MOOSE COUNTRY

A Boy Naturalist in an Ancient Forest

by
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The Philosopher of the Forest

ILLUSTRATED BY BOB MEYERS

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To

SIG OLSON

in appreciation of his untiring efforts to preserve the Spirit of the Wilderness in the canoe country

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I. STORY TOLD IN SNOW

OUR party moved along through a crystalline fairyland in silence, except for the rhythmic swish of our snowshoes. There were eight of us in all-quite a little army to be found in this part of the north woods in the midst of winter. Beside me walked Giny, my wife and companion in countless nature adventures. Her face beamed with anticipation as her eyes stayed focused on a point of land we were approaching. Near her marched Ray and Ada, our long-time friends. Just ahead of them was their lovely daughter, dark eyed and black haired, of early high-school age yet swinging her snowshoes like a veteran. Next in line were Bob and Marge, feeling joyous but awkward as this was their first adventure in North Country winter travel. By means of a rope looped about his chest Bob pulled a nine-foot toboggan sled, on which rode two packsacks loaded with supplies.

That accounts for seven, and there were eight in our party. Was someone lost? No, not this time. Hasty glances over our shoulders assured us of that fact. About one hundred

feet behind us, huffing, puffing, slipping, tumbling, labored a figure that looked at first like a diminutive snow man. Beneath layers of clinging snow could be seen a boy with cheeks about the color of Giny's red coat and eyes that sparkled with joy and enthusiasm. Hi-Bub was having his first lesson on skis. It was a strenuous experience. The short runners wouldn't go where he wanted them to, and when they did they wouldn't come back. He was down more than he was up. Even as we watched, he sped too fast for his ability and there came another mighty tumble. Hi-Bub went head first into a small drift, while skis and ski poles flew to the four points of the compass. We paused and looked about. Bob and Marge called to their son asking if he needed any help.

"No siree!" Hi-Bub called back. He rolled over in the soft fluffy snow, getting it in his face, down his neck and up his sleeves while he struggled to his feet. Why should he need help? He was a man now-in his own opinion. The fact that only a few months ago he had been a lisping F youngster with something of babyhood still hanging around was forgotten. The lisp had been overcome by corrective methods, and now he was ancient to the degree that graduation from grade school was but a few months ahead. Need help? "No siree-wait a minute and I'll help you," he called as he fastened the skis on again and took up his task once more.

I marveled as I watched him approaching us. Really, the strength and endurance of the youngster were amazing. He was chunky in build, somewhat like his daddy. Nothing seemed to faze him. Twice more he tumbled before he reached our waiting group. Each time he bounced up as if he were made of rubber.

Bob looked at me and winked as Hi-Bub came struggling on. He was proud of the stubborn determination of the lad. Whatever Hi-Bub decided to do, he did, and difficulties only inflamed his enthusiasm. "He has the character of a conqueror, and of a nuisance, tool" Bob had said to me. The previous summer the chosen task had been swimming, and Hi-Bub learned to swim like a loon. In the autumn there had been boxing lessons, and Hi-Bub had his daddy down for the count of nine almost every day. With the same energy and enthusiasm the lad had taken to his school work, to nature study, hiking, tennis and gymnasium work. He was a bundle of muscles and a geyser of enthusiasm. Now the great interest was skiing, and it was a safe prediction that someday not too far off this lad would be racing and jumping with the best of them.

"Hi-Bub, you're a menace," said Marge as her son passed close enough that she could brush some of the snow from him.

"No I'm not!" said Hi-Bub, but he paused by his mother while the brushing went on. It was a futile operation, for in a few minutes he would be as snowy as ever. But I guess a mother can't resist straightening up a youngster. The move was rather symbolic at that. It was the sweet patience and persistent wisdom of Marge that had kept Hi-Bub such a

well-balanced boy. With all his unusual energy and strength, he was courteous, considerate and kind. True manliness is of delicate balance. It calls for courage that is quiet, strength that is gentle, fearlessness that is guided by wisdom. Marge constantly directed Hi-Bub toward this attainment.

"Now, we waited for you so we could all see the Campbells' island at the same time," Marge was saying. "We will see it when we get to that point. Don't you want to be with June?"

"Aw," said Hi-Bub, "I think-I think-I think I'll just be with Sam Cammel."

It was a way out. Hi-Bub had grown into that stage where he thought he ought to have nothing to do with women-ever! He wasn't going to get married, he had announced, just live in the woods and study animals. Women weren't necessary and he could get along without them. Seemed to me I had heard those ideas before and voiced them too-when I was about the size and shape of Hi-Bub. The little lad came over toward me, but he flashed a glance at the radiant June that acknowledged he would far rather be with her—if he dared give in. There was an understanding smile from June.

"I wonder why we men do such things," I said half under my breath. "We don't fool anyone but ourselves. These women have us hooked, Hi-Bub, and our struggles are useless."

