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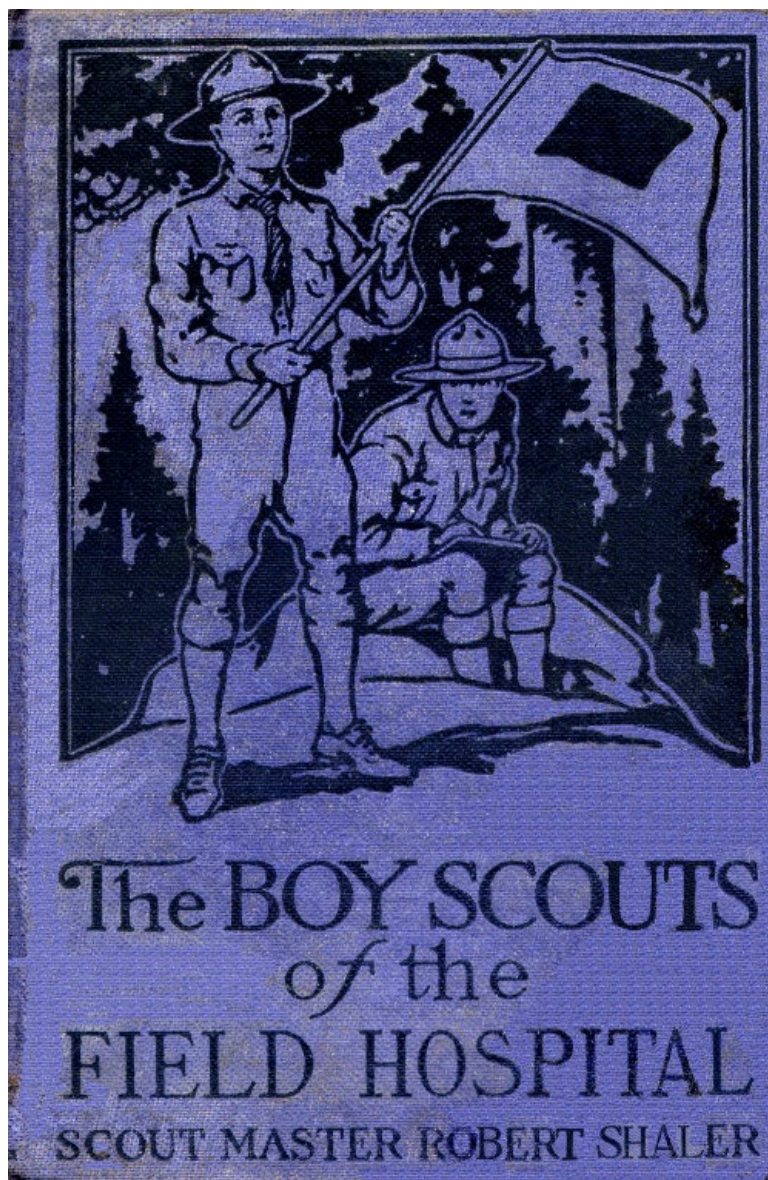
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# THE BOY SCOUTS OF THE FIELD HOSPITAL

BY  
SCOUT MASTER ROBERT SHALER

AUTHOR OF "BOY SCOUTS OF THE SIGNAL CORPS," "BOY SCOUTS OF PIONEER CAMP," "BOY SCOUTS OF THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY," "BOY SCOUTS OF THE LIFE SAVING CREW," "BOY SCOUTS ON PICKET DUTY," "BOY SCOUTS OF THE FLYING SQUADRON," "BOY SCOUTS AND THE PRIZE PENNANT," "BOY SCOUTS OF THE NAVAL RESERVE," "BOY SCOUTS IN THE SADDLE," "BOY SCOUTS FOR CITY IMPROVEMENT," "BOY SCOUTS IN THE GREAT FLOOD," "BOY SCOUTS WITH THE RED CROSS," "BOY SCOUTS AS COUNTY FAIR GUIDES," "BOY SCOUTS AS FOREST FIRE FIGHTERS," ETC.

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# The Boy Scouts of the Field Hospital.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE CAMP ON THE HURRICANE.

"The same old hard luck seems to follow our scout master wherever we go, Hugh!"

"It surely looks that way, Billy, for a fact."

"After taking all the trouble to hunt around the country for a new camping place where the Oakvale Troop could open their summer campaign, here the scout master has to be called back home with his mother coming down sick."

"It was too bad, Billy, and Lieutenant Denmead looked as if he had met with a bitter disappointment. Having his old mother ill would be bad enough at any time, but to have it happen just now seemed doubly hard. I know he looked forward to a week or so of rest and recreation up here."

"Well, all my sympathy is with the lieutenant; I'm not wasting any on the bunch of scouts gathered here around these tents, let me tell you, Hugh. They'll be just as well looked after by our efficient assistant scout master."

"It's nice of you to say that, Billy, even if not true. I'll try my level best to please you, but if I succeed it will only be because I've got such a splendid lot of fellows to work with."

"What d'ye think of the place our scout master picked out for us, Hugh?"

"Couldn't be much better, it seems to me, Billy. We've got mountain scenery and running water. We can take long hikes to the top of the range there; and at the same time get to a town inside of an hour if we want to. The combination is pretty nearly perfect I should say in so far as that goes."

The stout boy in khaki, Billy Worth, looked quickly up at the face of his companion, Hugh Hardin. Evidently there must have been some little intonation connected with the last part of the other's remark that aroused a sudden suspicion in his mind.

"Something you don't appear to like about it, Hugh," he remarked. "Has it anything to do with this rapid river, which might be dangerous to a fellow not knowing how to swim, or take care of himself?"

"I wasn't thinking about that just then, Billy; and besides, all the boys, so far as I know, are good swimmers—unless it's that new recruit, Harold Tremaine; and we've got to find out considerable about him on this trip."

"Then perhaps you happen to know something about the farmers of this section, and that they'll raise a kick against scouts crossing their fields; how about that guess, Mr. Scout Master?"

"Still shy more or less, Billy," the other told him. "To relieve your mind, since I see you're bound to get the truth, I'll tell you what it is. I understand that a couple of miles away toward the west of this place, there's a big establishment or cement works where they employ a couple of hundred workmen."

"Why, yes, I believe that's so," interrupted Billy. "It's called the Samson Cement Company, seems to me. But what's that got to do with us scouts, Hugh?"

"I hope it isn't going to have anything to do with us," came the reply, as something like a slight frown appeared on Hugh's forehead. "But it happens that there's some sort of trouble going on at the works."

"A strike, do you mean?" ejaculated Billy, becoming deeply interested at once, for he was a boy who delighted in action and adventure of all kinds.

"Yes, and they say that it's developing into a bitter struggle, too. The men are mostly foreigners, and their wives are worse than the workers. If strike-breakers are brought up from Boston, as there was talk of the company doing, there might possibly be a pitched battle between the strikers and the guards who act as deputies."

"Whew! You don't say!" cried Billy, with a whistle that marked his interest in the news. "But, Hugh, if we make it a point to keep away from that section of country in our hikes there's no reason why we should get mixed up in any of this ugly business, that I can see."

"Perhaps not," the scout master continued, "but if these ignorant foreigners begin to feel the pinch of hunger pretty soon, they may take to raiding orchards and fields of the farmers, and then there will be the mischief to pay. They don't bother much about the rights of property when they can see no sign of officers around. And if they happen to discover some of our troop, they may think from our uniforms we're members of the State Militia, sent secretly to camp here so as to arrest them when they get to acting vicious."

"Hugh, I can see now where we *might* get into trouble. If Lieutenant Denmead had dreamed of anything like this, the chances are he would never have selected a camp so near the cement works. It's too late to make a change of base now, I reckon."

"Yes, we've got things all nicely fixed for a stay, Billy, and we'll have to try and not get mixed up in any of this strike business."

"That reminds me that I saw three men walking up that country road a while back when I was taking a look around; and, Hugh, they were foreigners, as sure as anything. We may have to keep watch nights so as not to suffer from a raid on our stores."

"Oh! I don't think that would happen," said Hugh, immediately. "These men are ignorant and foreigners but we mustn't believe them to be a nest of thieves. Only when they see their women and children suffering from lack of proper food they might be tempted to resort to violence. In one way you could hardly blame the men for taking what don't belong to them in order to save the lives so precious to them."

10

From where the two boys reclined at their ease, they could look at the tents of waterproofed canvas that had been pitched with such skill as scouts learn to show after they have had frequent practice. Several lads were bustling around, tidying up the camp, looking after the fires and apparently making ready for rather a lengthy and enjoyable stay.

Close by ran the river, a brawling stream of quite some size, and also deep in places. It was said to contain plenty of fish, so that the scouts anticipated enjoying more than one chowder during their stay on its high bank. While they had no boat with them, that was not going to debar them from making frequent use of the stream for bathing purposes.

Hugh and Billy belonged to the Wolf Patrol of the Oakvale Troop. They were among the charter members or "early settlers" as Billy called them, having helped organize the initial patrol.

11

By degrees there had come other patrols, known as the Hawks, the Otters, the Fox, and the Owls, and the members of all of these were now in camp on the Hurricane River. The first mentioned patrol had for leader Walter Osborne; Alec Sands had charge of the lively Otters; while Don Miller was looked up to as the head of the Fox adjunct.

A retired army officer had taken charge of the troop, and devoted much of his time to building up the organization, having the development of boy character as his impetus. On this particular occasion, as we have learned from the conversation between Hugh and Billy, Lieutenant Denmead had been called away, which he had undoubtedly regretted very much, just after their camp was started.

In other seasons some of these enterprising scouts had managed to enjoy certain outings which have been described at length in the earlier volumes of this series. For the full particulars of these happenings, the reader will have to be referred to those books, every one of which will be found teeming with adventure, useful information, accounts of scout activities, and all such things as boys with red blood in their veins love to read about.

12

Some of them had seen service with the genuine

army signal corps; on another occasion they had been enabled to work in conjunction with the maneuvers of the State Militia on their annual training trip, when a mock battle was fought in which the scouts took a prominent part.

A few of the boys on a visit to Florida had a chance to assist the life-savers of the coast in rescuing survivors from a wreck; then there was another time when some of them accompanied the Naval Reserve Corps aboard a war vessel placed at their disposal by the National Government, which gave the lads a splendid opportunity to pick up much valuable information connected with naval affairs.

Under the energetic leadership of Hugh Hardin, the scouts had undertaken to clean up their town in order to assist the Women's Civic Organization, which alone and unaided had found the task beyond their power. That triumph alone would have been enough to make the scouts respected in the community, even if they had not in numerous other ways proved their efficiency.

13

The latest exploit in which some of the Wolf Patrol members were concerned had taken place at some distance away from the home town. They chanced to be sent to Lawrence on business early in the spring at just the time when there came a terrible rain, and a flood that put the whole country under water. Being kept from returning home by a break in the railroad embankment, Hugh and his chums proved themselves energetic workers, and by enthusing the local troop of scouts to work like beavers in rescuing imperiled persons, they not only did a vast amount of good but revived the flagging interest of the organization, so that from that day Lawrence Boy Scout stock boomed.

With all these successful doings scattered along the pages of their short history, the scouts of Oakvale had reason to feel proud of the badges some of them wore. From scout headquarters in New York City had come medals such as are only given to those who save human life at peril to themselves; for the enthusiastic Lawrence people had seen to it that a record of the achievements of the wide-awake visitors to their town on that momentous occasion was forwarded to the proper officials, with a request that their efforts be duly recognized in the proper way.

14

"Hello! Sounds to me like some of the boys have started to bathe, even if the sun is burning hot for a June day!" remarked Billy Worth, as sounds of splashing, accompanied by boisterous sounds, came to their ears.

Hugh sat up and looked a trifle anxious.

"I'm sorry they were in such a rushing hurry," he remarked. "I meant to give them one more caution about risking that fierce current out there. The river is unusually high for early summer, on account of recent rains, and I would hate to get caught in that swirl myself, stout swimmer that I am."

"Same here, Hugh!" declared Billy Worth, as he started to get on his feet. "Let's walk over there, and you can tell the fellows what you think about it. I'm more concerned about that new

tenderfoot, Tremaine, than any of the old members. He seems to be a bundle of nerves, and inclined to be rash. That's just the kind of chap to take chances, so as to make the rest think him some punkins."

"All right! Come on, Billy. I'll feel easier in my mind——"

15

Hugh stopped short in what he was saying. A sudden chorus of excited cries rang out, coming from the river where the scouts were bathing.

"Scoot for it, Hugh!" barked Billy, often called "Billy the Wolf" by his chums. "I reckon what we were just talking about has happened. I heard someone shriek that Tremaine was drowning! I'm at your heels, Hugh, all right!"

16

## CHAPTER II. A CLOSE CALL IN THE RAPIDS.

It took Hugh and Billy only a dozen seconds to clear the intervening ground to reach the scene, such was the speed with which they ran.

On reaching the bank of the river, Hugh saw that it was just as he had feared. Out in the midst of the boiling current, where the foam leaped and there were evidently dangerous rapids of some sort, a boy was struggling madly. He had evidently been attempting to swim across that dangerous place when attacked by cramps; either that or else he had been thrown against a concealed rock and struck his head so as to become staggered and frightened.

Billy Worth may have wondered why Hugh led him to the river *below* where the outcries arose, instead of heading directly toward them; but he now realized the wisdom of the move.

As usual, Hugh had grasped the situation and understood that there would be an advantage in reaching the river bank below the scene of the accident, rather than further up the current. It was always this way with the scout master; and many of his successes were due to his ability to do the right thing in the start.

17

As he ran, Hugh had thrown off his hat, and even unfastened his flannel shirt, for he had a premonition that it might be necessary for him to plunge into the river. Now he tore off his shoes, and his trousers followed suit; all this taking but a very few seconds of time.

All of the other scouts had not been paralyzed with fright, for Ralph Kenyon, Bud Morgan and Alec Sands were even then splashing through the shallow water close to the shore, and evidently trying to make their way below the spot where the boy was struggling with the current.

Hugh shouted to them even as he sprang into the water:

"Keep on going down, and make a chain out as far as you can, everybody! Billy, you follow me!"

Billy had been just as rapid in disposing of his clothes as Hugh, so that he was close at the other's heels when the scout master hurried into the stream.

It grew deeper as Hugh pushed on. Presently he was compelled to swim, and that was where his knowledge of aquatic sports served him well. His sturdy strokes allowed him to buffet the waves of the rapids; while his quick eye figured the course he must take in order to keep below the drowning boy.

Hugh realized that there was every probability that the struggles of the tenderfoot would cease before he could reach him. That was the main reason why he wanted to be where he might intercept the helpless form of Tremaine when it was borne along with the current.

He shouted encouraging words when he could do so without having his mouth filled with the foamy water. It is doubtful whether the imperiled scout heard these cries. At least he was too far exhausted to keep up the struggle long enough for Hugh to reach his side.

"Oh, he's sunk, Hugh!" came a shout behind the leader of the Wolf Patrol.

Hugh knew this without being told. He had figured it all out, and understood just when the helpless figure would reach him. In imagination he was following its rapid progress with his eye; and with such precision that, sure enough, he was enabled to seize hold of the boy.

Then came a desperate struggle, for it was difficult to keep his clutch on the slippery form of the helpless lad and at the same time buffet the current of the worst place in the rapids.

Fortunately, indeed, for them both, Billy Worth was close at hand to lend his aid. Billy was a stout swimmer, and between them they managed to keep Tremaine's head out of the water as they allowed the current to carry them down.

Presently they had arrived at a stretch where the river broadened out somewhat, and here Alec Sands and the others had stretched themselves in a human chain with the leader of the Otters as the outermost link.

Once upon a time Alec Sands had been a bitter rival of Hugh, and had even done numerous mean things in order to overreach the latter; but since then Alec had learned to esteem his former enemy because of his manly nature, and nowadays they were the best of friends.

It was meet that Alec's should be the hand to obtain a grip on Hugh and begin to tow the two swimmers ashore, bearing their limp burden between them.

"Oh, is he dead, Hugh, and is our summer outing going to be broken up right in the very start?" cried Tom Sherwood, who had run down from the camp by this time and was waiting for them on the shore.

