to drink tea after this, anyhow, Joe," he said. "You've spoiled my taste for my own coffee, confound you."

He came to the door to help in the last packing of the toboggan. "If you've left anything, I'll keep it till you come back next summer," he said, trying to laugh.

"We'll be back!" the scouts cried. "We'll be rangers, too, some day, with you as our boss!"

"I'm goin' to miss you something fierce, boys," Mills added, taking each of them by the hand. "Tom, I can't never thank you proper for what you did—so we'll let it go at that. You're a regular scout, and you and Joe'll make good whatever you do, and Joe'll keep as well as he is now, always."

He turned his head suddenly away, and the boys felt a lump in their own throats.

Then they started.

When they looked back to wave, however, he was facing them, and they could see his pale, blue eyes—the eyes of a woodsman—looking at them as they went down the trail.

Opposite the entrance to their old camp, Joe dropped the rope, and ran down the path, to the surprise of Tom and the doctor. He came back with their rough sign, “Camp Kent,” and stuck it into the load.

“Gee, if we’d forgotten that for a souvenir!” he cried.

Tom gave the doctor some wild rides on the toboggan in the next two days, while Joe took the hills on skis. They camped that night in the same woods as before, only this time they had no tent, only such protection as they could hastily rig up by making a rough lean-to of evergreen boughs and crawling under it in their sleeping-bags. Each one took a watch to keep the fire going during the night, and they managed to come through fairly comfortably, though it was bitterly cold. However, they were up long before the sun, and on their way.

The second day the boys knew they were seeing the mountains for the last time, and as they passed by old Rising Wolf, his red rocks buried under glistening snow, they loitered a little on the trail and walked with their eyes turned upward and toward the west.

And that evening they were suddenly landed out of the lonely snow-fields and the wilderness of rocks and cliffs and frozen lakes, of deer and lions and avalanches, into the hot, musty smell of a Pullman sleeping car, on the trans-continental limited, bound east!

They each took one sniff, and looked at one another.

Then Tom laughed. “We’ll get used to it again,” he said.

“I suppose so,” Joe answered, “but gosh! it’s going to be hard work.”

CHAPTER XXXI—Home Again—Joe’s Christmas Present to His Mother is Sound Health Again, and Tom Rejoices

They got to Chicago the day before Christmas, and had time to go shopping for presents. Tom sneaked off by himself, and returned with a mysterious parcel, which Joe imagined was for him. Twenty-five hours later, they were getting out of the train at Southmead, into the arms of their parents and brothers and sisters, and amid the cheers of the assembled scouts.

“Well, you are certainly a hard looking pair!” Mr. Rogers laughed. “And hard feeling, too,” he added, poking Joe’s legs and arms. “What do you weigh, Joe?”

“I weighed a hundred and fifty-nine in Chicago,” Joe answered.

The next two days both boys spent telling everybody the tales of their adventures, and Mr. Rogers took Joe up to Dr. Meyer again, who thumped him and listened at him as before, weighed him and tested him, and then, with a smile, declared he was as fit as a fiddle.

“And mind you live outdoors till you’re twenty-one, and keep so!” he added. “And then go on living outdoors if you can, till you’re a hundred and one. It’s the only way to live, anyhow. I haven’t been out for a week, and I know!”

“Take that news home to your mother as a Christmas present, Joe,” said Mr. Rogers.

Then he turned to Tom. “And you, Tom, gave the present of health to Joe. How do you like giving instead of receiving?”

“Giving? Giving nothing!” Tom exclaimed. “Don’t you make any mistake. I received more pleasure seeing old Joey get fat and strong than I’ll ever give anybody!”

“That’s what I like to hear a scout say,” Mr. Rogers smiled, putting an arm over each boy’s shoulder, and hanging his weight on them, to feel how sturdy they were. Neither flinched an inch, but stood up like hickory posts.

Joe’s Christmas present from Tom—the mysterious bundle he bought in Chicago—was a developing tank and all the chemicals. Joe also received from Lucy Elkins, on Christmas day, a beautiful enlargement of a view of Gunsight Lake and Mount Jackson, to hang in his room. For the next few days he and Tom toiled over the tank, developing their endless rolls of film, and then, when these were printed, they gave an exhibition at the scout house.

But it was several days before they went into the woods.

“Gee, it’s too much like a prairie ’round here,” Tom said, casting a contemplative glance at their eighteen-hundred-foot mountain.

Finally, however, just before school commenced, they put on snow-shoes, and tramped over a mean little eight inches of snow to the top of their highest hill, out on a ledge above the trees. Southmead lay below them, with all its roofs and steeples gathered in the snowy fields like a herd of cattle. The woods were still.

“It’s not the Rockies,” said Tom, “but it’s pretty nice at that, and we’ll get out the old rope on this

baby cliff in the spring.”

“It’s home,” said Joe, “and I’m well again, and can go to school, and help mother, and study for the forestry service with you, and—and—oh, Spider, you’re the best friend a fellow ever had!”

“No,” Tom answered, “you’ve got the wrong dope. I’ve got the best friend to be a friend to a fellow ever had. Anyhow, Joey, we’ve given old man tuberculosis the knock out, and had a grand old time doing it. Let’s see if we can start a snowslide here.”

But the snow stuck in a huckleberry bush six feet down.

“I guess it’s old Cæsar and geometry for us,” Tom sighed, “till we beat it for the Rockies for good and all.”

“Geometry’s not so exciting,” Joe laughed, “but I suppose we’ve got to have it.”

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK BOY SCOUTS IN GLACIER PARK ***

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE
THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE
PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”
- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the

works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.

- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.
- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you ‘AS-IS’, WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™'s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.