"What what did you say, Sam Cammel?" asked Hi-Bub, his activity having prevented his hearing my remarks.

"Just saying that we men must stick together," I said, while the others laughed. "Come on now. Let's see our island!"

Our route had been over the snow-covered surface of ice-locked lakes. Somewhat over a mile back we had left two cars parked beside the road-a road kept open through the winter by virtue of powerful machinery and human heroism. For this north country in winter is a challenge. It reveals nature in a rugged mood. Seasonal temperatures may drop to thirty, forty, fifty, even sixty below zero, and snow pile to the cabin tops. But the main roads are seldom out of service, never for long.

This day we were experiencing one of nature's eccentricities. She seems to love to do unexpected things. In the midst of this winter, when everyone was expecting the mercury to drop into the cellar and stay there, behold there was a warm spell. That doesn't imply anything tropical about the conditions. Nights found the temperature playing affectionately with zero, but for a number of days noontime had registered around twenty-five above. That is high enough to make you shed heavy woolen wraps when you are doing strenuous things like snowshoeing.

It was most unusual weather, as California was saying at that same moment about its snowstorms. This unseasonable weather did strange things to forest life too. June found

evidence of an odd circumstance, and called from her position ahead of our party: "Sam Campbell, what are these tracks in the snow?"

We hastened to her and looked down upon sharply outlined marks likely made the previous night. There were two distinctly different sets of tracks somewhat mingled but easily recognizable. One was the trail of a raccoon showing clear record of its dainty front feet and large spreading hind feet. Along with these prints was the track left by a huge timber wolf. The trails did not indicate a hot pursuit. Apparently the animals were going at slow speed. Likely the old coon had crossed the lake first, and the wolf was following his trail.

"That is a product of this warm spell," declared Ray, who has lived all his life in the forest. "If the weather were colder that raccoon would have remained asleep. Possibly it would have been better for him if he had. That wolf wouldn't be a very gentle playmate if he caught up with him. Just see the size of those tracks."

"I found some bigger'n they are," came the voice of Hi-Bub from a few feet ahead. "Lookut here, Sam Cammel. This was a man following the animals, and did he have big feet!"

We went to examine Hi-Bub's find-but it wasn't the record of a man. It was something far more exciting than that.

"A bear, Hi-Bub!" I exclaimed. "A huge bear-much larger than even Old Charley, or any other black bear you have seen. Probably he was following the wolf."

"A bear?" asked Marge and 'Bob in unison, looking around as if for an exit.

"A bear!" shouted June delightedly, for she had long since learned not to fear things in the woods.

"A bear!" shouted Hi-Bub. "Come on, let's see 'im!" The excited boy tried to run on skis and of course finished with a nose dive into the snow.

Ray had taken a metal tape from his pocket, and now was measuring the remarkable tracks. Eleven inches wide by fourteen inches long was his startling announcement! Of course, in this snow the track would be larger than the foot that made it; but, making all allowances, this would be a tremendous beast weighing possibly six hundred pounds.

"It has been years since I saw anything like that," Ray was saying. "How I would like to set eyes on that old fellow! What is he doing walking around at this time of the year? He should have been in hibernation six weeks ago, and he ought to stay there until March. Likely it is the warm weather again."

We stood for a moment trying to picture in imagination the epic of wilderness drama, a slight record of which lay before us in the snows. While the others listened, I volunteered my conception of it: What appalling silence reigned as the night cold settled on

the vast forest! The wooded shores lay like irregular drifts of night itself. Stars sparkled so brilliantly that it seemed their very voices might be heard. Occasionally the lakes uttered their deep tones as the ponderous ice coating cracked under its own weight. The eerie wildness of the ages rested on the rugged north country.

Then out of the shore-line shadows came a dark form, small in comparison to his surroundings. It was the raccoon and he ran, but not rapidly. He had a definite object in mind, for his trail was straight and purposeful. He crossed the long stretch of the lake, the snows of which were white even in the night. Perhaps he heard the distant call of a coyote, or the fearful shriek of a wildcat. But he kept to his pace and his purpose.. On over the lake he went and into the forest on the opposite shore.

One hour, or maybe two hours later, another wildwood figure appeared at the same spot on the shore where the raccoon had first emerged. Perhaps he had already been following the tracks of the smaller creature for some distance. He loomed as large as a deer in the pale, cold light. He paused to look carefully over the open stretches before him, and perhaps he raised his nose toward the stars and gave his challenging howl. Then, nose to the trail, he followed the route taken by the raccoon.

Next came the entry of the bear, looking as if a huge section of the shore-line shadow had broken loose and moved under its own power. This event in the nocturnal drama occurred very soon after the coming of the wolf. Perhaps the bear was running by sight rather than smell. He had no fear of the wolf, great and powerful as that creature is. The black bear is king of the forest, and is conscious of his supremacy. He followed, unhurriedly, relentlessly, confident of his endurance and his strength.