"I hope it isn't as bad as that," replied Hugh. "Carry him up on the bank, so we can get busy. He wasn't under the water long, and I expect he



will soon be all to the good. I think he must have struck his head on a sunken rock, and that made him dizzy. Then he became frightened, and when a swimmer gets in a panic, it's going to be a bad lookout for him."

They laid young Tremaine down on his stomach, with his head raised a little. Hugh placed himself over him, with his knees planted against the ribs of the unconscious boy. He commenced pressing downward regularly with both hands, pumping just as one might breathe. This was to force the water and air out of the lungs, and allow them to fill again with oxygen. It took the part of natural respiration.

Meanwhile the others were all doing something to assist in the work of restoration. Alec vigorously rubbed one of Tremaine's legs to induce a warmth and get the blood circulating. Another was holding the boy's head in such a way that his tongue might not slip back.

Fortunately, the time of Tremaine's immersion had not been of long duration; and under these vigorous efforts of the energetic life-savers, he soon opened his eyes.

Shortly afterward he was able to sit up, though he still felt weak. Everyone experienced a great sensation of relief. The sudden black cloud that had fallen on the new camp had drifted away, thanks to their intimate knowledge of what was required in a case of near-drowning.

There is not a summer passes but that the precious lives of scores of boys are imperiled when in swimming; and since the scout movement took root in this country, the records show that in innumerable instances fatal results have been avoided simply through the knowledge that membership in that organization entails on all who expect to attain the rank of second or first-class scout.

Tremaine admitted that he had been very unwise to undertake that passage of the rushing rapids. He seemed humble enough, and thankful that he had such loyal and dependable comrades near at hand.

"I've always boasted about my swimming," he contritely explained to Hugh, after the scout master had gently taken him to task for his recklessness, "and I think I could have made the crossing all right only for that wave dashing me against a sunken rock. It clipped me on the side of the head, and made me feel sick. After that I guess I got scared and near frantic, for I felt that I was in danger of being drowned out there in all that foam and swirling waters. But I've had a lesson, Hugh, and I promise you after this 'I'll look before I leap.'"

"A good motto for every scout to keep in mind," remarked Alec Sands, who was hovering near, since he had taken quite a liking for the new boy. "I used to be just as quick on the trigger as you, Harold; and let me tell you it got me into no end of scrapes. I'm beginning to see things differently now; and a heap of that is due to my knowing Hugh Hardin better."

If Hugh heard these last words as he hurried away to hunt up the several parts of his clothes, they must have given him considerable

satisfaction. Making a friend out of a bitter enemy was always a favorite diversion of the young scout master; and nothing he ever did gave him more deep-seated pleasure than the conversion of Alec Sands.

Tremaine was soon able to get on his feet and dress. He said his head hurt somewhat where he had struck it on the rock, and he felt a bit weak, but expected he would be all right by another day.

Hugh dressed the bruise with some soothing salve he carried in his medicine kit, and the value of which he had tested on more than one occasion in the past.

The afternoon was wearing away by now. Some of the boys had made little journeys around the neighborhood so as to get an idea of what their surroundings were like. They had been warned not to go far toward the southwest; and if they chanced to run across any foreigners not to do anything to annoy them, since they were very excitable.

Hugh had seen fit, at lunch time, to tell what little he knew concerning the upheaval at the cement works, and the chances of trouble coming about between the striking workmen and the guards imported by the company to defend their property as well as protect any new laborers who might be smuggled in to take the places left vacant by those who had gone out.

24

"I hope that isn't going to be the beginning of a rush of trouble for us in our new camp, Hugh," remarked Billy Worth as he came over and dropped down alongside the scout master in the shade of a tree.

"Whether it is or not, Billy, we've got a lot to be thankful for; and if all our mix-ups turn out as well, we can call ourselves a lucky bunch. Perhaps it's a good thing it happened, for every scout will be on the watch after this to curb his ambition, and not be reckless. A warning in the beginning is often the best of happenings when a lot of lively boys start out camping."

"That Tremaine had a close call, all the same, Hugh. I rather liked the way he owned up to being foolish. The fellow must have good stuff in him for all he's so flighty."

25

"Sheer nervousness, Billy, and it'll wear off after he's been outdoors more. He told me this was the first time he has ever camped, though he's gone swimming and fishing and all those sorts of things in the place he came from. But they hadn't cared to start a scout troop among the boys, because some of the leading people thought it was a military movement, and they didn't want their sons to grow up with the idea in their heads that some day they would have to fight, and kill other people's boys."

"How foolish they are to think that way," said Billy, indignantly, "when the Boy Scout movement is founded on just the opposite plan in this country. Their mission is to save life, not take it. They try to carry this out in dozens of different ways. Why, even we can point with pride to our record in that line. Think only this last spring when we got caught in that flood up at Lawrence what chances we found to do things

for other people who were in terrible trouble. But what are you staring at, Hugh?"

"I'm wondering what that man who looks like a farmer wants here," replied the scout master. "He's left the road, and is heading for our camp as fast as he can come."

26

Billy Worth immediately began to take notice.

"Just what he is, Hugh," he remarked, with a trace of excitement in his voice; "and seems to me I can scent some new trouble in the air. Gee whiz! Listen to how he cracks that blacksnake whip of his, would you? And look at his face, how ugly it seems. He's whopping mad over something or other, Hugh; and there, he's asking Arthur Cameron a question, because Arthur is pointing this way. The boys have got on, for there they start to tag after him. Mebbe it's his river and our fellows had no right to go in swimming there without asking his permission; or else we're camping on his ground here. Anyhow, we'll soon know what's up, for here he starts this way!"

27

### **CHAPTER III.**

#### **RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL.**

"He had better not try to use that nasty looking whip around here, that's all I want to say," remarked Bud Morgan, who had joined Hugh and Billy.

"Don't talk quite so loud, Bud," warned the leader of the Wolf Patrol, who saw no reason why they should add fuel to the fire that seemed to be raging in the heart of the countryman.

The farmer was a typical Yankee in looks, and in a city he would be termed a "hayseed" by the boys; but Hugh knew very well that such a man might be a well-to-do owner of much property, and respected in the community where he lived. In the country it is not always a wise thing to judge a man's standing by the appearance of his overalls and jumper.

"They tell me yeou be the feller in charge o' this outfit, mister," was the way he greeted Hugh as he arrived on the spot.

"Well," said the boy, "we have a gentleman by the name of Lieutenant Denmead who is the real scout master of the Oakvale Troop, but he was called home by the sickness of his mother, and I am serving in his place. What can I do for you, sir?"

28

Hugh said this with one of his winning smiles, but the old farmer evidently felt in no humor to let himself be moved by such influences.

"I'm comin' here tew enter a complaint," he started to say; "and I want it understood that we farmers ain't agoin' tew stand for any sech pranks. Where yeou came from they c'n excuse boys' keerlessness, but we call it by another name up here. It's agin the law tew trespass on a man's property where there's signs warnin' people off; an' when boys adds tew that by

leavin' the bars o' a pasture daown so the cattle c'n wander away, they're takin' right big chances o' landin' in the taown lockup."

There were some contemptuous snorts heard as the boys gathered around. Apparently they did not take to the old farmer's accusation very kindly. Hugh knew them well enough to believe that there must be some mistake; for scouts are as a rule too well trained with regard to the rights of others to offend heedlessly in that manner.

29

"Did someone leave the bars of your pasture down, then?" he asked the farmer.

"Jest what I said, and naow I got the job o' huntin' all over creation tew find my keows and that 'ere prize Holstein bull that's wuth a thousand dollars. I'm givin' yeou fellers plain warnin' that this thing ain't tew be tolerated any more."

"Let's look into this a little closer, Mr.—Mr.—" said Hugh.

"Stebbins is my name, Uriah Stebbins, and I owns three farms araound this section," the other hastened to remark when Hugh paused.

"And my name is Hugh Hardin, Mr. Stebbins," continued the scout master, still looking pleasant, without appearing to smile too broadly; for he realized that the angular old farmer might be sensitive and easily believe he was being made an object of ridicule.

"All right, and I want tew say right naow that I doan't b'lieve yeou done the trick, but haow 'baout some o' the rest o' the boys?"

"I'd be very much surprised, Mr. Stebbins," Hugh assured him, "if it turned out that any of these scouts were guilty. They're taught differently in the organization to which we all belong. Scouts like fun as much as any boys, but they try to have it without being mean, or injuring others. Now, can you tell me when the bars of your pasture were let down?"

30

"Sence high noon," came the reply. "I know 'cause I was aout there 'raound that time, an' everything was as it ought tew be. When I kim by jest naow I seen every bar tuk daown an' the cattle air missin'."

Hugh turned to the scouts, now clustered around the spot.

"Who has been off since lunch time?" he asked quietly.

"I was for one!" came from Arthur Cameron without hesitation; and Hugh fancied he saw something in the face of the speaker that made him think Arthur could tell a story if questioned; though the expression did not savor of guilt.

"No one else?" continued the scout master, firmly.

As there was no answer it seemed settled that Arthur must be the only scout who had left the vicinity of the camp since the hour when they sat around having their midday meal.

31

"Do you know anything about this matter,

Arthur?" asked Hugh; while the farmer fixed his small, piercing eyes on the eager, flushed face of the scout as though he would bore him through, and read in advance what he was expecting to reply.

"I'm not so sure, but I think I do," Arthur started to say. "You see, I came in only a short time ago, and meant to tell the queer thing I'd seen, but somehow it slipped my mind. That's why I haven't spoken of it up to now."

"What do you mean by calling it a queer thing?" questioned Hugh, while all of the others pressed in closer so that they might not lose a single syllable.

"I'll tell you, Hugh. I started out to mosey around a bit, not meaning to go so very far away. You know I'm getting to enjoy searching for the tracks of small animals more and more, and keep a record of everything I see connected with the trail of a rabbit or a fox or a 'coon."

"Yes, we know all that, Arthur, so get down to business, please," said Hugh.

32

"I was just coming out of some woods into a side road when I heard loud voices, and noticed three foreign-looking men passing through a pasture where there was a bunch of cattle feeding. All at once they called out in alarm, and I saw that one of the cattle, a Holstein bull marked black with a white band about its body, was making headlong after the men, who were running like mad for the fence."

"Wow! Lucky Arthur to be the one to have such a free show!" Billy Worth was heard to say, half under his breath.

"They managed to just get over the fence and no more," continued the narrator; "in fact, I'm not quite sure but what that bull helped the last man over, for there was a lot of angry talk afterward when the men were brushing themselves off. I wanted to laugh out loud the worst kind, but they looked so black, and I've heard these dagoes always carry knives with them, so I thought I would show my good sense in bobbing back into the woods and continuing my hunt for tracks in another direction."

"You didn't see anything more of the three foreign-looking men then, Arthur?" queried the scout master.

33

"Not a thing," came the ready reply, with a frankness that could not be mistaken; "for I was soon taken up with a discovery I made, and trying to make head or tail of some curious tracks I ran across. When I thought to come back to the camp I was a little twisted in my bearings; but by making use of my limited knowledge of woodcraft I finally managed to get in all right."

Hugh turned to the farmer, who had listened intently all this while.

"You heard what this scout said, Mr. Stebbins?" Hugh began. "I want you to know that no one ever questions the word of Arthur Cameron. It looks to me as if those three unknown men, possibly from the foreign settlement over at the cement works, lowered the bars of your fence

just in revenge for the scare they got when your prize bull chased them."

The farmer must have been impressed with the sincerity of these boys. Perhaps, as a rule, he had little use for growing lads, and his experience with such on his farm may not have prejudiced him in their favor; but Arthur's story was so simple, and the explanation so convincing that he nodded his head slowly as if inclined to take back his former angry charge.

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"Wall, naow, mebbe that is what happened," he said reflectively. "Nero has got a rousin' temper, an' he ain't agoin' tew let any strangers cross the pasture he's feedin' in. I guess naow he mout a run them Eyetalians over the fence; an' they'd be jest mean enough tew let daown the bars. But haow in creation am I agoin' tew get on the track o' my cattle?"

Hugh smiled now.

"Nothing easier, Mr. Stebbins," he told the puzzled farmer, "if you choose to let us help you. As scouts, we would like nothing better than to find your herd for you; and while you may not know it, that sort of work is one of the things we've been trained in—following a trail."

"By jinks! I really b'lieve yeou mean it!" exclaimed the pleased farmer, a grim smile flitting across his gaunt weatherbeaten face, as he looked around at the eager countenances of that dozen khaki-clad boys.

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"You've been unjust to accuse us without any evidence except our happening to be camped near your farm, Mr. Stebbins," said Hugh, meaning that the other should have something to reflect on afterward, "but we will let that pass. We'd like you to know boys better than it seems you do. And if you say the word, I'll pick out several of the best trackers here to go with you to the pasture and follow your herd."

"Wish yeou would, er—Mr. Hardy," said the farmer, eagerly.

"Hardin is the name, sir, or plain Hugh. All right, we'll start with you now," and the scout master turned to glance around him at the eager faces of his chums.

Every fellow fairly held his breath in anticipation and suspense, hoping that he might be fortunate enough to be selected among those who were to take part in this little adventure.

"Alec, you for one; then Arthur, as you've had a hand in the game already, and are making a hobby of tracking, you can be the second. The other two are Billy Worth and Ralph Kenyon."

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The rest of the boys looked downcast, for they were in just the humor to welcome some diversion of this sort. However, they had been too well trained to give voice to their feelings of disappointment.

Hugh and the farmer hurried away, with the others tagging close at their heels. Reaching the road, which was not far from the camp on the river bank, they presently turned into a smaller thoroughfare, and in the end came to where there lay a dense wood on one side with a wide

pasture on the other.

The bars of the fence lay on the ground. It was the easiest thing in the world for the scouts, because of their training, to see that someone had taken the pains to toss every bar aside as it was drawn from its sockets; and this would dispose of any suspicion that the cattle had broken the barrier down.

"Here's the way they started off, you can see, Mr. Stebbins," said Hugh, as he pointed to the plain impression of many split hoofs in the road, and which led in an opposite direction to the one they had come from.

It was no trouble at all to follow that broad trail; why, Billy Worth declared that even the greenhorn, Harold Tremaine, might have done it with only a few hitches.

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"There's one thing we want to remember, fellows," remarked Arthur Cameron, after they had been moving along for some little time, and apparently getting closer to where the cattle would be found.

"What's that?" demanded Alec Sands.

"You remember the old cry they say folks used at the time of the Spanish war: 'Remember the Maine!' Well, we want to 'remember the bull!'"

"I should say we do," admitted Bud Morgan. "For one I've had the delightful experience of being tossed by a bull, when I was a kid. I landed in a tree, and held on like fun, so I wasn't hurt very much. But I'll never forget how that old critter pawed the ground and tossed the dust up with his wicked short horns; and how I suffered all sorts of tortures for a whole hour, till my father heard the racket and came to the rescue."

"And if you'd seen how Nero chased after those foreigners, you'd never hanker after making his acquaintance at close quarters, let me tell you," remarked Arthur; while the farmer chuckled as though he thought he should be proud to own such a progressive animal.

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All this while the cattle seemed to have been moving along the country road, no doubt stopping now and then to nibble at some particularly tempting bunch of green grass; but making steady progress nevertheless.

"Well, here's where they turned aside and entered the woods, you can see, sir!" Hugh presently said, pointing to the marks at his feet, which seemed to change their course.

A minute later and the trackers were passing through the forest. Each boy tried to follow a different trail as much as possible. This was done at Hugh's suggestion, for it gave them the advantage that if one series of tracks became faint and difficult to see some of the others would be plain enough to be easily followed.

"We're pulling up on them fast now!" Arthur Cameron declared. "Why, I just saw a little weed that had been pressed down by a hoof right itself. That means the animal can't be far ahead of us."

"Here's another pointer," remarked Alec Sands.

"Where this cow is walking there's considerable moisture in the ground, and some of the tracks are partly filled with water. It's oozing in still, and will fill them up inside of five minutes. Judging from that I'd say this cow passed along here not more than five minutes ago."

"Likely enough we may find them just beyond that line of bushes ahead," ventured Ralph Kenyon, who had once been quite a trapper, and knew the signs of the woods better than any fellow in the whole Oakvale Troop.

"Wait a minute," said Hugh, impressively, and then turning to Billy and Alec he added: "I'd advise both of you to pocket the red bandanas you've got knotted around your necks cowboy style. A bull will charge anything red, as Mr. Stebbins here will tell you."

"That's right," agreed Bud Morgan, who believed he knew considerable about the habits of bulls in general, especially their "lifting" powers.

"And another thing," continued Hugh, striking while the iron was hot, "it's no disgrace for a scout to shin up a convenient tree if an angry bull charges at him. You want to remember that, all of you. 'An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure,' isn't it, Bud?"

"Well," replied the other, with a whimsical shrug, "you just watch my smoke if ever he really starts for me, that's all."

## CHAPTER IV. TURNING BACK THE CLOCK OF TIME.

"Here they are!" cried Arthur Cameron, triumphantly, because it pleased him to be the first one to discover the runaway herd.

"All there, Mr. Stebbins?" asked Hugh, as the little party stood and looked at the feeding cattle.

"Seven keows, and Nero—that's the full caount, Mr. Hardy; and naow if so be yeou boys'd gimme a lift agettin' the same back, I would like it fust rate."

"That's what we expect to do, sir," Hugh assured him. "You'll have to take the lead. They know you, and will be more apt to mind when they hear you shout at them. Besides, the bull isn't so apt to charge when he knows his master is along."

"Wall, I doan't trust Nero too far, yeou understand," the farmer shrewdly remarked. "Bulls is queer critters and mighty sly. But so long as the herd keeps alongside him I kinder guess as haow we won't have much trouble."

It turned out that way. They passed around so as to head the animals off, and then a gentle pressure was exerted to start them along the back trail. Doubtless the cows understood that



they were expected to return to their corral, for they showed little inclination to balk or act contrary.

Several times Nero was noticed turning to observe the advancing line of herders with more or less disapproval. It was laughable to notice how every scout edged toward some convenient tree, or looked anxiously toward a fence when on the road, as though mentally calculating how speedily he could make a safe exit from the scene in case of sudden necessity.

On the whole, however, Nero acted decently, for he kept moving on steadily; and in the end the herd was safely placed behind the bars.

"As slick a little job as you'd like to see!" remarked Billy Worth, when the last bar had been put in place.

"And as easy as anything we ever tackled," added Alec Sands; "but it's just as well. If those foreigners are going to roam around this part of the country much more, you'll have to nail up your gates, Mr. Stebbins. Yes, and watch your crops a bit, too, because when their money gives out, they'll be apt to forage on the farmers for a living, as they have families to feed."

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The farmer looked serious.

"I never did take any tew them foreigners," he remarked, bitterly. "Years back I had some hired help that came from acrost the water, and they gimme a rough deal. I couldn't understand them critters nohaow, an' I had tew let 'em go. As luck would have it one o' my barns burned daown the next night, which I allowed was some queer. And yeou couldn't git me tew hire one naow if I hed tew quit raisin' crops."

"Well, we'll start back to our camp, Mr. Stebbins," said Hugh, offering his hand to the other. "I'm glad you came to see us, and if you have time, drop in some night and listen to the boys sing some of their school songs."

"I will, by jinks!" declared the farmer, taking the extended hand in his own calloused palm. "I uster be summat o' a singer myself in the old days when I was acourtin' Sally Jane. I'd jest like tew hear if boys air improved any sense them times."

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"They haven't changed much, you'll find, sir," Hugh told him, "though the songs have, and none for the better, either, because in my mind there's nothing like those old tunes, so full of harmony. But drop around and see us, to-night or any night. We hope to be here a week or ten days longer."

Mr. Stebbins went around and shook hands with every one of the four boys. He was rather a different looking Mr. Stebbins from the angry-browed farmer with a grievance who strode into their camp earlier in the afternoon. And somehow the influence of these healthy boys had seemed to make him more human.

After he had gone, turning to wave to them ere he passed around the bend to follow the lane leading up to his own farmhouse, the scouts started in the direction of the camp.

When they arrived they were met with a multitude of questions from those who had not been so fortunate as to go on the tracking expedition. The story was soon told, for there was not much to it; still, it seemed to most of them that this coming of the angry farmer was a good beginning to their outing.

"Our first day in camp," remarked Billy Worth, as he assisted in getting supper ready, "and already we've had two adventures. The signs look good for a real lively time of it up here, seems to me."

Others were thinking along similar lines. Indeed, it did seem as though the members of the Wolf Patrol always did manage to be on hand when anything worth while was taking place. At least it had been their good luck to be connected with quite a number of lively episodes worth keeping a record of.

When a party of fun-loving boys have gone into camp there is always more or less humor abounding. High spirits are the rule, and everything is taken in the light of a joke.

As they sat around and discussed that evening meal, with the three dun-colored tents lending an air of business to the scene, as viewed in the light of the crackling campfire, the utmost hilarity ruled the hour.

The camp cooks had done their work with credit, and were loudly praised; though possibly there was a method in this flattery, since hopes were entertained that it might induce the officiating cooks to keep on trying to excel one another.

Just about the time they had finished everything in sight in the way of cooked food, and Bud Morgan was trying to squeeze one of the two coffeepots in the hope of extracting a few more drops of the beloved amber fluid, Harold Tremaine, who chanced to be on his feet at the time, sang out:

"Visitors coming, fellows! No, there's only one, it seems, and I declare if it isn't our friend the farmer!"

"And he's got some sort of basket along with him, too!" ejaculated Billy Worth, unconsciously rubbing the pit of his stomach in anticipation; for if the truth must be told, Billy was very fond of eating, and his first thought seemed to be that possibly the grateful farmer might be going to donate something worth while to their stock of edibles.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Stebbins!" called out Hugh. "Move along there, fellows, and make room for our visitor on that log. I invited him to drop in and see us any time he found the chance, and that we would let him hear some of our songs. Mr. Stebbins used to be something of a singer himself long ago; so we'll expect you to do your level best for Oakvale High."

"I fotched yeou over a few dozen o' fresh aigs," exclaimed the farmer. "'Tain't much after haow yeou helped me so fine tew git my herd back this arternoon; but the missus she thought as yeou mout enjy knowin' they was all laid sense yist'day."

"That's splendid of you, Mr. Stebbins," Hugh told him as he saw the clean eggs in the basket, snuggled in some hay; "and if only you'd take pay for them——"

"Stop right there, Mr. Hardy," interrupted the other, raising his hand in expostulation, "we hain't a-sellin' them aigs, remember. They's a free-will offerin' from the Stebbins, and I want tew say I'm right glad I had a chanct tew meet up with yeou to-day. I kinder looks on boys a bit different, and I guess they's some truth in what I heard 'baout this scout business amakin' 'em act like they never used tew do ten years back."

"Then thank your good wife for the Boy Scouts of Oakvale Troop, will you, Mr. Stebbins?" said Hugh. "I'm sure we'll enjoy eating such fine eggs. We brought a few with us, but even now they're nearly all gone."

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"Mebbe if so be them Eyetalian strikers doan't wring the necks o' my dominick fowls some night, when they're aprowlin' araound lookin' for food, they might be more o' the same kind acomin' this way from my coops."

Apparently Mr. Stebbins had been impressed by the behavior and cordial ways of the scouts more than any of them had suspected. Here he was opening his heart to them in a way that would have amazed those of his neighbors who had known him all his life as perhaps a close-fisted tiller of the soil. Hugh hugged to his heart the conviction that it paid to make a friend out of one who seemed inclined to be an enemy.

Mr. Stebbins sat down there in front of the glowing fire and listened to the lively talk that was going on. Occasionally he joined in, usually to mention some episode of his past which came up in his mind under the peculiar conditions surrounding him.

Mr. Stebbins must have been asking himself more than once whether he could be awake or simply dreaming all these things. If friends had told the crusty, grubbing old farmer a week before that he would presently be found actually wasting precious time sitting on a log by a blazing campfire, and enjoying himself to the limit listening to a pack of boys chatter and sing, he would have informed them that they were crazy.

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When Hugh started the crowd singing the farmer seemed to be quivering all over with delight. Old half-forgotten memories must have awakened in his brain. Once again, perhaps, he was taking a pretty red-cheeked lass to "singin' skewl," and he might be even stealing a kiss on the road in the bargain.

He even joined in some of the choruses, and while there could be no doubt with regard to his good intentions, it was also a patent fact that, in the long years since Mr. Stebbins had sung, his voice had become wofully cracked. But then the boys cared nothing for that. It tickled them to see him clapping his hands to keep time with the music, and to notice how his wrinkled face fairly beamed with awakened satisfaction.

That had certainly been a day to be marked with a red cross in the life history of Uriah Stebbins; and it might be set down as certain that from

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that time on he would try to get closer to the hearts of boys than he had ever thought of doing before.

He could hardly tear himself away when the hour began to get late, that is, for a hard-working farmer who was at work at peep of dawn, often long before.

"I'm sure coming daown again tew see yeou, boys," he said, as he went the rounds and squeezed a hand of every scout; "and mebbe if it's all right I'd like tew fotch my Sally Jane along. I kinder think it would make the missus feel ten years younger if so be she could hear some o' that fine singin'. Haow 'baout that, Mr. Hardy?"

"We'd be only too pleased to have you bring her any time, sir. And let me tell you, all of us have enjoyed this evening almost as much as you did; isn't that so, boys?" and Hugh turned expectantly to the rest as he said this.

A chorus of approval answered him, and the old farmer went away in high spirits indeed; they even thought he stood up straighter, and walked with a more springy step than before.

"Of course we mean what we said," observed Alec Sands after the old man had vanished from sight; "but at the same time that insures us a supply of dandy fresh eggs all the time we stay here. So things work out well for us, it seems."

"Oh! don't be so mercenary about it, Alec," remonstrated Billy. "Why, it was worth a lot to me just to see what a remarkable change has come over Uriah. I wouldn't be surprised if he wants to learn the newest songs, or even how to dance the tango with his wife if this new spirit keeps on growing."

They continued to sit there for quite some time—it seemed so cozy by the fire.

Hugh was just thinking of saying that they had better be crawling inside their tents and trying to get some sleep, when he noticed Ralph Kenyon trying to attract his attention. Leaning forward, Ralph went on to say in a low tone:

"Don't anybody look just yet; but there's a man watching us in those bushes back of you, Hugh."

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## CHAPTER V.

### SIGNS OF BROODING TROUBLE.

Thanks to the fact that all of them heard the warning uttered by Ralph, no one was so incautious as to suddenly turn and stare toward the bushes mentioned by the chum who had given the alarm.

"Keep on talking as if nothing had happened," advised Hugh. "By degrees all of us can take a peep."

Perhaps even then he was half inclined to believe Ralph must have made a mistake and only imagined he saw a face. A minute later and

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the scout master realized that undoubtedly there was a man concealed back of the bushes, for his face was raised in plain view, only to again vanish back of the covert.

"Looked like one of those foreigners for a fact, Hugh," muttered Arthur Cameron.

"You mean the three who were chased by the bull, don't you?" asked the other.

"Just what I do," replied Arthur, positively.

"It's a dark face, and might belong to an Italian or a Hungarian, such as they say most of those strikers are," continued Hugh.

"He may have been looking for a chance to pick up something worth eating."

"They say grub is getting short in their camp," suggested Alec Sands.

"And seeing the light of our fire, he came this way to spy on us," added Billy Worth.

"Well, he looked surprised, and half scared, to me," observed Bud Morgan. "It's easy to understand why. You know, over in their country, the only authority they recognize is that of uniforms. Police officers or army men they bend the knee to. So, seeing a dozen stout chaps all in khaki uniforms seated here, I guess that dago is laboring under the idea that in some way we're connected with the U. S. Army."

Hugh looked uneasy.

"I hope he isn't going to carry that impression back with him to his mates, then," he argued, "because they would think the soldiers were hiding up here, waiting to shoot them down if any rioting began. And we might have a hundred wild strikers breaking in on the quiet of our little camp when we least expect visitors."

"They're an awful unreasonable lot, too," added Harold Tremaine. "You can't make 'em understand what you mean: and they've got ugly, hot tempers in the bargain."

"There, Hugh, he's crawling off now!" said Ralph.

"A good riddance of bad rubbish!" declared Arthur Cameron. "The less we have to do with these queer foreigners, the better for us all."

When he said that Arthur little suspected what strange happenings there were destined to come their way ere long, and also what surprises they would be thrown in contact with, even to a close association with the very foreigners he was, in his ignorance, speaking of so bitterly.

"I hope he's gone for good, that's all!" was what Hugh said.

When they got to talking it all over a little later, it seemed to be the consensus of opinion that they should do something to guard the camp. While there might not be the slightest chance of any peril descending upon them as they slept, at the same time the motto of all scouts is "Be Prepared," and Hugh as well as some of the others did not believe it was sensible to wait until "the horse was stolen before locking the

stable door.”

All sorts of familiar maxims were brought out and paraded in order to bolster up this idea, and finally Hugh paired his followers off. Two of them were assigned to keep watch the first hour, with instructions to arouse Hugh at the least suspicious discovery.

In turn these sentries were to arouse the next pair, and so, in regular routine, all the inmates of the camp without exception would do their share of work between that time and the coming of welcome dawn.

Nor was that all. Since they had no firearms in camp, Hugh made them arm themselves with staves or cudgels, so that in case of necessity they might have some means of defense should the camp be invaded.

Some of the more timid doubtless looked around at the black woods and may have peopled those shadows with the lurking figures of many excitable strikers. These might be eager to see for themselves the “soldiers” that one of their number reported as having gone into camp not more than two miles from the threatened cement works upon which the strike had been declared.

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There was not a great deal of sleeping done that first night in camp. There seldom is, but on this particular occasion the boys had additional reason to be wakeful as they lay there under their blankets, and with the dun-colored waterproof canvas above them moving from time to time in the night breeze.

The frequent change of guards for one thing kept them from sound sleep. Then the fellows who were on duty persisted in walking about more or less; or else they talked in low but distinctly heard tones as they threw additional fuel on the fire.

Once Billy Worth managed to arouse the whole camp when out of his tent he came crawling forth, sniffing the air vigorously, and asking if that was breakfast getting ready he scented.

He was informed it was only an hour after midnight, and that he must have dreamed he smelled coffee; after which they chased him back to his blanket.

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Well, dawn came finally, and it found the camp of the scouts undisturbed, for which all of them doubtless felt duly grateful. There was Bud Morgan, however, so fond of excitement that he never met with enough, heard to lament the fact that after all their fine preparations, and the waste of time that might have been put in napping, “nothing had happened after all.”

As they ate their breakfast of fried ham and eggs, the latter the gift of their grateful farmer friend, the scouts planned all sorts of diversions for that particular day. One wanted to do this thing, and another had his favorite scheme on his mind, which he was only waiting for a chance to try out.

Hugh always tried to suit the caprice of the boys when arranging plans for the day. It was most unwise to stick a round peg in a square hole, he

figured. The fellow who was making a hobby of learning all about animal tracks and habits would be wasting his time with a camera trying to snap off scenery; or making a bungle of tying up the broken wing of an injured crow he had managed to catch.

"Every one to his taste," was Hugh's motto; and by adhering to this plan whenever practicable he managed not only to satisfy the boys but accomplish much better results than if he had persisted in crossing their wishes.

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As for himself, Hugh had so many "hobbies" that he was ready and willing to join any group in carrying out their plans, for it was likely that in so doing he would be pleasing himself in the bargain.

All arrangements had been made for sharing the onerous duties of cook. Some of the boys were so much better at this than others, that an agreement was effected whereby those who did more than their share in preparing the meals, should escape wood-chopping and such hard labor.

Needless to say, Billy Worth gladly took upon his shoulders the task of relieving two other fellows at this cooking game; for he loved to be where he could make sure that there would be enough of a supply for everybody, because Billy hated a short allowance above all things. Then again it gave him something of a lofty position, since the cook was the "king of the camp" while at his labors.

He had set his scullions to work cleaning up the breakfast things, and was feeling quite important, Hugh noticed, as he bustled about, having donned the round little white cap that had been brought along in a spirit of humor to distinguish the Great Mogul who would be the officer of the day.