At the distant shore the trio disappeared, three predators—pursued and pursuing one another. "The final scene of the drama," I concluded, "may have been a tragedy behind the shadow curtains of the distant shore."

"Hi-Bub!" exclaimed Marge. "Please get up out of the snow!”

While I was orally describing the wilderness scene as I imagined it to be, Hi-Bub was so fascinated at the conception he forgot that he had tumbled into a drift. There he lay just as he had fallen, one ski standing on end, holding a foot high, his face covered with snow that was melting from his body warmth, and most of the rest of him completely buried. His imaginative powers had carried my description to the point of realism. "Mr. Cammel!" he said. "I never saw a wolf before."

II
FEATHERED ATOMS AND FUTURE PLANS

Now we came in full view of our Sanctuary. The sight brought a lively cheer from our party, and a waving of hands and arms as if someone were there to welcome us. A

quarter mile over the white stretches of the lake lay our island, the cabin conspicuous among leafless trees. On beyond were the west and north shores so sacred in memory. In the distance, sharply outlined in the clear morning air, we could see the hills that surround Vanishing Lake.

Giny and I found ourselves trembling with excitement at sight of this land we love so much. June stood still as a graceful little statue, her eyes fixed on the forest, a tear finding its way unnoticed down her cheek. A reverent and adoring silence descended upon the rest of the party.

Was this making too much over a mere place, a material thing? I believe not. It wasn't just a selected spot in this endless earth that affected us so deeply; it was recollection of all the wonderful things that had happened there and the promise of what was to come. We had seen the miracle of friendship unfold, both in people and forest creatures. In those woodland halls before us lived that strange and fascinating Inky, the porcupine, who has been a lesson in devotion and loyalty. There too lived those other porcupine characters Salt and Pepper. There were Bobette and Specks, the deer; Sausage, the woodchuck; Bunny Hunch and Big Boy, the bears; squirrels; chipmunks; foxes; coyotes; wolves; beavers; otters-an endless array of wildwood citizens with whom we had had friendship or at least acquaintance. Of such things our attachments and sentiments are born.

The mood of the party changed suddenly. The desire to get to the cabin seized us. We raced ahead as fast as conditions would permit. The speed limit on snowshoes is very low, and hurrying brings its penalty in awkward steps and tumbles. Hi-Bub found the skis couldn't keep up with him, so he took them off and tried wading through the knee-deep snow. That didn't work so well either, so he climbed on the toboggan and

transformed his daddy into a dog team. "Mush!" he cried, swinging an imaginary whip. "Come on there, mush!" And Bob mushed the best he could.

It was a laughing, breathless group that finally reached the island. We took off our snowshoes and climbed the low hill toward the cabin. We felt as if something surely would come out to welcome us, and something did. Giny heard a faint sound and signaled us all to listen. Then we caught it too. "Neeya-a-a," came a nasal call from somewhere in the tree. "Neeye-a-a," it was repeated again, this time closer."

"Nutty, is that you?" called Giny. "Come here, you lovely little thing. Come on."

"Neeya-a-a," answered the voice, and presently we beheld Nutty, our friendly nuthatch, coming cautiously toward us, flying from tree to tree. He seemed to be showing off, hanging upside down on twigs, hopping up and down the side of trees, perching on limbs and turning his cute head from side to side eying us.

The return of this diminutive creature was quite a surprise. We had known him first in the previous autumn, and then only for a few weeks before we left. His friendship was one of those unexpected events which keep that book of nature forever fascinating. One autumn day I was conscious of him about three feet away from my head. Nuthatches were common in our forest, but we had made no effort to tame one. He took the initiative in that. He was much interested in peanuts. I tossed some half kernels on the ground, and he picked them up right by my feet. Within a day's time he was taking them from my hand.

It was amusing to watch him carry the half kernels and hide them in well-chosen places. Sometimes the selection of a place would require as much as fifteen minutes. With the treasured morsel in his beak he would hop up and down trees looking for favorable openings in the bark. Finding such a spot he would insert the treasure, and then hide the opening by tucking in a shred of birch bark. A dozen kernels were forced under the edge of the roofing paper on our boathouse, and later this opening thoroughly plugged with pine needles. Our contact with Nutty had been so brief in the previous fall we entertained no hope that we would see him on this winter trip, though he does live the year around in the north. But here he was, a self-appointed reception committee to welcome us home.

He was rather cautious at first. Fluttering from one tree to another, he circled the entire party, looking us over thoroughly. Every one of us held out a hand toward him in which there were peanut crumbs, and he was entreated in most bewitching tones from eight voices to "come on."

But Nutty took his own sweet time. At last he singled out my hand, and with another of his nasal cries he flew and perched squarely on my fingers. He did not perch upright, but hung tail down as he would on a tree.

I shall always remember the feel of those little feet. One who has never known the friendship of a wild thing has missed one of the sweetest adventures in life. Such a friendship gives one the feeling that some strange illusion or spell that has held all creatures at enmity with one another has been cast out and a natural harmony regained.