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None of them had, however, started out on their several errands when Ralph Kenyon was seen to step up on a log, and shading his eyes with a hand, look earnestly off in a direction that might be called "up" the road.

"What did you think you saw, Ralph?" asked Billy, noticing the other. "I hope it turns out to be our friend the egg-man coming with a fresh supply."

"Hugh, come here and take a look," said Ralph, in a strained voice; "there's something queer about that crowd, seems to me!"

No sooner had Hugh looked than he turned to the rest.

"Keep quiet, and do nothing to attract attention," he said. "Fortunately the fire has burned itself nearly out, so there's little or no smoke rising, and the breeze is coming from them to us. We'd better let them go past without knowing we're in camp here."

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His words of warning thrilled every scout, and there was immediately a general movement under way to find some chance to discover what it was that had excited the two who had been standing on the log.

As they looked over the tops of the screening bushes, they discovered moving figures up the road; and at the same time could be heard the scuffling sound of many feet not keeping time as soldiers would have done.

The boys stared as they saw several squads of men passing swiftly along. It appeared as though some of these parties seemed suspicious, perhaps half anticipating an attack from the neighboring woods. They were on the whole a tough-looking crowd, and seemed to be muscular workers, some natives, others of foreign birth.

Half a dozen heavily-armed men strode along with them. At sight of the repeating rifles they carried, Billy whispered to Hugh, close to whom he now stood:

"Who are they, Hugh? Can they be game wardens arresting poachers up here?"

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"I reckon that they are strike-breakers, guarded by armed deputies," Hugh replied.

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## **CHAPTER VI. EVERYBODY BUSY.**

"That's going to mean a pack of trouble, isn't it, Hugh?" said Billy the Wolf, as he counted the men who were passing, and found that they numbered fully a score, with six armed guards who looked very grim and determined.

"Yes," replied the scout master, reluctantly, "I'm afraid it does spell that, not only for the strikers' families but to the company as well."

"How's that?" demanded Alec Sands, who had also pushed alongside so as to see better, and at the same time learn what the leader of the Wolf Patrol thought of the situation.

"Why," replied Hugh, still speaking softly so that those on the road might not overhear the sound of his voice, "there never was a bitter strike yet when bullets flew but what the company involved suffered in the end. Public opinion is against the use of force. There must sooner or later be some way found to arbitrate all these labor troubles. Both sides would be better off if that could be done."

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They remained very quiet as the several detachments passed along the road. Perhaps it was fortunate that the presence of the boys was not suddenly discovered by those guards. They looked as though they might prove to be somewhat reckless in the use of the firearms they were carrying; and since they knew the striking foreigners were camped somewhere in this vicinity, they might have fired on the spur of the moment and investigated afterward.

"I wonder if that's the whole bunch?" remarked Tom Sherwood, looking up the road as though under the impression that what they had seen was only the advance guard of an invading army.

"They'd be apt to keep as much together as they



could," said Hugh, "so as to be able to cow any demonstration the strikers might make; and on that score I reckon we've seen their full strength."

"Wow! if those excitable foreigners find out that strike-breakers are being taken into the cement works by the back door, they'll be hopping mad, let me tell you," observed Billy Worth, seriously.

The situation reminded some of the scouts of that time they had accompanied the militia on their annual training trip, when a mock battle was fought, with the boys rendering invaluable service as part of the Signal Corps.

"Suppose the strikers and that crowd did happen to meet, Hugh; there'd likely be a pitched battle, wouldn't you think?" asked Bud Morgan.

"The chances lean that way," he was told. "I've heard a good deal about these impetuous foreigners. It seems that the women have more nerve than the men. That may be because they feel the pinch of hunger sooner, and see their children suffering. But they've always been known to push their men into a fight, yes, and even take part in the row themselves, with clubs, or any sort of thing they could handle."

"Hugh, if something like that did come off while we were camped on the Hurricane what could we do?" demanded Arthur Cameron.

"Oh, it would be out of the question for scouts to take sides in any labor quarrel; we'd have to be strictly neutral!" the other hastened to tell him.

"Shucks! I don't mean it that way, Hugh," continued the other, eagerly. "Wouldn't it be all right for us to try and help the under-dog in some way? Of course we couldn't fight, or anything like that, but what's to hinder us from trying to save the lives of any who might get hurt in the riot?"

Hugh looked decidedly interested.

"That's a suggestion, Arthur, that does your heart credit," he hastened to say with enthusiasm. "Certainly there could be no objection to our playing the part of the Good Samaritan to any of the strikers who happened to get wounded. That's always in the province of scouts; the main part of our manual is taken up with the idea that it's noble to stretch out a helping hand to those who are down."

"There is likely to be no doctor near the foreign camps, I should say," Arthur added, as if the idea was fast taking a firm grip of his mind, "and some of us have made a special study of treating wounds."

Billy Worth also desired to be heard as favoring the cause of humanity.

"We always carry plenty of lint, bandages, liniment and salve along with us when we go into camp. There's never any knowing when an accident might happen, with boys handling sharp axes recklessly, and cutting themselves with knives. Of course I hope nothing is going to happen between those two crowds; but if it does, I'm in favor of taking up Arthur's idea."

As it was apparent that there were no more

strike-breakers coming along the road, at least just then, the boys presently began to pay attention to the various matters they had planned to carry out during this, the first full day in camp.

A couple of them had determined to try the fishing in the river, and as the first requisite toward success they started to find some angle-worms. This is an easy enough task around gardens and compost heaps at home; but off in the woods one has to depend for the main source of supply on grubs taken from decayed tree trunks, beetles, grasshoppers, if they are to be had, and all such things.

Under some of the rocks the boys discovered a few ugly looking dobsons or, as Bud called them, hellgamites. They had a black color, and were armed with a pair of powerful mandibles or "pincers" that had to be avoided unless one scorned the sharp snap they could give when angered.

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After an hour or so of searching, enough bait of various kinds had been found to answer their purpose. Then Bud and Billy walked down the river a short distance until they came to a likely-looking place where a deep pool seemed to promise them good results.

They had been wise enough to bring jointed rods along, as well as a landing net, and all the paraphernalia needed for the work. Being experienced bass fishermen, the two scouts knew how to go about the job; and it was not long before they were enjoying the sport.

The Hurricane proved to have gamey bass in its slumbering pools, and the varied kind of bait which the fishermen offered was very tempting to their capricious appetites, for the boys inside of an hour had landed quite a number of fighters, all of which compensated Bud and Billy for their work in hunting for the bait.

Arthur Cameron had taken the tenderfoot under his wing. Harold Tremaine had discovered how much enjoyment the others seemed to get from their observation of things about them. He was earnestly desirous of emulating their example, and since above all other things he fancied he would best like being an expert at reading animal "signs," Hugh had privately asked Arthur to get him interested in that line.

68

They spent the livelong morning in the woods, searching everywhere for tracks, and when finding them, trying to read a story in the marks as made by the shy little animals. Sometimes they came upon evidences of a tragedy, such as are constantly happening amidst these primitive circles, where existence on the part of one always means annihilation of another.

There was a creek that ran into the river a short distance above the camp, and it was here that Arthur and his friend spent most of their time. Along the banks, where it was narrow, they could easily find the tracks of numerous small animals.

Arthur, from his longer experience and study, was able to point out exactly what difference existed between the footprint of a mink and that of a 'coon.

69

"This one here," he told Harold as the morning waned, and they were about returning to the camp for lunch, "bothers me. It doesn't look like anything I ever happened to run across before. Ralph Kenyon would know, and if I can get him up here I'd like to see what he makes of it. Even if he won't come we can describe it to him."

"But what do you think it can be?" insisted Harold.

"Well, there's a badger and a fisher cat, besides an otter," replied Arthur, meditatively. "I know it isn't made by a muskrat, because I've seen heaps of their tracks, and I showed you several."

"We must tell Billy Worth about the big greenback frogs there are up here along the shores of this creek in places," remarked Harold, as they started down the winding creek, so as to strike its junction with the river, as that would be the easiest way to keep from getting lost, something Harold seemed to dislike the very thought of.

"Why, yes, Billy was always wild over his favorite dish of frog legs," Arthur admitted. "I've known him to spend half a day prowling about in a marsh and working like everything, only to fetch in a couple of measly little saddles that gave him just a few bites."

70

"These fellows are whoppers up here," the tenderfoot continued, "and he could get a dozen if only he made decent shots with that little Flobert rifle he carries with him. Now, I own up I don't think I'd like frog legs for a meal. I never tasted any, but then I haven't been much of a hand for eating oysters or clams, though I do like fish; and I hope the boys manage to catch a mess to-day."

"I'm in the same boat with you, Harold," agreed the second scout; "but if I get the chance, I'd like to try a taste. Hugh tells me they're as fine as spring chicken. It seems cruel to kill frogs, but when you want them to eat what difference is it from stepping out in the barnyard and chopping the head off the old family pet of a rooster when the parson comes to dinner?"

Meanwhile the other boys had spent the fine summer morning in pursuits that appealed especially to them. Two of them roamed the neighborhood looking for birds of every description. They were deeply interested in classifying the various species found in New England during the season, with something of their habits as observed by amateur ornithologists.

71

This sort of thing entailed considerable work. It became necessary to do more or less running in order to make observations, consultations over the guide book that was carried along for reference, and climbing of trees when a nest was discovered; so that, taken all in all, the morning proved to be an exhausting one, even though enjoyable in the extreme.

Then there was another lot who had made a hobby of photography, and they were forever getting some of the others to pose; or else seeking what they termed wonderful views that might take the prize in a competition.

Hugh was interested in many things. He could have entered into each and every separate pursuit undertaken by the others—from fishing, animal tracking, bird lore, and even taking snapshot pictures; for at times he had pursued each and every one of these with his usual vim.

On this morning, however, Hugh was apparently hardly feeling in a humor to undertake any of these attractive things. He hung about the camp doing many little chores that were calculated to add to the attractiveness and comfort of the place during their term of occupation.

72

Once he found himself quite alone there, and when assured of that, Hugh got out the little medicine kit that was a part and parcel of the Oakvale Troop's camp equipage, spending quite some time in overhauling its contents.

From the significance attached to this action on the part of the scout master, it might be suspected that Hugh could not get certain things out of his mind. He feared that sooner or later there was bound to be a collision of armed forces over there between the camp of the strikers, and the cement works where the new men were being guarded by deputies and guards; and the possibility of such a calamity gave Hugh Hardin much cause for thought.

A number of times during the earlier part of the morning, had anyone been observing the scout master, they might have seen him raise his head and appear to listen intently.

This always happened when the wind picked up a little, and rustled through the leaves of the trees overhead. It was also a significant fact that the breeze was coming directly from the quarter where they had reason to believe the shanties of the foreigners made up a settlement, with the cement works not far beyond.

73

Some sound startled Hugh each time. He feared it might be a distant shout, and that it would mean the beginning of an outbreak, the end of which no person could prophesy. But fortunately these all proved to be false alarms. The morning slipped away, and at noon all of the scouts gathered to enjoy the fish that Billy and Bud had captured and prepared for the pan.

They were pronounced simply elegant, and the successful fishermen told they could duplicate their performance at any time they felt inclined that way.

"Mebbe we will to-morrow," said Billy; "but there's a louder call for me this same afternoon. Bullfrogs as big as puppies, and singing to get knocked over, eh? Well, I'm much obliged for the information, Harold and Arthur. If I'm lucky in my little hunt, you'll be able to taste the finest dish going to-night."

While they ate their midday meal, everybody explained what they had spent the morning in doing; and that added greatly to the enjoyment of the occasion. And it had been amusing to see how Billy's eyes danced when told about those gigantic frogs hidden among the sedge grass along the low shores of the creek, in places where it widened out and became very shallow.

74

"I'm going to take off my shoes and wade

wherever it happens that's the best way to get a crack at the sly old chaps," Billy had told them; and shortly afterward he was seen ambling away to where the creek joined the river, meaning to follow this former stream up until he came to the hunting-grounds described by the tracking party.

Now and then, during the next half hour, they heard a faint report, which, of course, they knew was made by Billy's small Flobert rifle.

"If he's a dead shot," Harold Tremaine was saying, "he must be getting quite a load of game, for that makes about the tenth time I've heard him fire."

It was only a short time afterward when those in the camp suddenly looked up and exchanged significant exclamations.

75

"He's shouting about something, Hugh!" cried Bud Morgan, scrambling to his feet.

"Sounds as if he might be in trouble of some kind!" added Harold Tremaine, turning a little pale, for he was new to all this sort of thing, and unused to excitement.

76

## **CHAPTER VII. THE FROG HUNTER TRAPPED.**

As usual Hugh was quick to do his thinking.

"One of you pick up that rope!" he called out. "Bud, you and Ralph come along with me."

He jumped over to a tent, and when he appeared again, they noticed that he was carrying the medicine case with him.

"A rope!" exclaimed the bewildered Harold. "Then Hugh thinks Billy's fallen down into some hole! But we didn't run across anything like that, did we, Arthur?"

"Leave it to Hugh; he knows what he's doing," replied the other scout. "That rope may be for something else."

"Yes," added Harold, "I know they use ropes for a good many purposes in different parts of the country; but Billy doesn't really deserve being lynched, even if he has gotten off some tough stories on us."

Meanwhile Hugh, Bud and Ralph were running as fast as they could in the direction of the spot from whence those faint shouts came at intervals. The further the three scouts advanced, the plainer the cries sounded.

77

"Give him a whoop in return, Ralph, just to let him know we are on the way," suggested the scout master, knowing the carrying power of the other's voice.

So Ralph let out a call that might have been heard a mile away. Doubtless it afforded more or less satisfaction to the unseen Billy; for while he continued to give an occasional whoop, the

frantic appeal was missing from his outcries.

"He's only shouting now to let us know where he is," Hugh explained.

"What in the dickens do you think has happened to him, Hugh?" asked Ralph. "Billy isn't silly enough to get lost, or to shout like a baby if he did find himself mixed up. I wonder if he's had an accident, and shot himself with that little Flobert gun?"

"Or been caught by a lot of the strikers, who think he must be a soldier because he's wearing a uniform?" Bud added as his contribution.

"We'll soon know," Hugh told them, "because we're getting close to where he is. If it was the strikers, they wouldn't be apt to let him yell that way; I'm inclined to think it's some sort of pickle Billy's allowed himself to get into; which is mainly why I had you fetch the rope along."

78

The other scouts might have demanded what he meant only it happened that just then they came upon the creek.

"Now we'll find him, for he's right above here!" exclaimed Ralph, after which he gave utterance to one of his "hallo" calls. An immediate reply from nearby caused the three boys to quicken their steps; and half a minute afterward they burst past a screen of bushes to discover the object of their concern.

"Well, I declare if he hasn't fooled us to beat the band!" cried Bud. "Hey, Billy, what d'ye mean shouting that way, and giving us such a big scare? Better come ashore and get down on your knees to beg— Why, look at him tugging away like everything, and the water up above his knees, too! Hugh, is he caught in the quicksand, do you think?"

"That's about the size of it," sang out Billy, with a wide grin, for now that his chums, and particularly Hugh Hardin, had reached the spot, his late fears had evidently subsided, and he only saw the comical side of his predicament.

79

"D'ye mean to say you can't get a foot out?" asked Ralph Kenyon, as he and the other two came to a halt on the low shore.

"Well, that's the trouble, you see," explained Billy, composedly. "Now watch me lift my right foot, and you'll see that the other sinks down several inches when I put all my weight on it."

He thereupon proceeded to show them how it came about, much to the wonderment of Ralph and Bud.

"He's caught as fast as if he was in a vise," admitted the former; "and if he had to depend on himself, I guess Billy'd have a hot old time getting out of that fix."

"What's the good of having chums if you don't make use of them?" demanded the one who was standing in the shallow stream, holding his Flobert rifle in one hand, and getting deeper in the mire every time he moved.

Ralph and Bud turned to the scout master.

"What's the answer, Hugh?" asked the latter.