While Nutty clung to my finger, I drew my hand in and looked at him closely. His coat of feathers was much thicker than when I had last seen him. At the same time he looked me over right thoroughly, turning his head from side to side and likely deciding that I had grown a thicker coat too. Then he snatched a peanut crumb and flew away.

Hi-Bub and June took over the servicing of the nuthatch and their persistent calls of "Nutty" would surely have given a stranger a wrong idea about what sort of an institution occupied the island. "Might be the right word the way this gang acts at times," commented Ray just as I had the same thought.

Now we took up the task of making the cabin comfortable. It is strange how cold an unoccupied building can be. As we opened the door, we found it much colder inside than outside. The first move was to open doors and windows so there was a complete change of air. Next the stove and fireplace were put in operation. The warmth, the sound of crackling fire, the odors of food cooking, the happy mood of our group, all combined to make a home out of that empty cabin in a hurry.

We lose something vital in our modern easy ways of living, I believe. The thought came to me as I watched our party bring life to that cabin. There was a task for everyone. Ray brought in armload after armload of wood. Bob seized a snow shovel and began clearing a path at the cabin door. Giny, Ada and Marge took over the preparation of food. I started the fires and brought in bucketfuls of snow to melt down for water. There was an indescribable joy about it all. We weren't just punching buttons and turning switches, but had our hands in the tasks themselves. And we were working together for a common good purpose. It all felt good, and there was a song in our hearts that had to come out. Soon we were singing a favorite north-woods song, "Beautiful Ohio," in a way that was more noteworthy for its volume than its musical quality. No matter-it gave vent to our feelings, and there was no one to be annoyed by it—except one.

"Hey, you're scaring Nutty," cried Hi-Bub. "He doesn't know what to make of all that noise."

"Neeya-a-a, Neeya-a-a-a!" screamed Nutty, peeking out from the far side of a tree where he had taken refuge.

"He'll get used to it," called Ray, and he led us into a voluminous rendering of "Let the Rest of the World Go By." Nutty contributed his call to the melee several times, then decided that things were not so bad as they sounded and flew back to June's waiting hand.

Hi-Bub broke up the song a moment later, however. "Sam Cammel! Here's a chipmunk!" he cried in incredulous tones.

"No, it couldn't be," I replied, but we all rushed to windows and doors to see. It was a chipmunk, now up to Hi-Bub's very feet.

"Sam Cammel," exclaimed the excited boy as he stooped to the little creature, "there is a scar on the side of his face. Why, it's Beggar Boy!"

Indeed it was our famous and much-loved pet of many years. The scar on his face was definite identification, as was his familiar manner of racing up to Hi-Bub and jumping up on an outstretched hand that trembled with excitement.

"What is the north woods coming to!" exclaimed Ray with pretended disgust. "Here in January we have a temperature that would make Florida proud, a raccoon comes out of hibernation, and so does a bear. Now comes a little scamp who shouldn't awaken until the arbutus blooms. Something's wrong, I tell you, something's wrong."

Nothing was wrong, but it was hard to believe. None of us had ever seen a chipmunk in the wintertime in this country before. We hastily snatched cameras and took some pictures to convince ourselves later that this actually happened. "Now if I hear a song sparrow singing, find a wild cherry tree in bloom or see a wall-eyed pike swimming in a snowdrift, I am going to give myself up to the boys in white jackets," said Ray.

That is nature for you! She is the perfect dramatist. She loves to get you all wrapped up in fixed opinions and then do exactly what you think will never be done. I have learned to be moderate in my statements and suspicious of my facts. Anything can happen, and I believe it is best to let that stand.

One thing was being made clear by what we saw in the forest this gorgeous winter day: forest creatures are governed by temperature rather than the calendar.

The ladies announced that dinner was ready, and the announcement provoked a near stampede. June and Hi-Bub left Nutty and Beggar Boy to their own devices.

We circled the table, and after we were all seated Giny brought in a huge pot of steaming baked beans. These had been precooked and merely had to be heated. Oh, the odor and the flavor of those beans! I contend that beans are among the great inventions of the ages anyway. I have eaten the famous "bean hole" beans of the early lumber camps, I have cooked them in remote spots of the forest far from the end of roads, I have eaten them in the army and never lost my enthusiasm for them in the least. For a complete, tasty, satisfying one-dish dinner, what is there better than good old beans?

While our meal was in progress, I suddenly became the object of considerable propaganda. It originated with Giny. We had never had enough of winter in the north, she declared. To this I agreed. "Well," she said, "you are planning to devote more time

to writing and less to lecturing—could there be a better place to write than here in the winter?"

"No," I agreed, "this would be perfect. We have plans, you know," I said to the others. "Someday we are going to build a real winter home. We have the site selected among the big white pines on the north shore mainland. Don't know when we will be in position to carry out our dream, though."