80

"That's why I had you fetch the rope," Hugh told him. "Somehow something seemed to give me an idea it might be either sucking mud or a quicksand. When a fellow is trapped in either one, and there's no chance for help coming, he must set about saving himself by his quick wits."

"Yes, that's all right, Hugh," explained Billy, making a grimace, "and I pounded my poor brains like everything trying to think of some way, for I hated the worst kind to play the baby act and call for help. But there wasn't a single thing I could hatch up, seemed like. Tell me, what can be done in such a case? Oh! don't mind me any, because I'm comfortable, and I know I'll be yanked out of this right soon. How about it, Hugh?"

"Well, if the fellow who's caught happens to be only in half-way to his knees," explained the other, "the best thing for him to do is to throw himself flat and scramble for the firm ground in that way, no matter how much he soils his clothes; because then you see all his weight doesn't come on a small point like his foot, and so he can crawl or roll to safety."

"But if he's in too deep for that?" asked Ralph.

81

"In that case it's much more serious," Hugh told them. "If he happens to have a rope along, he can make use of it by noosing some object, and then dragging himself out. If a tree is overhead, and he can get hold of a limb, the rest is easy. I've even read of a man who was in above his hips remembering that his horse was staked not far away. He whistled, and the animal, breaking loose, came running to him; then the lariat was fastened to the saddle, the loop put under the man's arms, and the intelligent animal dragged him free."

"Fine!" ejaculated Billy. "But I didn't have a horse nor yet a rope, you see. There's a tree above me, but no limb within five feet of my hands. I guess I'd have had a tough time of it only for the camp being so near by."

"Well, now to get you out of that hole, Billy!" said Hugh, with a confidence so refreshing that Billy actually laughed gleefully.

First of all, Hugh climbed up in the tree and managed to reach the limb that was directly above the imperiled scout. Billy, by stretching his arm, was able to hand up his gun, which in turn Hugh passed along to the others close by.

82

"Now, I'm going to lower the rope, Billy," the scout master continued. "It has a running noose at the end, you see. Slip that under your arms, with the knot across your chest. After that, when we start to pulling, do everything you can to work your feet free from the clinging quicksand."

"That's O. K., Hugh, and I can do it to a dot!" sang out the one below, as he took hold of the dangling rope the scout master had lowered.

Fortunately that same rope, a stout braided clothes-line or window-sash cord belonging to Hugh, was long enough to pass over the limb, and from there extend to solid ground.

"You two fellows get down on the firm bank and

be ready to heave when I give you the word," Hugh told Ralph and Bud; and after they had done this he continued: "Pull steadily now, and not with a jerk. That's the way to do it. Work your legs as much as you can, Billy. Are you moving any?"

"Yep, and I'm being sawed in half, too, I reckon!" gasped the other; "but mebbe I c'n stand that better than being smothered, so keep it goin', boys. 'One good turn deserves another.' Yo-heave-o! away she goes! That time I lifted three inches, and it ought to be easier now. Whee! good-by, old quicksand! Sorry to leave you, but 'the best of friends must part!'"

83

By the time Billy's feet had come in sight above the scanty water, his hands were able to fasten on the limb. With the waiting Hugh ready to assist him, it was not so very difficult for the boy to scramble up until he found himself astraddle there.

"Lemme breathe a little here first, fellows!" wheezed Billy, as red in the face as a turkey. "You joshed me when I was startin' out, Ralph, and said mebbe the old bullfrogs might turn on me. Well, they didn't, but their best friend, the creek, did everything it knew how to take revenge."

"But didn't you get any frogs; we heard you shoot lots of times?" Bud asked.

"Sure I did, one with every shot, and there's a round dozen lying up on the bank, where I tossed 'em after I found I was stuck in this sand. I'm rested some now, boys, and I think I'll get ashore."

84

When he had successfully negotiated the limb and descended the trunk, Billy was seen to affectionately pat the bark as though he should always cherish fond memories of that friendly tree.

"I'm going to coax one of the fellows to take a picture of it for me," he declared, "and every time I look at it, I'll think what a nice thing it is to have a friend in time of need."

They soon found the big frogs where the hunter had tossed them. Billy admitted that he fancied he had had enough of the sport for one day. As there were a baker's dozen in all, and it was not certain that every fellow would care to taste such an odd dish, his decision was perhaps wise.

So he washed his soiled legs, and put on his shoes and socks, which he had been carrying suspended from his belt up to the time he thought it best to hurl them ashore after his game.

Some of the boys took quite a fancy to the novel food, but others nibbled and threw up their hands, saying they did not like the slightly fishy taste, though it was certainly true that the meat was as tender as spring chicken.

85

So another day had passed. Hugh was secretly glad that so far they had heard nothing to indicate that trouble had broken out over at the headquarters of the striking cement workers. When he prepared to settle down that night, after arranging for the watch, Hugh's last



injunction to the sentries was that they should call him if they heard any suspicious sounds in the direction of the scene of the labor war.

The night passed peacefully away, and not a single event happened calculated to cause alarm. With the coming of another day, the scouts busied themselves after their usual fashion in laying out ambitious plans, but, owing to circumstances which none of them could foresee, none of them were fated to be carried into effect.

Indeed, hardly had they finished eating than there came a sudden loud angry burst of distant shouts, quickly followed by the report of a number of guns. Then, after a brief silence, while the boys were standing there listening with intentness and anxious faces, another chorus of voices came rolling over the two miles of space that lay between the scouts' camp and the village of the foreigners, as well as the cement works in which they had formerly labored day after day until agitators caused them to make demands upon their employers and quit in a body.

A second time the sound of scattered gunshots came to the strained ears of the boys, with many frenzied shouts that now seemed to tell of terror, as though the rioters might have been awed by the show of force, seeing so many of their number shot down in cold blood.

Again silence brooded over the land, a silence that was eloquent of terrible possibilities, and which gave Hugh one of the queerest sensations he had ever experienced as in imagination he could see the field of battle where all this fighting was taking place.

86

87

## **CHAPTER VIII.**

### **SCOUTS HEED THE CALL TO DUTY.**

"They've gone and done it after all, Hugh!" exclaimed Alec Sands, as he turned a rueful face toward the scout master.

Nor was Alec the only one who looked puzzled and worried, for other faces showed positive signs of pallor. Hugh himself was not entirely free from experiencing the deepest anxiety since he knew only too well how men's passions can run away with their better judgment.

"That was a regular battle, as sure as anything," said Arthur Cameron, shuddering as he recalled how terrible those last cries had sounded, fraught as they were with what seemed to be fear.

"And all that shooting wasn't for nothing, either," added Bud Morgan. "When I saw the kind of men those armed deputies were, I knew there would be something doing if the strikers tried to break their way into the cement works to get at the men who had taken their jobs. They did just what I thought they would."

88

"What can we do, Hugh?" asked Ralph Kenyon.

Ah! that was the question—what would it be safe for them to try and do under the conditions? That was the problem Hugh was tossing about in his mind then and there.

He knew what chances there were for trouble unless they could in some way convince the ignorant foreigners that they were friends. Should the angry men discover them coming up from the rear, their first thought would naturally be that they had been caught in a trap, and that these fellows in khaki uniforms must be members of the State Militia seeking to surround them.

In that case the strikers would either fly madly, or believing themselves in a trap, they would start an attack, determined to break their way through.

Hugh knew that the chances were many of them were armed. Those who did not have firearms of some sort would carry the favorite weapon of their type, the stiletto, and unable to properly make them understand that they came only as friends who wanted to assist their wounded, the bewildered and furious mob might turn upon them like so many mad wolves.

If ever the scout master found himself up against an occasion when he had need of deep thinking, that time was the present.

“The fighting seems to have been short and swift,” remarked Bud Morgan; “and from that we can guess that it must have been the guards who won the scrap.”

“Yes,” commented Billy. “If the strikers had managed to break through the gates that are in the stockade surrounding the cement works, as we’ve been told, they’d be yapping still, as they chased every strike-breaker around. No, they were up against a harder proposition than they reckoned on, and that last volley scattered the mob like sheep.”

“But think of those who must have been shot down,” said Arthur Cameron, with a look of deepest pity on his face. “Their friends have run away and deserted them; and the men in the works will be afraid to come out so as to do anything for them; so there the poor chaps must lie, bleeding to death it may be for want of a little attention.”

He looked appealingly at Hugh as he said this. The scout master knew what was in Arthur’s mind. He understood what a fascination the subject of “first aid to the injured” had been of late to Arthur, and what signal advances he was making in his studies along this line, with an expressed determination to some day become a regular surgeon like one of his uncles.

Still, Hugh wanted to be very sure that he was doing the right thing before he gave his consent to advance in the direction of the disputed territory now given over to anarchy and bloodshed.

In the absence of Lieutenant Denmead, the complete charge of the troop was placed in his keeping, and the responsibility weighed heavily on Hugh. Humanity called on him to accept the opportunity that had suddenly opened up before

him; on the other hand, his duty to his chums, as well as to those many parents at home in Oakvale, demanded that he take no unnecessary risks.

The picture which Arthur's words had conjured up, of poor fellows lying there in danger of bleeding to death because there were no helping hands stretched out to aid them, gave Hugh a cold feeling in the region of his heart. Had he only himself to think about, he would have cast discretion to the four winds, and hurried away on his mission of mercy, regardless of any peril to himself.

91

Feeling that the responsibility was too much for him to decide alone and unaided, the scout master turned to that solution always available, and which divided the burden, share and share alike.

So he turned hastily on his chums, saying earnestly:

"I can't find the answer to this thing by myself, fellows, and I want you to decide it for me. Had some of us better start across and try to do something for those who may have been wounded in that fight? When the news gets to the city I suppose the authorities will send out hospital nurses and attendants; but they might take hours in getting on the ground. Ought we go or stay here; that's what I want you to settle, and I'm not going to tell you what I want to do. Every fellow who believes it to be our duty as scouts to try and help those poor foreigners, hold up his hand."

He was thrilled to see that there was not a single dissenter; for every hand instantly went up, and when Hugh feebly added, "Contrary no, hold up a hand!" there was not one to be seen.

92

Hugh sighed with relief. It was just what he wanted, hoped for, and was delighted to have come about. At the same time he felt secret fears lest something terrible follow their forward move.

The next step was to select those whom he knew could be of the greatest good in the work they laid out to attempt. Not every scout has the necessary nerve to hover over a wounded person, and play the part of nurse or doctor; some boys are afflicted with weak nerves, and feel sick at the sight of blood; others are clumsy by nature, and hardly capable of attempting the washing of ugly wounds, with the subsequent binding up of them.

"I want five to go with me," said Hugh, decisively. "Arthur for one, then Billy, Ralph, Alec, and let me see, you can make the fifth one, Bud. Gather any old bits of cotton or linen you can find, for our supply in the medical kit may soon be exhausted. And hurry, above everything else."

93

All this talk and exchange of ideas had taken but a few minutes. As not only the chosen five scouts but their comrades as well jumped at a lively rate to get things ready, another brief interval sufficed to complete the job.

"We're ready, Hugh!" announced Alec Sands, who looked as though he felt under heavy

obligations to Hugh for picking him out as a member of the life-saving corps.

Once upon a time Alec had fought the rising star of Hugh Hardin with all his might and main; for he had had ambitions of his own to be supreme in the councils of the Oakvale Troop of Boy Scouts. After many serious encounters in which Alec generally got the worst of it, he had bowed to necessity and admitted that Hugh was better fitted for the position of leader than he could claim to be.

Since that time the two boys had come to know each other better, and were now the warmest of friends. Alec formerly had shown some ugly traits of character; but these were pretty thoroughly overcome after he turned over that new leaf; and latterly he had developed a popularity among the members of the troop second only to that of Hugh himself.

"Then let's be off," the scout master called out. "We must do some tall running, because there are two miles between us and the cement works, and more than that by way of the road, Farmer Stebbins said. But the running will be easier if we keep on to the main pike, and take that the rest of the way."

Those who were to be left behind hated to see them go, for they envied the fortunate five selected to accompany Hugh. Crushing down the feeling of keen disappointment as best they could, they gave the little group a parting cheer.

"Good luck, boys, and here's hoping you'll be equal to everything that you run up against!" called out Ned Twyford, who also made it a point to secretly promise himself that from that time on he was going to take considerably more stock in that "first aid" movement, because here was a plain example of what great value a knowledge along those lines would be to any scout.

Along the road the six boys ran like greyhounds, leaping and bounding with the exuberance of young blood fresh after a good night's rest. They were following in the tracks of the band of strike-breakers whom they had seen pass the camp on the previous day.

As he ran, Hugh was turning it all over in his mind. He arrived at the conclusion that the new workers must have been smuggled into the works without the knowledge of the strikers; but in some way the truth had become known in the morning, and this was what had brought about an attack in force, followed by the shooting, and the flight of the mob.

All was as silent as death ahead of them, and Hugh considered this an ominous sign. Had the foreigners come back for their wounded, they must have made some sort of outcry, and the lack of such sounds could only mean an absence of care for those who had probably been shot down, and now lay there suffering.

## **CHAPTER IX.**

### **THE HELPING HAND.**

"Seems to me we ought to be getting pretty near the place," commented Alec, as they jogged along at a fair clip, even Billy showing himself persistent as a runner, though he could hardly be placed in the same class as some of the other fellows.

"We are," Hugh told him, shortly. "I expect to see signs of that settlement at any minute now."

"Terribly quiet, I think," remarked Bud Morgan.

"It always is just before a storm breaks," chirped Billy, between breaths.

"In this case it's the deadly lull *after* the storm has done its worst," suggested Ralph Kenyon. "Lots of times I've known 'em to curve around and come back again over the same old ground."

"Yes," added Arthur, "and they say the second time is apt to be a whole lot worse than the first. If those foreigners get mad after what's happened, goodness knows how the thing will end."

"Well, I'd keep that white flag in plain sight right along, if I was you, Hugh," advised Alec.

"That's what I am doing, Alec," the scout master replied.

Before leaving camp, Hugh had secured a piece of white muslin and tied this to a stick three or four feet long. His idea was that a flag of truce, being understood by people of every nation, is as a rule respected. If the strikers seemed disposed to be ugly toward the scouts and threatened an attack, perhaps the waving of this flag might hold them in check.

All Hugh wanted was a fair chance to explain the motive that was bringing himself and comrades into the fighting zone. Surely after the men and women learned that they only came with the intention of caring for those poor unfortunates who may have been shot down by the guards at the works, they could not continue to bear the boys any animosity.

He knew that the sight of their uniforms was apt to be the worst feature of the case, for this would prejudice the ignorant foreigners against them. The situation was fraught with considerable risk, and Hugh realized that it would require all the diplomacy he could display in order that they might avoid a rupture with the sullen men and the furious women among the foreigners.

"Listen! wasn't that someone talking in an outlandish jabber?" asked Bud, all of a sudden, holding up his hand.

"Yes, we must be getting close to their settlement," announced Hugh, as his jaw became more firmly set, and his eyes took on a determined expression.

"I think we'll open it up as soon as we pass around that clump of trees on the side of the road, Hugh," Ralph Kenyon was heard to remark.

"The road takes a sharp bend there," said Hugh, "and I've no doubt we'll find the camp not far away. It may be we can see the cement works at

the same time, for there isn't more than a quarter of a mile between them, I understand."

They kept on running, and in less than two minutes more turned the bend in the road. As they did so Bud Morgan called out:

99

"There are the shacks now, fellows!"

"Gee! what a tumble-down place!" exclaimed Billy.

"And look at 'em rushing around, would you?" added Ralph Kenyon. "I'd say they're right excited as it is, and when they glimpse us coming it's going to be worse still."

"There, they've done it already!" cried Arthur; "see that man rushing around and shouting like he was crazy! I've heard screech-owls make a row like that, but never a human being. What will we do, Hugh?"

"Steady, fellows!" cautioned the scout leader. "We must make them understand that we come in peace and not in war. Slow down to a walk, and let me go on ahead with this white flag!"

Hugh was waving the makeshift flag of truce furiously over his head as he continued to walk toward the camp of the strikers. A near-panic had broken out there when the ignorant foreigners suddenly discovered what they thought must be the advance guard of the soldiers charging their village. Men, women and children were rushing to and fro in the wildest manner imaginable, many of them shrieking at the top of their voices, so that it seemed as though Bedlam had broken loose.