"Now that is what I have been thinking on," said Giny in a way that showed her thoughts had been carefully considered. "Too much time is going by waiting for that house. Why can't we live right here in this cabin? There could never be a home we would love any more."

"But this place is a summer cabin," I explained, rather forcefully as I could see she was in earnest. "It's not insulated."

"Well, insulate it!" put in Ray.

"Yes, I suppose we could. But we have no storm windows," I argued.

"Have storm windows made!" said Ada.

"But we have no way of really heating it," I fought back, sensing something of the mob spirit in the others. "It is all right to come here for a few hours and sit here dressed in heavy clothing, but to live here and work here is another thing."

"Put in a floor furnace," said Bob. "I know a manufacturer who produces the very thing. If you insulate the cabin that little furnace would make a hot house of this place."

"And you could take care of our animals all winter long," exclaimed Hi-Bub.

"And we could all come to see you." June laughed.

"It is the only way you are going to get the privacy you want," insisted Giny. "No telephones, no appointments, no noise or disturbance. You could read, study and write as you have been longing to do for years."

They were all sitting forward, elbows on the table regardless of manners, and bearing down on me.

"Wait a minute! Wait a minute!" I cried, feeling as if I had my back to the wall. "It just isn't practical to make a winter home on an island. Why, there is a period of four to six weeks in the early winter and another similar period in the spring when the ice is too thick for the use of boats and too thin to walk over. We couldn't get here during those periods, and if we were here we couldn't get ashore!"

Giny wasn't discouraged in the least. "You will be doing some lecturing. Use that autumn and spring period for that," she persisted.

"Will you, Sam?" begged Ray, looking right into my eyes.

"Will you?" echoed Ada.

"Will you?" "Will you?" "Will you?" ran all around the table.

"We can have this right away," continued Giny, "and we don't know when we can have that home on the mainland."

I looked from one to the other, summoned all my reserve strength and exploded, "No! A winter home on an island has too many complications! I would rather wait until we can build the place we planned. Now go on, eat some beans and let me alone."

They did look a little discouraged at that and there was a moment of silence. This gave us a chance to hear some voices from outside the cabin that had something important to say in the matter.

"Phoebe, Phoebe," came a call, quickly followed by a more dainty strain, "Chickadee-dee, Chickadee-dee."

"Bless their hearts, there they are!" I exclaimed. "The chickadees! I have wanted some of those little fellows around here for years. Look. There are a dozen of them."

In the small balsam trees directly outside our window there was a regular circus of those marvelous little birds. They have such a jaunty appearance, look so cocky and defiant yet are so tiny, they have always stirred my admiration. Occasionally they had come to the island in early spring or late fall, but they would not stay. In the summer they completely ignored our place.

Later I accused Giny of being in league with them. I still wonder if she knew the effect it was going to have on me. Usually when a wild creature comes near the cabin she is the first to approach it. Not this time, however, and that is why I am suspicious. "Take them some crumbs," she said, smiling wisely as she prepared some bits of bread and gave them to me.

I took my offering and went out. I expected the flock to fly away, and that I would toss the crumbs on the ground, then come inside to await their return. But they did not. In fact they came hopping and flying along branches directly toward me, crying their "Phoebee-e-e" and "Chickadee-dee-dee" all the while. I had never seen such mass friendliness before. Holding my hand toward them, I displayed the crumbs. One fellow with sharp markings perched about three feet away, summing up the situation. He looked at me, then looked at the crumbs, then at me again. I was doing my best to sound like a chickadee, though Hi-Bub says my imitation wasn't very good. Still the cocky little fellow watched me. Suddenly he flew right to my hand, and perched there while he ate. I felt a little thrill run from my head to my toes.

The adventure had only begun. Having decided that I was nothing to be feared, the whole flock swarmed on me. They sat on my shoulders, my head, my hands. One even lighted on my nose and succeeded in hanging there for several seconds. I was so excited

I trembled. Here were my chickadees! And making them friendly wasn't going to be a long process. They were already so! Spring, summer and autumn had never given me this delightful experience; it was the property of winter.

The group in the house were nearly in hysterics watching the show. They made no effort to join in, but just let me be the center of things. Finally the flock left and I stood staring after them, my thoughts racing in circles.

"Bob," I said sheepishly, as I went into the cabin again, "what is the address of that company that makes the floor furnace?"

"Yes siree!" shouted Hi-Bub, "the chickadees did it!"

III
SLIPPERY SLIM

LONG live the toboggan! It is a pleasurable and useful invention. It is a masterpiece of streamlining. Lying flat to the earth with its toes turned up in a graceful curl, it offers a minimum resistance to both snow and wind. It skids over the surface of powdery drifts into which a runnered sled sinks hopelessly.

The toboggan we had with us that wonderful January day had a name. Hi-Bub, who personalizes everything, supplied that. "Slippery Slim" was his title for the long slender sled, and from the moment the name was accepted he felt that he had at least half-interest in the sled.