100

"Hold up!" called Hugh, suddenly, "we'd be foolish to go any closer while all that row is keeping on. Let's take a stand here and keep on waving this rag. Sooner or later someone who's got a more level head than the rest must understand that all we want is to talk with one of the lot. We've got to avoid a mix-up; and that's what might happen if we allowed some of those half-crazed women to get their hands on us. They'd tear the clothes from our backs, and beat us black and blue."

No one offered the least objection to Hugh's plan. Indeed, if the truth must be told they secretly heaved sighs of relief upon hearing that the leader did not contemplate advancing directly into that maelstrom of shouting humanity. It was only a short time before that they had been reading in history what terrors the Amazons of Paris had shown themselves to be during the Revolution; and consequently they felt a certain amount of respect for excited women's prowess as fighters.

All at once there was a shot, and the scouts plainly heard the "ping" of a bullet singing over their heads, and not so very far away, either.

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"Hugh, they're starting to shoot at us!" gasped Billy.

It was really the first time in their lives these boys had experienced the strange chilly feeling of being under fire. To their credit it must be said that not a single one of them flinched, even though they may have turned a bit pale, and no

one could blame them for that.

"Steady!" said Hugh, continuing to move his flag back and forth. "Hold up both hands, every fellow, to show them we have no guns, and have come to them unarmed."

It was a bright thought. Actions must take the place of words at such a time as this, and ignorant though these foreigners might be from the standpoint of an American boy, surely they ought to comprehend such a plain fact as this.

Hugh was staking everything on it. He felt that there must be some sort of leader among these strikers who would be above the average in intelligence. All the while he stood there in front of the others, and in waving his emblem of peace, Hugh was endeavoring to pick out this man from among those who were rushing around wildly, gesticulating, shaking their fists in the direction of the scouts, and shrieking in their native language.

"I see him!" Hugh suddenly exclaimed. "There he comes out to the front now, that big man with the red handkerchief knotted around his neck, and the brass earrings. That must be the padrone, the man who is the big boss. Yes, see him trying to choke off some of the shouters. If only he can do that it's going to be all right."

"I hope he squelches that fool who fired at us, so he doesn't try it again," Billy was heard to say; but it might be noticed that although his words indicated uneasiness of mind, Billy was far from showing himself to be a coward, for unwilling to have Hugh shield his person, Billy had stepped out in order to be in plain sight and share the danger with his chief.

That was Billy's way, and one of the reasons why his chums loved him as they did; generous to a fault, he was always willing to share everything with his comrades, even to court peril.

They watched the actions of the padrone with keen interest. It was apparent that he understood the object of that white banner better than any of the rest; or else he may have discovered that the six figures in uniform were not men but boys, and therefore hardly to be feared.

"He's coming this way, Hugh!" announced sharp-eyed Ralph Kenyon.

"Yes, and if he holds up part way, I'll step out and meet him, which would be only fair," Hugh told them.

"See what he's got in his hand, will you?" said Billy.

"It's a pretty tough specimen of a white flag," jeered Alec; "but anything goes I guess with them. He means all right, don't you think, Hugh?"

"No doubt about it at all," came the ready answer. "Now, if you see me start out toward him in case he stops, please stay where you are, everybody."

"We're on, Hugh," Billy assured him; "but I only hope he can understand enough English to grab what you say to him, that's all."

The leader of the striking laborers continued to advance straight toward the little group of khaki-clad scouts. Hugh kept his truce flag waving constantly, as if he meant to impress upon the suspicious minds of these people that they had nothing to fear from himself and companions.

Just as Hugh had anticipated, the man suddenly came to a halt about fifty feet off. Undoubtedly he had reached the limit of his valor, and believed one of the strangers in uniform should come out to meet him. Yes, he was even then making violent beckoning gestures with his hand, and holding up one finger, which doubtless meant that he wanted but a single member of the group to meet him.

Accordingly, Hugh immediately started off to join him, with his flag over his shoulder. Quickly he advanced, and was soon up to the man, whom he found to be a fellow with a strong face, and undoubtedly well fitted for his position as a leader among his people.

"Can you speak English?" was the first thing Hugh asked, and to his surprise as well as pleasure the man nodded his head as he replied briskly:

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"Sure. Anglich I spick ver' well."

"That's good," the other hastened to say, and looking as friendly as he could. "Do you know what the Boy Scouts are? We do not belong to the soldiers, but we wear this uniform so we can be known from other boys. We were in camp over there," and he pointed back along the road as he said this, "when we heard the shooting. We feared some of your people must have been hurt, and that you mightn't have a doctor here to help them. So we have come to do what we're able, to stop the bleeding, to bind up the wounds, and make them as comfortable as we can."

The big man with the dark face had listened intently. His face lighted up with intelligence, and Hugh realized that the other must have grasped the idea he was trying to convey after a fashion.

"Oh, you doctor, you know how keep men alive after they be shot? Why, you only boy. I never know boy can be doctor over here. How is that so, tell me?"

When the padrone said this he looked suspiciously at Hugh, as though it may have begun to filter through his brain that after all this might be some shrewd trick on the part of the enemy to gain access to their camp. A concerted rush on the part of civil and military authorities would mean the capture of the ring-leaders of the strike that was turning out to be so riotous an affair.

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Hugh's answer was prompt and to the point. With admirable discretion he had thought to carry along with him his medicine kit, and this he now opened so that the padrone could see its entire contents. That ought to be enough to convince him as to the pacific intentions of the six lads who had come running all of two miles just to lend a helping hand to those in distress.



It did, for when Hugh looked up again he saw that the suspicious frown had left the dark face of the other, and was succeeded by an eager expression.

“You learn how so be doctor in this what you call Boy Scout biz?” the man asked huskily; “it is ver’ good thing you come here. I think one, two men die if that bleed not be stop soon. Nobody can do nothing, and it soon be too late.”

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“Then will you let us try the best we know how; can we come into your camp, and will you tell your people we are friends?” asked Hugh, quickly.

When he saw the padrone nod his head violently several times in the affirmative, Hugh turned and beckoned to his chums; who, reading the signal aright, hastened to join him.

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## **CHAPTER X.**

### **THE FIELD HOSPITAL.**

When the padrone came hurrying back with the six boys, they were immediately surrounded by an excited mass of jabbering foreigners. Many dark faces glowered at Hugh and his chums. It was as though all the fury in these excitable natures had been aroused when the indiscreet guards, back of the stockade surrounding the cement works, had fired those cruel volleys at the men and women who were pressing forward, not to try and destroy property but to expostulate with the manager because he would not give them work when their children were near the point of starvation.

The padrone immediately told some of those near by what the boys had come to do for them. Somehow it seemed to soothe the angry feelings of the most violent, to some extent at least. There was no longer a hostile demonstration on the part of the crowd. Some looked at the boys apathetically, as though they could not quite understand what it all meant; others showed a little interest, while one man plucked Hugh by the sleeve, and attempted to lead him away.

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“You, doctor, come, my woman she seek, she be bad hurt!” this fellow was saying, piteously.

Hugh, knowing that a start must be made somewhere, allowed himself to be led off.

“Keep along with me, boys,” he said to the others; “I may need your help.”

He knew that Arthur Cameron was likely to prove his mainstay in catering to the needs of these poor people who were in such distress. At the same time all of the other scouts were capable of doing more or less along the line of stopping a wound from bleeding, and binding it up after the recognized principles of field surgery—something to tide over an emergency until a better examination could be attempted by a regular surgeon.

A minute later and they reached a spot where a heavy-set old woman lay upon a dirty blanket.

Several other women were gathered around. They had a tin basin with water in it, and seemed to be trying in their clumsy fashion to attend to the gunshot wound the woman had received.

Hugh took hold of the case immediately. When the eagerly watching padrone saw the business-like way of the boy as he started to wash the jagged cut in the upper arm, after which he proceeded, with Arthur's assistance, to lessen the bleeding as he had been taught to do, a pleased look crept over that grim dark face.

110

"See how his earrings dance when he nods his head that way," whispered Alec Sands to Billy. "He knows we can deliver the goods now. He approves of scouts as field surgeons. And say, let me tell you, the boys are making a bully job of that woman's arm. It's a nasty cut, all right, and I'd hate to tackle it alone, though I reckon I'd try to do my level best."

When Hugh found that a point had been reached where he could safely leave the rest of the binding up to some of the others, he called upon Billy and Ralph to get busy.

"They say there is another man here who is badly hurt, and I'm afraid several others may be still lying out there on the field. We'll try to rig up some kind of stretcher and get them here a little later. Alec, suppose you and Bud see if you can find some stuff to make one out of—poles, with bed ticking or burlap fastened across. It'll be saving time, you know."

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"Only too glad, Hugh," replied Alec, cheerfully; for he disliked inaction above all things, as many boys do. Give them something to do, let them feel that they are of some importance in the working out of plans, and they will show themselves eager to do their very best.

It was found that the man had been shot in the back. Hugh felt that he was badly hurt, though with care he might pull through. The boy had never attempted so serious a task as he now found on his hands, and he was glad that Arthur was there to back him up.

First of all he asked the padrone to make the people stand back, for they were crowding close in, all eyes filled with wonder at seeing mere boys performing the grave duties of army surgeons.

Their wonder grew as they saw how Hugh and Arthur seemed to know just what best to do, and how deftly their fingers worked. The dark frowns began to disappear, and confidence replaced suspicion. It would no longer be dangerous for any boy wearing that khaki uniform to move among those strikers, after they had seen with their own eyes that the mission bringing these boys to the camp had been one of peace and not of war.

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Meanwhile Alec and Bud were doing their best to carry out the suggestion made by the scout master, though they found it no easy job. By dint of looking around they managed to pick up two stout poles that would answer for the sides of the stretcher, but finding a suitable substitute for the usual canvas upon which the wounded are laid, proved a still more difficult task.

They were beginning to despair when, seeing the old padrone crossing in front of them, Alec flew up and seized hold of him.

“We want something to make a stretcher out of; something strong like bagging, or a mattress tick,” he told him, gesticulating at the same time with both hands in order to emphasize his words. “You show us where to find something; we carry the wounded men here from over there by the works.”

The padrone looked puzzled at first; then as Bud quickly laid the two poles on the ground and threw himself prostrate between them, while Alec made out to take hold of the near ends, the other gave a cry as though it had dawned on his mind.

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He nodded his head and, darting into a shanty close by, came out bearing a tough-looking mattress. Drawing out a knife, he sliced down one end, and deliberately proceeded to empty the corn husks it had contained upon the ground.

When the scouts found that the material though faded was still of considerable value, so far as strength was concerned, they proceeded to bind it to the poles. It required more or less ingenuity to accomplish this, for the strain would be very great, once they started to carry a man weighing at least a hundred and fifty pounds, but they had mastered much more serious problems than this, and in the end managed to secure the bed ticking to both poles in a secure though possibly clumsy fashion.

Hardly had this been accomplished than they saw Hugh hurrying toward them. He had left Arthur to finish the work of caring for the wounded man, with Billy and Ralph to render any assistance required.

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“I’m anxious to get over there where the fight came off,” Hugh told the two, after he had taken a quick survey of their completed work, and apparently given it his approval. “Nobody seems to know just how many were shot down by that murderous fire of the guards. Some say five, and others hold up both hands, as if there were at least twice that many.”

“Then you think some of the poor chaps may be lying there still, do you?” asked Alec, with a vein of real pity in his voice; for the sight of all that suffering had caused his heart to beat much more kindly for these poor foreigners.

“I hope it’s a mistake,” replied Hugh, as they all hurried off. “In case there are any who have been hurt too badly to get away, you can see how they might continue to lie there until they bled to death. The guards behind the stockade are afraid to show themselves after doing what they did; and the strikers are just as much averse to going near the works, with those men waiting to pour in another awful volley at sight of them.”

“Whew! I hope they won’t try that game on us,” said Bud Morgan, though for all that he did not lessen his pace a particle, because Bud did not know what fear was, to tell the truth.

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“Oh, there’s little danger of their being so badly

rattled as that," said Hugh. "I mean to call out and tell the one in command just how we happened to be near by, and felt it to be our duty to do all we could for the strikers who were hurt. It may, in the end, save some of those reckless guards from being tried for murder."

"Just what it might," said Alec. "That man was shot in the back, which shows he was running away. Only a coward would fire on retreating men who were unarmed."

"Hold on, don't say too much just now," cautioned Hugh. "We're getting near the stockade, you notice. And here's a poor fellow trying to limp along, though he's badly hurt in the leg."

The man saw them and looked worried as he clung to a tree waiting for them to reach him. Perhaps the white flag which Hugh again carried eased his mind somewhat, and when the boy spoke to him the tone of his voice was certainly reassuring.

116

"You are hurt, I see," said Hugh, pointing to the other's left leg, which showed all the terrible signs of a serious wound; the poor fellow had managed to tie his red bandana handkerchief around the limb, and above the bullet wound, as though he may have served in the army at one time, and knew something about the use of a tourniquet to stop the bleeding.

He must have understood what Hugh said, for he nodded his head. Then the scout waved him on, and pointed to the camp.

"Go to camp and doctor look after you—understand, with medicine like this," and he even opened his little kit to let the man glimpse its contents which might tell him more than words could convey.

With signs and what words he could make use of, Hugh tried to find out from the injured striker whether there were others still on the battlefield who would be in need of rescue. Perhaps the man had a smattering knowledge of English, or else Hugh's signs were wonderfully illuminating; at least he comprehended what the boy was trying to ask, for he pointed back, and then held up the fingers of both hands.

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The boys exchanged horrified looks. Hugh hoped there was some mistake on the part of the man. It would be a dreadful thing if they found the field covered with dead and wounded strikers; such a calamity had not been known in the state for many a long year, and the slaughter must create a wide sentiment in favor of arbitration in these unfortunate labor disputes. "Come on, boys! No matter what is waiting for us there, we must go on," Hugh told his two chums who carried the homely but useful stretcher.

"I can see the buildings of the cement works right ahead of us, Hugh!" exclaimed Alec, shortly after they had parted company with the limping striker who was trying his best to get back among his own people so that his wounds could be cared for.

"Steady again, everybody!" said Hugh. "We must be careful not to do anything to make them fire on us. Of course they're bound to see that we

don't belong to that crowd, and so I don't think we run much danger, if we keep our heads, and they do the same."

As they drew near the stockade that had been built of heavy planks all around the works where labor troubles had possibly been of frequent occurrence, the boys could see that men were watching their approach, crouching on some sort of platform that gave them a chance to see over the barricade.

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"Oh! there are some of the strikers lying about here, for there's a man right now, hugging his knees as though he might be suffering terribly!" declared Bud.

"I see another—two, three of them!" burst out Alec, in a voice that trembled; "and, Hugh, what do you think, there's a little child playing over there alongside—yes, it must be a woman. Oh! I wonder if the poor thing is dead, and the baby doesn't know it?"

"No, for I saw her raise her arm, then, to pull at the child," said Hugh. "We must attend to her first of all. But while you're heading that way I'll go straight on a little, and try to get in touch with the party in command of the guards back of the stockade," and waving his white flag, the scout master strode bravely forward.

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## **CHAPTER XI.**

### **A TRAGEDY OF THE STRIKE.**

"Stop where you are!"

This harsh order came from the barricade, and at the same time a number of heads appeared in view over the top of the heavy planks forming the stockade around the buildings of the cement works.

It did not need the sight of the Winchester rifles in the hands of these men to tell Hugh they must be the guards who were responsible for the shooting. He knew that in the main these men were hardened, desperate fellows, who possibly made it their business to hire out to companies needing such kind of help, for it always brought big pay, and a certain sort of excitement which they craved.

Of course Hugh obeyed immediately. He did not want to dare them to fire on him or take unnecessary chances simply because he was carrying a flag of truce. Besides that he was now close up to the heavy barricade, and in a position to do what little talking he had in view.

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As he ran his eye along the top of the fence he concluded that there must be some sort of platform on the other side, built so that the guards could crouch behind the shelter, and at the same time be in a position to suddenly show themselves in case they felt that it was necessary to shoot.