Slippery Slim was a central figure in our pleasures during an eventful afternoon. Dishes had been washed in snow water. June and Hi-Bub had fed Nutty, Blooey, Beggar Boy, the chickadees and a late-comer Nuisance, the red squirrel, until all of them went and hid. Then we took Slippery Slim and started out looking for more adventure. The eaves were dripping under the warmth of the sun. Woolen coats were left behind. Even gloves were tucked under belts or in pockets.

Snowshoes were strapped on again, and Hi-Bub resumed the mastering of skis. I tried to tell him the word should be pronounced "she," but that offended his masculine vanity and he wouldn't do it. Whether it was skiing or sheing, it was a tough job. I made the mistake of laughing at him and directing a few uncomplimentary words his way. Little did I know that within a day I would be eating the laughter and those words too-with no mustard on them.

Our first plan was to follow the animal trail we had seen that morning. It was still plainly visible on the snow, though the sun was eating at the edge of the tracks, leaving a fringe of delicate colored glass in each one. Leaving Slippery Slim at the lake shore, we pursued our hunt into the woods. The animals had entered the forest to the west of our island and followed a much-used deer trail. Here were deer tracks in such abundance that it

was difficult to sort out the three we had been following. The fact that all held to this trail gave us another conception of what might have been going on. Perhaps this was not a hunt at all. The animals traveling at separated intervals, may have been going along established routes and not stalking one another. Hi-Bub liked that idea better. There was too much kindness in his heart to let him relish the sterner phases of nature. Yet, I never saw a lad his age with greater endurance and more indifference to knocks and bumps that came his way.

"I think that old bear and wolf and coon just went to their homes to sleep, don't you, Sam Cammel?" he asked.

"That is possible, Hi-Bub," I replied.

"Sure they did," said June, trying to reassure Hi-Bub and herself at the same time.

This optimistic view might have been right at that. We reached the edge of a great swamp and there the tracks separated. The raccoon had turned to the left and disappeared into an area filled with brush. The wolf had not followed. Rather had he headed directly into the swamp. It was impossible for us to follow either of these tracks farther. The wolf tracks had joined others of doglike appearance—probably coyotes. The great bear had broken away from the main runway before it reached the swamp.

We followed his tracks to the top of a knoll, where we found that the animal had joined or been joined by at least two other bears. Ray thought there might have been three. Certainly the tracks indicated there had been one small bear, probably a yearling; one medium-sized bear perhaps two years old; and the great old monster whose trail we had been following. Of course, to Hi-Bub the story had a happy ending—a family reunited. He could even tell from the tracks that they had shaken hands and patted one another on the back. Our party was satisfied now, and began retracing the trail back to the lake.

Ray and I went a little farther. I am glad we went without the others. We came upon one of those sights which one must be prepared for if he is to study the wilderness. The bear tracks went all in one direction, but they showed a quickening of pace. The great creatures had separated somewhat. Obviously there had been a chase. Ray and I moved as fast as we could, as though we were a part of the drama whose records were about us. We found brush and small trees broken by the weight and rush of the animals. Then we were halted by sounds ahead of us that were similar to those of pigs. We moved ahead cautiously, but sound of our coming or else scent preceded us. We heard excited, heavy grunts and then a scurry of big bodies through the brush. We hurried forward, arriving in time to see one huge black form disappearing in the forest, while sounds on beyond told of others. We didn't see much of the beast but enough to tell us that our estimate of his size was not an exaggeration. He impressed us as being nearly as large as a cow.

In the area where the bears had been surprised the snow was packed down by their large paws. We had surprised them at dinner, and it wasn't a very pleasant sight. On the ground lay a deer, now half eaten. A hurried examination showed the animal was much handicapped in the chase. One leg had been useless, likely an injury from the hunting season six weeks before. This was a rather gruesome record of the severe phases of nature. True, it was not to our liking. However, bears who do not hibernate must eat. Hibernation is their way of conserving food energy and passing these cold months. The bear is not just a wanton killer. Much of his food is vegetation-leaves, grass, berries. These things are not found in the snow periods, hence if he is afoot then he must be a predator.

"Anyway," commented Ray as we turned to leave, "from the condition of that deer I believe this is the kindest thing that could have happened."

We worked our way back to our party. It was just as well not to tempt nature. Normally animals are not aggressive toward human beings. But I would just as soon not stand between bears and their dinner. Besides, it isn't good manners to call on anyone at mealtime unless you are invited-and we hadn't been asked.

"We're going just as fast as he is," put in Ray.

"Where are we going to stop?" screamed June amidst high-pitched giggles.

"It isn't where, it is how are we going to stop," yelled Bob. I tried to say something, but when I opened my mouth Slippery Slim sent up a shower of snow and filled it.