Hugh also decided that the man near the middle must be the one whose gruff voice had uttered that significant command. Yes, there was that

about him to designate the big man a leader. Even as Hugh was making up his mind as to this he heard once more the booming of the heavy voice that rasped unpleasantly on his ears.

"Now, who are you, and what d'ye want here, anyway?"

"We are Boy Scouts from Oakvale," the boy immediately hastened to tell him, "and we happened to be in camp only a couple of miles away. When we heard the shooting we hurried over, thinking that we might be of some assistance, that's all."

"As how?" demanded the captain of the armed guards, harshly.

"Why, you see, all scouts are taught the first principles of taking care of the wounded; and prompt action in that way often saves a person from bleeding to death. Some of my comrades are busy right now over in the settlement, and we've come here to ask if you have any objections to our carrying off any others who have been hurt, and are lying helpless close by."

Hugh said this without trying to give any offense. He could easily guess that he was speaking to a man with very little or no feeling in his heart for the ignorant foreigners who had rebelled against a reduction in pay, and were making trouble for the rich owner of the works. To this captain of the guards, they were only so many "dagoes" and he believed in treating them pretty much as animals.

Still the law might choose to investigate this shooting, and it would be apt to go hard with him if he were accused by these boys of having refused to let them assist those unfortunates who were bleeding to death.

The man was shrewd enough to see that, which fact doubtless made him answer Hugh as he did.

"Oh! so far as that goes none of us here have any objections to you carrying 'em off, and fixin' 'em up the best way you can," he called out, with a short, nervous laugh. "They would have it, and forced us to fire. It was our lives or theirs. They rushed the gate with guns and knives flourishing. We had to fire, or it would have been all over with the lot of us. You hear what I'm saying, don't you, boy?"

Hugh thought it wise to repress his feelings of indignation. It would never do for him to boldly tell this man, that as far as he had seen, all of the wounded had been shot from the rear, which would indicate that they were in flight at the time of being injured.

"Yes, I hear you, sir," the scout master replied; "and I thank you for giving us permission to do what we can for these poor fellows."

"Oh, that's all right, boy!" continued the man, "and I hope you'll warn 'em not to come near this works again if they know what's good for 'em. The men that are in here want to work at the wages the strikers refused. They threw up their jobs, and if they try to trespass on the company's property, they do it at their peril. We've got the law back of us, and you tell 'em so, kid, hear that?"

"Yes, sir," replied Hugh, though he certainly did not mean to be made the mouthpiece of this bragging guard leader.

"My men had orders to shoot low, and I don't reckon that any of the poor fools have been killed; but it's their own fault, anyway. When a mob of hundreds of wild men and women rush a little party of a dozen men, it ain't no time for being over-particular where you send your lead. Go on, then, and do what you want. I've heard a heap about you scouts; let's see if you do know anything about taking care of the wounded."

Hugh waited for no more. With that permission he was satisfied none of them would be fired on by the guards in hiding behind the stockade.

Turning, he immediately hurried back to where he had left the other fellows. They had done what they could to staunch the blood that had been flowing from a nasty wound. The woman was weak and, Hugh feared, in a bad way.

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As soon as the scout master arrived he examined to see what the others had done, for neither Bud nor Alec pretended to have had anything like the practical experience that Hugh did in this first aid to the injured business.

"We can better that some," he told them, "and I think it would be wise to go at it before you try to carry her to the field hospital, where Arthur can get busy."

Both of the other scouts were only too willing to do what they could; and making all the speed possible, Hugh soon had matters fixed to his satisfaction.

"Now, since you've already placed her on the stretcher, see if you can lift and carry her, boys. I'll stay here and try to do what I can for the others."

It required a considerable effort to raise the woman, for she was quite stocky in build, though short of stature, as is usually the case with natives of certain parts of Italy. Fortunately, however, Alec and Bud were sturdily constructed boys, and prided themselves on their muscular ability; so that they presently managed to stand erect, each holding an end of the poles forming the sides of the litter.

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"Be as quick as you can, fellows!" Hugh called out after them as they started off. "If you feel too tired, send a couple of the others in your place."

Immediately Hugh started to see what next could be done. He had never before been thrown in close contact with so much human suffering and misery, and it was little wonder that his heart throbbed with pity as he saw that there were still several more forms lying there on that terrible field where they had fallen.

One man seemed to be huddled up as though he might be actually dead. Hugh hardly dared look toward him, for up to that time the boy had never been brought face to face with the grim reality of death.

There were two others, however, who were moving, and toward these he hurried. One was holding himself up with his arms, and seemed to

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be anticipating relief. Perhaps he may have seen that the poor woman had been carried away on a stretcher; and he hoped for the same treatment himself. He looked from time to time in deadly fear toward the stockade from whence that murderous fire had leaped out, under which he had fallen.

It turned out that he was terribly injured about the legs. Hugh immediately jumped to the conclusion that scattering buckshot fired from a riot gun must have been responsible for those many ugly wounds. He remembered what the captain of the guards had said about giving orders to "shoot low"; and Hugh decided that this fact alone accounted for the many injuries to the lower extremities of the strikers.

He bent over the man and tried to see if there was anything that could be done then and there to help him. Finding that none of his wounds looked very serious, and deciding that fright and the sight of blood combined to make him weak, Hugh felt that he could leave him and hurry on to the next victim.

"They will be back soon and carry you to the shacks," he told the man, at the same time giving him a reassuring nod and a smile, which doubtless did more to buoy up his spirits than any spoken words, which he may not have understood at all.

The next man, who lay there on the ground groaning, Hugh found to be in a serious way indeed. He had been shot in the back, though just how near the bullet had gone to a vital part could only be found out by a careful examination later on.

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These boys were hardly fitted to undertake any such serious job as this. Their knowledge of surgery was confined to setting broken limbs or binding up wounds; they knew exactly how to go about stopping the flow of blood in case anyone happened to cut themselves with an ax or a knife; they could resuscitate a comrade who had come within an ace of being drowned; they could undertake to assuage the pain caused by colic or ptomaine poisoning, and all such things; but when they came upon a case where a bullet had passed through a man's body, it was time to wait for the arrival of a regular surgeon.

Hugh now began to look anxiously for the return of the two scouts with the handy, if crude stretcher. He believed they had had ample time to go all the way to the foreign settlement and be well on the road back.

To his satisfaction he caught sight of them on the run; and evidently Alec and Bud did not mean to turn their office over to any of the others, for they had taken it upon themselves to return in person.

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Hugh hardly knew which of the two men should be carried off first. They were both seriously hurt, and it was a toss-up which one needed attention more than the other.

So Hugh decided to send the man whose legs had been so badly peppered by the scattering buckshot. Arthur could do all that was necessary for him, whereas Hugh feared that the other man would have to wait until some help came



from town. They could carry him to where he would not be lying in the glaring sunlight; so that he could be given a drink of water, or something to keep his strength up.

"Here, help me lift this man on your stretcher, boys," said Hugh, as he beckoned them over.

"How about those other two we see yonder?" asked Alec.

"One is badly hurt, shot through the body somewhere," replied the scout master; "and the other has not stirred, so far as I have seen."

"Oh, my stars! do you think that he's really dead?" asked Billy, who was not as rosy-cheeked as usual, Hugh noticed, though not wondering at all that this should be the case.

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"I don't know, but I'm afraid of the worst," Hugh told him. "I haven't been over to him so far, but expect to go as soon as you get started. Now, take hold, and be easy, boys, with this poor chap."

The man groaned as they moved him, but he bravely tried to smile back when he saw Hugh nodding to him in that friendly and comforting way. Then the litter was once more raised with an effort, and away the burden-bearers went as fast as they could.

"Keep in step, both of you!" called out Hugh. "It makes the going a whole lot easier for you!"

After they were well on their way, Hugh cast a comprehensive glance around him. He heaved a genuine sigh of relief when he made sure of the fact that except for the striker who had been shot through the body, and the other still form, the open field seemed to be clear of all evidences of the harvest that had followed the sowing of the seed of strife.

The boy shut his teeth hard together. He disliked going over to find out the condition of that motionless, huddled figure; but duty was a thing Hugh Hardin never allowed himself to disregard, no matter what pangs it might bring in its train. So he started straight toward the object of his solicitude, determined to know the worst, no matter what the cost was to his feelings.

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## **CHAPTER XII.**

### **A CALL FOR THE RED CROSS.**

"Perhaps I don't wish old Doctor Kane was here, though, to help us out," Hugh was saying to himself with a sigh, as he walked forward, and mentally figured how much of the heavy responsibility would be taken from his young shoulders could the genial old Oakvale physician be present to take charge.

As he drew near the huddled figure of the striker, Hugh felt his heart grow cold with dread. Then suddenly hope revived, for he believed he had detected a slight movement on the part of the man.

"He may have only fainted from fright after all, or been struck by a passing bullet and knocked unconscious," the boy was telling himself eagerly as he increased his pace until he was almost running.

In this fashion, then, he arrived on the scene, and bent over the figure lying there on the ground. Gently, Hugh turned him over, but strange to say he did not see any sign of a wound.

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He dropped down beside the man and placed his ear close to his chest. Immediately he discovered that his heart was beating, faintly it is true, and with a peculiar flutter, but at least he was alive.

Hugh had a canteen along with him, which had been filled with cold water before they started from their camp. This he now made use of, and sprinkled some of the contents on the dark face of the foreigner.

"He's coming to his senses!" Hugh told himself, with a sense of great relief, "and there's a mark on the side of his head that may have been made by a passing bullet; either that or else he tripped and, in falling, struck himself there. But I saw his eyelids quiver then; and there, they opened part way! I believe he's going to be all right yet."

Why, the boy felt so relieved that it might have been thought he was hovering over one of his beloved chums instead of an unknown foreigner whose language he could not understand. But he was a human being in distress, and scouts are taught never to stop and consider more than this when a necessity calling for prompt aid faces them.

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When he sprinkled a little more of the water over the man's face, the puzzled black eyes were looking up at him. Evidently the poor fellow wondered what had happened to him. Hugh knew that his chums would soon be returning, and that minutes were therefore precious to him.

"Can you get up?" he asked, making a beckoning movement with his hand which the other could hardly fail to understand.

He struggled into a sitting position and stared around. When he saw the figure of the other wounded man he shivered violently. Doubtless once again he was passing through the horror of that dreadful minute when the mob in flight was fired on by the guards, and shrieks of pain and fright arose all around him, followed by darkness as he fell.

Then he looked toward the frowning stockade so near by, above which the heads of the curious guards could be seen, as also their guns.

"Get up, and go to the rest of your people," said Hugh, making gestures with his hands, and ending up with pointing in the direction where he knew the settlement lay.

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The man must have understood him for he hastened to scramble to his feet. There were a few loud jeering remarks from the stockade as the guards discovered that, after all, the one man considered dead had come to life in a

wonderfully miraculous fashion, after the scout had done something or other.

There were even some threats made which Hugh hardly imagined could be seriously meant. At the same time the boy had the nerve to walk behind the striker when he was hurrying off, in this way actually interposing his body between him and the men who carried guns, and who were just then looking upon all of these foreigners as enemies to be harshly treated.

When Hugh had thus seen the frightened fellow safely out of range of the stockade, a friendly patch of trees interposing, he discovered Alec and Bud coming back with the empty stretcher.

He was at the side of the badly injured man when they arrived, and assisted in getting him on the stretcher. Bud meantime must have taken a nervous look around, for he hurriedly asked:

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"Where's the other, Hugh, the dead man?"

"Oh, that was him you saw hurrying off," replied the scout master, with a faint smile. "It turned out that he had been only knocked senseless by a fall or something in the shape of a clipping bullet that struck him on the head. I brought him to his senses by using a little water, and started him off."

Bud gave a chuckle at hearing this.

"Say, they'll get your name in the papers yet if you don't watch out," he told Hugh. "'First aid to the injured,' eh; seems to me that when a scout can bring the dead to life, he's got a heap beyond that point. But I'm just as well pleased; it's a whole lot better to have him step out for the camp than it is for us to lug him there on this old stretcher. I'm getting blisters on my hands already; but all the same I'm game to keep on to the finish."

Nor would he let Hugh even "spell" him at the poles when the other offered to do so; it was one of Bud Morgan's oddities that he never wanted to give anything up on which he had started, no matter how unpleasant a task it may have turned out to be.

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"I'm going along with you this time, you know," ventured Hugh after he had helped them raise their burden, which seemed to be the hardest part of the job; "so far as I can see there's no more wounded lying around here. Perhaps we haven't run on all of them yet; others may have fled in different directions, and we can look for them to show up from time to time, some of them perhaps with wounds that need attention."

Bud and Alec exchanged glances.

"Why, Hugh, that's just what has happened already," said the latter, quickly.

"Do you mean there have been more wounded strikers come into the camp since I left it?" the scout master demanded.

"Three of the same," Bud answered, "and I tell you Arthur has got his hands more than full with all the bandaging and such things. But he's doing it in great shape, though when I see the regular old field hospital we've got over there I feel that help from the city can't get around any

too soon."

"I wonder if the news of the battle has been wired or carried in any way?" Alec remarked, as he trudged along, holding to one of the poles with each hand.

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"I'm going to make sure it is," replied Hugh, "by sending a scout to the nearest telegraph station as soon as I get to the camp. Some of these poor people are in a serious way, and for one I don't propose to take any more responsibility on my shoulders than I can help."

"Goodness knows we've done enough as it is," said Alec, though that notion would never have prevented Alec from exerting himself right along to continue the good work indefinitely.

As they finally arrived at the settlement, a crowd came out to meet them. Many swarthy faces glowed with half-hidden fires, and Hugh could see that there was only a spark needed to start the slumbering passions into some desperate deed of retaliation.

He hoped that when the news of the riot reached the authorities, they would send the militia to take charge, and place all those guards under arrest until it could be ascertained whether they had acted within their rights in shooting as they had done.

One woman acted as though on the verge of going crazy. She must have been the wife of the man they were now bearing in. Indeed, only for Hugh preventing it, she would have thrown herself upon the form of the badly injured striker. When she fought like a wildcat to break past Hugh, the latter appealed to the padrone, who had come bustling up.

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"Keep her away, unless you want the man to die right here!" Hugh told him. "Don't you see he's so badly hurt that he mustn't be touched?"

The padrone grasped the situation, and closing a hand on the woman's arm he led her away, at the same time speaking to her sternly. After that she no longer tried to brush any of the scouts aside, for she had evidently been told that they were the best friends the strikers had, and were trying everything in their power to save lives and stop pain.

When Hugh looked around, he was really appalled at what he saw. There were some five who lay there on the ground, all of them groaning, and carrying on as ignorant people nearly always do when in great pain of body and distress of mind. Besides these there were a number sitting on the ground, surrounded by clusters of their people, all of them injured more or less severely.

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The clatter of tongues was dreadful. It reminded Hugh of a certain windmill he had once seen in action, one of the real old-styled Dutch type, with the sails stretching nearly to the ground, and which made the most dolorous sounds when the mill was working rapidly in the freshening breeze.

Hugh had not forgotten what he had said to the two stretcher-bearers while on the way over with the last load.

"Ralph, step here a minute, will you?" he asked, and the other immediately complied, with a look of wonder on his face, for he could not imagine what was about to be sprung on him now.

Hugh was hastily writing something on a piece of paper torn from an old letter he had in his pocket.

"I am bothered about some of these wounded people, to tell you the truth, Ralph," the scout master told him. "I'm going to pack you off to the nearest station on the railroad to send a message for me."

"To the authorities, asking for help?" Ralph Kenyon queried.

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"No, because that isn't right in our line. The governor will learn all about it sooner or later, and do what he thinks best. What we need now most of all is a regular surgeon and a nurse or two. These poor people haven't anything to help out in taking care of the sick or injured. And while on the way back I suddenly thought of something that might turn out to be of advantage. It's in connection with the Red Cross."

"Oh, Hugh, I think I know what you mean!" cried Ralph, in some excitement. "You were telling me that there was some sort of a state convention of those interested in Red Cross work being held in Farmingdale, which is only a few miles away from here, isn't it, Hugh?"