The question as to how we were going to stop was answered a bit abruptly. Where the hill reached the lake there was a drop of almost three feet. We hadn't noticed it when we started down, but we certainly noticed it when we arrived there. Down we went with a jolt that brought a yell out of everyone. Hi-Bub suggested to his daddy that he never need be spanked again, because he had enough to last him through life.

"You little rascal, you never have been anyway—and I think that was a mistake," answered Bob.

Slippery Slim was now on the open lake making time over a stretch where the wind had blown the ice free of snow. We had only a few seconds to enjoy this smooth sailing, and then Slim spilled us in a good-sized snowdrift. It was an awful mix-up. Ray complained that he couldn't find his own arms and legs—someone must have taken them. Hi-Bub was almost completely out of sight in the drift.

June was struggling to her feet, giggling and gasping for breath. "Oh, isn't that fun?" she exclaimed. "That is, if you live through it."

The party paused only to make sure everyone was present, and then started up the hill to repeat the performance. Again and again we came sailing down Trail's End Hill, each time with greater speed as the snow became hardened and crusted. It was near

sundown as we took the last trip. "Slippery Slim," said Bob as he patted the toboggan, "I didn't think there could be so much fun in a few flat boards with their toes turned up."

The cold of night was settling down as we reached the cabin. We added wood to the fires, and were glad to sit looking at the dancing flames. Soon Giny had some hot soup ready. We drew closer and closer to the fireplace. The thin walls of the cabin could not keep the cold out. "This time next year we will have the walls insulated," I said, noticing that one after another was putting on wraps.

"Yep," said Hi-Bub, "thanks to the chickadees."

The group was happily tired from the day's activities. Conversation was of a quiet nature. Ray and I told of what we had found in the forest, being careful not to describe the scene in detail. It was in the past now, and the account did not distress them so much. "Sam Cammel," said Hi-Bub, "that deer wouldn't have been Bobette, would it?"

"No, Hi-Bub," I replied, "this was a buck, so we may be sure it was not Bobette."

"That's good!" said the lad, relieved, "it would seem worse if it happened to someone we knew."

We delayed our departure until the last possible minute, for we were reluctant to give up this homey, cozy little spot in the wilderness. Hi-Bub was fingering through an animal book. He had come upon the picture of a moose, and stood looking at it for a few moments.

"Sam Cammel," he said.

"Yes."

"Does a moose moo?"

"Does a which do what?" I asked as the whole group looked up incredulously.

"Does a moose moo?"

I thought the walls would never stand the outburst of laughter that came. I had no opportunity to answer Hi-Bub, and he couldn't see that there was anything so funny about what he had said.

"Hi-Bub," said Ray when he could be heard, "tell me first, does a cow coo?"

Hi-Bub was the only one who did not laugh. He wanted to know. if a moose moos, and what was funny about that? "You let Hi-Bub alone," said June, taking his part, much to his embarrassment. "I'll bet none of you knows just what a moose does."

"That's right, June," I interjected. "We don't know very much about moose. Someday I want to spend a long time where I can study them. There were some in Wisconsin in the early days, but they have all disappeared. I can tell you this though, Hi-Bub; a moose doesn't moo. They are silent much of the year, but in the mating season they call and challenge."

"Have you heard them?"

"Yes, in Wyoming, and also back in the Canadian canoe country. By the way, Giny and I are going back to that canoe country this summer."

"Huh?" said Hi-Bub, his eyes-wide.

"Can moose be tamed?" asked Bob, not noticing Hi-Bub's reaction.

"Yes," I replied. "They can become quite friendly. In the mating season they are not to be trusted, however. It is recorded that in the early days of the north they were used as draft animals. Teams of them properly trained would take cutters and bob sleds along at a great pace."

Hi-Bub was striving hard to say something or other, but Marge was ahead of him.

"Why do they have such long legs?" she questioned. "They present such an ungainly appearance—as if they were on stilts."

"You probably have given the answer. It is likely those long legs are stilts in the strictest sense. These stilts seem to be nature's answer to the deep swamps and deep snows. Animals meet such conditions in different ways. The wide feet of the wolf and the hairy paws of wildcats and lynx carry these creatures over the surface of the snow. The huge hind feet of the jack rabbit answers the same purpose. In the case of the moose, and to some extent the deer, nature has tried another method of meeting those conditions. She has given them stilts so they can wade through drifts and swamps."

"Sam Cammel," put in Hi-Bub, able to get the floor at last.

"Yes."

"Did you say you are going back to the Canadian canoe country?"

"Why, yes, Hi-Bub. I just had a letter from my publishers asking me to go there and get material for a new book. They have been receiving letters from so many readers who want to know more about Sanctuary Lake. We plan to go there for five or six weeks, studying wildlife, especially moose, and making pictures of them."

Hi-Bub walked up beside me, his face beaming with excitement. "You mean—you mean—you are going to that little lake where no one else has been? You mean—Sanctuary Lake?" He acted as if he could hardly believe it.