"Just what it is, Ralph, and I understand that at the convention there was to be a regular field hospital equipment of an up-to-date motor ambulance with its surgeon and quota of Red Cross nurses. Now, if they could only rush that ambulance out here and carry some of the wounded strikers to the regular hospital, it would be a big thing, and take a terrible load off my mind."

"Give me the message, Hugh; I've got plenty of money in my pocket, and will see it's rushed through. What are you saying in it?" demanded the now eager Ralph.

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"I've addressed it to the Red Cross at Farmingdale, and it's sure to get to the right parties," explained the scout master, as he handed the piece of paper over to the messenger. "What I said was simply this: 'Terrible riot at cement works; many strikers shot down. Caring for them the best we can. Need help. Send surgeon, nurses and an ambulance. Hurry. Boy Scouts of Oakvale.' Now get on the move, Ralph, and see how quick you can deliver the goods!"

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## **CHAPTER XIII.**

### **HARD AT WORK.**

"I noticed where the station on the railroad was at this place," Ralph called back over his shoulder, with a ring of triumph in his voice; for as a true scout it was his duty to take note of all

such things, in case the knowledge became an important factor through the course of events.

Hugh saw him start on the run and felt satisfied the errand would be properly carried out—that is, if the operator at the station had not been given orders to refuse messages, which was hardly likely.

The old padrone had seen these wonderful boys doing so much for his people, and no doubt he considered that their impromptu field hospital would stand as a credit to their scout training. He hovered around all the time Arthur and Hugh worked, adding some finishing touches to what had already been done.

Finally, when he could no longer restrain the feeling that was in his heart, the padrone seized upon their hands and pressed them vigorously, while in his broken English he tried to tell them how grateful he was for their coming.

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Surely those boys, and the others as well standing near by, must have felt that they were amply repaid for any trouble they had taken thus far, when they saw how this tough-looking old foreigner actually had tears in his eyes as he tried to tell them that their noble work was appreciated.

“Everything seems to be going on decently but one case,” Hugh was saying to Arthur, “and I’m afraid that poor fellow is in a bad way.”

“It all depends on what course the bullet took after it started in,” said the other scout, seriously. “It would be next door to a miracle if it skipped striking any vital part. But that can only be determined after probing, and it may require an examination with the X-rays to locate the bullet, which, you know, didn’t pass out again.”

There was little time for talking, however. Their patients required so much attention that it kept them on the move almost constantly. Of course, the other scouts were only too willing to assist to the extent of their ability; but lacking the practical experience of Hugh and Arthur, their powers were limited at the best.

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What made it hard was the inability of the foreigners to understand what was needed, and to supply these wants after they did comprehend. Their miserable shacks seemed to contain next to nothing, and when Hugh had made the padrone realize that more cotton or muslin was required, it was only the merest luck in the world that one woman happened to have a few yards fresh from the store laid by, which she ungrudgingly brought forth.

About this time Ralph made his appearance again. Hugh could see from the satisfied look on his face that he had succeeded in his errand.

“Got it off all right, did you, Ralph?” he asked.

“Yes. The operator didn’t like the idea of sending it at first. I think the people at the works must have telegraphed a tame account of the fight, so as to have the news broken gradually. But I told him he would be held accountable if any of the wounded died, and might end his days in prison; so he finally agreed.”

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"I hope he wasn't saying that just to get rid of you?" ventured Hugh.

"Oh, I was smart enough for that," chuckled Ralph, nodding his head, sagely. "I just waited around after telling him that I was a telegrapher, too, and I heard him send her O. K. Depend on it, Hugh, your message is being delivered in Farmingdale right at this minute, I make a guess."

"Then it shouldn't take them more than an hour at the most to get over here," remarked the tired scout master. "Granting that they mean to come, which I certainly hope turns out to be so."

"Well, we've sure done our duty all right, Hugh," asserted Ralph, who was breathing hard, as though he had actually run both ways.

"And that's all any scout can do, I should say," added Billy Worth, who had hurried over to hear what Ralph had to report, for the others knew the nature of the errand on which he had been dispatched.

"Yes, no one can blame us for anything that happens now," Hugh declared. "All the same, I'll be glad to see that Red Cross ambulance turning up here."

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"You're worrying about that poor fellow who's been shot through the body, Hugh?" suggested Billy. "The padrone put a guard around him to keep his wife away. She wants to just throw herself on him, and shriek. My stars! but they're a queer lot, ain't they? But they've got feelings as much as any of the rest of us. Listen! wasn't that a motor horn blowing then?"

"Sounded more to me like a cow mooing, Billy," said Ralph. "There's the identical animal right now over in that yard yonder, tied to a tree."

Billy looked in the direction in which Ralph pointed, and then laughed.

"Guess that's one on me, Hugh," he remarked, "but then I'm not to blame for feeling nervous over things, with all this responsibility shoved onto our poor shoulders."

"No one's blaming you a bit, Billy," he was told; "in fact, we're all doing our duty in a way that couldn't be beaten. Some day later on we'll look back at this happening and wonder how we ever managed to survive the ordeal."

Billy was looking around as though he wanted to make sure the coast was clear before he said something he had on his mind.

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"Hugh," he said, lowering his voice unconsciously as he spoke, "I happened to glimpse something while I was nosing around the settlement here that gave me a bad feeling, because it means serious trouble ahead for these ignorant strikers if they push it any further."

His mysterious words, of course, aroused the natural curiosity of the other.

"Come, what are you hinting at now, Billy? No one's going to hear what you say, so out with it," he told the stout chum.

Nevertheless Billy had to take another look

around before he would consent to explain.

"You know, Hugh," he began, "I'm rather fond of studying human nature, and this chance was too good to be wasted, so while some of you kept shop and treated those of the wounded who'd allow it, I just prowled and snooped and saw how these wretched foreigners make a job of half living, for that's all it amounts to, say what you will."

"Less talk, Billy, and get down to facts," the scout master advised, knowing how the other loved to hear himself chatter.

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Billy laughed good-naturedly and then proceeded without the least sign of being in the least put out by the rebuke.

"Well, I only wanted to explain how it came I was poking around that way. Most of the people are clustered about where the wounded strikers are lying in your emergency hospital, so I wasn't interfered with even when I looked inside some of the awful shacks. Gee! but they're bare of the commonest comforts of life, as we know them."

"I could have told you that without looking, Billy; but you discovered something, you are trying to tell me; what was it?"

"In one shack I had the nerve to enter, so as to say I'd done the thing up brown, there was what seemed to be a carpenter's bench, and a few tools lying on the same. But, Hugh," and here Billy twisted his head around again to look right and left, "it wasn't any ordinary work somebody had been doing there at the time the shooting started in."

"Move along, Billy!" implored the other, as though he feared the other might be about to start off on another long-winded explanation.

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"There were some things besides tools on that bench, Hugh, things that looked like foot sections of gaspipe!"

"Well, what of that?" demanded Hugh, though the color partly left his face; "how do you know but what one of the strikers was a machinist employed by the owner of the works and that he chose to do some of his work at home?"

"I'll tell you, Hugh," continued Billy, his voice sinking to almost a whisper, "I had the curiosity to pick up one of those sections of iron gaspipe, and I want to say right now when I saw a fuse sticking out from the end of the same I put it back again in a hurry!"

"What's that?" exclaimed Hugh.

"Hugh, they've been making some sort of bombs or infernal machines there, meaning to blow up the cement works, with the strike-breakers and guards in the same!"

When Billy said this he and the scout master stood there exchanging horrified looks, and for the moment incapable of giving further utterance to the thoughts in their minds.

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## CHAPTER XIV. THE WELCOME SIGHT— CONCLUSION.

Hugh shut his teeth together with a snap, as though his mind had been suddenly made up.

Billy knew that there would be no shirking, for when the leader of the Wolf Patrol saw his duty clear before him he never allowed anything to stand between himself and its accomplishment.

"Come, you must show me that identical shack, Billy," he announced.

"But hold on, Hugh," hoarsely whispered the other, "if some of those men saw us go in there they'd believe we were connected with the detective squad, and trying to get them sent to prison. Why, they'd be furious enough to murder us."

Hugh realized that there was indeed need of caution. These ignorant and explosive foreigners could not be reasoned with by one who was unacquainted with their language. There may be times when signs will not answer to cool the heated blood of men driven to extremes by what they feel to be a gross injustice.

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"Billy, you're right, and we must first of all get the old padrone to accompany us. If, as you seem to fear, those things turn out to be real bombs, then his are the hands that must put them in water so as to forever destroy their destructive properties. Come along with me, Billy."

It was not difficult to find the padrone, for he was hovering near where the men were groaning, with Arthur and an assistant doing all they could to ease their sufferings.

Hugh managed to explain, partly through signs, that he wanted the padrone to go with him. After that Billy led the way straight to the rude shack he had by accident entered, and in which he had found such suspicious things being made.

As soon as Hugh set his eyes on the three-foot sections of old gaspipe he knew Billy had sensed the truth. One of the bombs was apparently ready for use. It had a short fuse at one end, and looked terribly suggestive.

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"You see what some of your men have been thinking of doing," Hugh said to the old padrone, as he held up this iron bomb.

The other showed all the signs of being both astonished and angry. Billy wondered if such an enterprise could have been going on all this time in the settlement and one so wise as the padrone not know it.

"It is bad biz!" the padrone said in a husky voice, as he, too, picked up one of the metal tubes and examined it; "some of my men they be near crazy with mad. When they see the children cry for be hungry they no care what they do to get what you call even. It is the strike-breaker they hate, you understand."

"But this will never do, padrone," said the scout master. "Once they start to using bombs and they lose the sympathy of the community. You understand what that means. If your men even hope to win this strike they must be held in and kept from violence. So far it has all been on the other side, and that is going to gain you many friends. The owner of the works will find that he has to call it off and give you living wages. Do you understand that?"

The padrone nodded his head violently.

"Whatever you tell me that will I do, for I know you scouts ver' good friend to the workingman," he hastened to say.

"All right," Hugh told him promptly, "then first of all get a bucket of water, and soak every one of these things in it so as to render them harmless."

"Here's just what you want, right in this corner," remarked Billy, pointing to a half barrel used as a tub, and which was more than two-thirds full of suspicious looking water, but which could be made useful to "pull the teeth" of the dangerous bombs.

The padrone not only dumped the gaspipe infernal machines in the tub but followed with every article connected with their manufacture that he could lay hands on.

"Now, tell what you want me do next?" he asked Hugh, as though he meant to leave no stone unturned in order to follow out the orders of this energetic young Boy Scout whose coming with his comrades had meant so much for the people under his care.

"You know who the men are who have been doing this black work, padrone?" Hugh asserted, looking the old man straight in the eye.

For a few seconds the old man wavered, and then unconditionally surrendered.

"Si, young signor, I know," he admitted.

"All right, padrone," said Hugh, sternly; "I want you to go and find them, and make them swear that there shall be no more of this sort of black work. Everything depends on how you manage to control your people through this crisis. You will win, if you get them to behave."

"I will promise it shall be so," said the old man, hurrying away.

Hugh and Billy returned to where they had been standing at the time the latter made his astonishing disclosure that had resulted in their action; and they could see the padrone talking earnestly to some of the men.

Just then Arthur called to Hugh to come and give him his advice about something he was doing in connection with one of the men, who had finally consented to have his injured shoulder treated. Up to that time he had stubbornly held out, and seemed to be suspicious of these boys, as though he feared that they would not do the right thing. The extreme pain, however, had finally brought him around, or else the wise old padrone had told him he was taking many more chances by waiting than he would in having his wound

dressed, even by amateur surgeons.

From one thing they went to another, so that they were kept constantly busy. In the midst of it all, Billy discovered a woman carrying a sick child straight to where Hugh and Arthur were engaged.

"There's a compliment for you fellows, and a feather in your caps," he told the others. "At first they were afraid you didn't know the first principles of surgery, and they've been watching you like hawks. Now the women are running to fetch any sick kids they may happen to have at home, for the wonderful doctors to examine and prescribe for. Look solemn now when you make your diagnosis, fellows; you're making reputations that are bound to go ringing down the ages. Doctor Blake and Doctor Cameron of the Boy Scouts of Oakvale to the front. Here she is. Now, listen to the poor mother chatter like a poll-parrot, would you?"

Even if they could not understand one word she said, there was no difficulty whatever in knowing what the woman wanted. She held out the sick child, and there was a beseeching look on her face.

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Hugh hardly knew what to do, but he had common-sense in plenty, and urged on by the confident Billy, he proceeded to take a professional look at the youngster. Then he nodded toward Arthur, as though he fancied that two heads would be better than one in a case like this.

"I'd be on the safe side in saying that it's eaten something that doesn't agree with it," ventured Doctor Blake, solemnly.

"Just my idea to a fraction," added the second amateur physician.

Upon that Hugh opened his little medicine kit, and taking out a phial proceeded to fix up a remedy which he knew was excellent for cramps and indigestion. It would do no harm, that he knew for a fact, and there was a fair chance of its taking effect. It certainly pleased the anxious mother, and she went away with a satisfied look on her swarthy face.

"If that ambulance does come along," said Hugh, with a whimsical look at his fellow-worker, "we'll get the doctor to take a look at the child so as to make a sure thing of it."

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"No need," sang out Billy, blithely; "it began getting better right away after its maw got it to take that remedy. Why, you fellows must be wizards, that's what. Whenever I get sick again, I'm going to insist on having *you* attend me. And that's praise not many doctors ever get, let me tell you."

An hour had gone by since Ralph returned with the news that he had heard the telegraph operator at the station send the message to Farmingdale. Still there was no sign of anything happening, nor for that matter had the authorities of the county taken a hand in the matter.

The guards still walked the platform back of the heavy stockade, and the sunlight glinted from

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the polished barrels of their guns as they moved to and fro. In the foreign settlement there were more or less ominous gatherings, and the scouts began to grow a little uneasy when they saw how furious the men were becoming under the lash of the tongues of the women.

"There'll be more trouble around here before long unless the right kind of officers are sent to keep order," said Billy to Hugh, as they hurried from one patient to another, so as to keep up the good work.

"What makes you say that, Billy?" demanded the other, uneasily.

"Well, they've got some old shotguns and the like, and they're talking things over now in little bunches!" Billy declared. "Whenever the old padrone comes around they hide these things, and let on that they're not plotting mischief; but before night gets here they'll make an attack on that stockade, unless the officers come up before, or something else happens."

"The trouble is they keep seeing all these injured people," complained Arthur.

"There is a whole lot in that," admitted Hugh. "If only we could get them away somewhere, it might be easier to handle the mob."

"Hugh, as sure as you live there's a cloud of dust up the road there!" exclaimed Ralph Kenyon, joyously.

Every eye was instantly turned in that direction, for all of the scouts realized that it meant a great deal, not only to them but for the future peace of the community that something occurred to make these ignorant foreigners understand they were not objects of indifference in the eyes of the authorities, who would permit them to be shot down like dogs and never interpose a hand to prevent the deed or punish the aggressors.

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Ten seconds later a cheer broke forth from the six khaki-clad boys as they saw a motor ambulance bearing the magical red cross on its side, swinging around the bend of the road that led toward distant Farmingdale. On the front seat with the chauffeur was a man dressed in white clothes, who had a badge around his arm, doubtless bearing the insignia of his calling; and further back in the commodious up-to-date ambulance could be seen a couple of nurses also garbed in the snowy dress that characterized their profession.

No wonder the weary scouts felt like throwing up their hats and shouting with an excess of joy; for their long vigil was about to be ended, since they could hand over all their patients to the care of these experienced workers in the Army of Mercy.

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Even the ignorant foreigners seemed to understand that the coming of the ambulance with its Red Cross, known throughout the whole world, meant a new chance of life and hope for the sufferers.

There was no cheering on their part, for their hearts were heavy with the dismal outlook confronting them; but some of the black looks

began to give way to a feeling of confidence that the worst was over.

It was the coming of Hugh and his fellow scouts on the scene, as the wise old padrone knew very well, that had started the scales to moving in their favor.

If you have been interested in following the adventures of Hugh and his comrades as detailed in these pages, and would know more about their further activities, it is easily possible to do so by purchasing the next volume of this series, now on sale everywhere, under the title of "The Boy Scouts and the Red Cross."

THE END.

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