There were exclamations of delight about the circle. "It is our favorite country," commented Giny. "We are so grateful that we are going there again."

Hi-Bub was standing right beside me, looking into my face and breathing as if he had just climbed a mountain. He opened his mouth several times as if to speak, but words didn't come out. At last he succeeded in saying, "Sam Cammel, are you going—alone?"

"Yes, just Giny and I. It is going to be fun—lots of hard work, but lots of fun too."

"Well—well—don't you think you should have someone to help you with all that hard work?"

I was terribly dumb not to understand him, but I replied casually, "No, Hi-Bub, I guess we can't have a helper. Three people on a long canoe trip is not so good, for only one canoe can be taken and it would be overloaded. Besides," I added, looking away from him to the listening group, "I would far rather do all the work than have the wrong person along. I wouldn't take a chance on a guide or a stranger."

"But wouldn't someone you knew, some friend be all right?" Hi-Bub persisted.

"Yes, it would be wonderful," I assured him. "If your Daddy could go, or Ray—any or all of our group here we would love it."

"So would we, if we could get away," said Bob warmly, and Ray exclaimed, "Oh-h-h, what an adventure that would be—if we only could."

"Maybe—maybe you could take some little person," Hi-Bub went on, "someone who wouldn't take up much room in the canoe."

"But if he were little he might not be strong enough, Hi-Bub," I countered.

"Oh, yes, he would be. And he could cook for you and wash dishes and make the fire—and help you-do-everything." Hi-Bub's voice broke at the end of this sentence. I was commencing to understand—Hi-Bub was pleading his own cause.

Giny had been listening to him with deep sympathy and interest. Now she leaned forward smiling and said: "Sam, don't you remember? You promised you would take Hi-Bub to Sanctuary Lake as soon as he grew tall and strong."

"Yes, and that promise almost wrecked my home," said Bob, in mock resentment. "All that youngster has done since is try to grow tall and strong. All this training, boxing, wrestling, tennis, hiking and swimming-all that has been done because he wants to get ready for a trip to Sanctuary Lake. Not yet, Old Top," Bob said, patting his son on the back. "A little taller and a little wider in the shoulders—then maybe Sam and Giny will take you, but not yet!"

"Yes, Hi-Bub, you are too young," added Marge. "Now, you mustn't tease Sam—that isn't nice."

I didn't dare look at the lad. A boy, especially like that one, in disappointment is a sight I do not relish. He had such a capacity to feel things deeply and such an overpowering love of nature, I could sense his hurt that we were going without him. I remembered only too vividly my own yearning for solitude when I was his age. Longing for wild, unspoiled places had been sufficient at times to make me ill. This very canoe country had me under its spell for years before I had the opportunity to go there.

"Will you see Sandy?" Hi-Bub was asking.

"Yes, we will see Sandy. In fact, we will get much of our equipment and supplies from him," I answered, though my voice sounded hollow and there wasn't much importance to what I said. Sandy was the tall soldier and lover of the forest who had been Hi-Bub's hero. The fact that we were going to see him only increased Hi-Bub's yearning.

"Hi-Bub," I said, putting my arm about him. "I wish we could take you along. I really do. But you are too young. You understand, I am sure. Why, Giny and I would have to be taking care of you, and we have work to do."

"But I came out here with you—and didn't I keep up?" he persisted.

"Yes, you did splendidly," I agreed. "But you see your mother and father are here to be responsible for you."

"If they went to Canada, would you want me to go?" Hi-Bub saw a ray of hope.

"Oh, wonderful," Giny and I exclaimed together. "It isn't best to go into such wild country with just two in the party," I continued, speaking to Marge and Bob. "If we could have you and Hi-Bub-that would be perfect."

"Could you go, Daddy?" Hi-Bub clung to hope.

"Son," Bob said firmly, "I have a job. Nothing in the world I would rather do than go on that trip, but people don't quit their work for such things. Now please stop teasing; you are not being very manly. I am afraid Sam will never want you after this."

"No, I repeat my promise, Hi-Bub," I said reassuringly. "When you are big enough and strong enough, I will take you to Sanctuary Lake."

Hi-Bub's voice was low, and he didn't want anyone to hear what he said, but I caught the words: "I want to go now."

IV
SKIS AND SCARS

WITH the memory of a perfect day locked in our hearts, our party dispersed to our several homes. Ray, Ada and June lived in a woodland cabin. Marge, Bob and Hi-Bub had a home in the village.

Giny and I were making our winter home in a new hotel, which offered an amazing amount of luxury for its forest location. The place was an inevitable answer to the ever-growing tourist business of the region. People had long since been acquainted with the summer vacation joys this north country offered. Now they were learning that the other seasons of the year, properly used, are just as wonderful. The hotel was ideal for our purpose and convenient to our Sanctuary.

In our room, I found myself in wakeful, meditative mood. After our day of activity I had expected to go to sleep the moment my head touched the pillow—but I could not. I couldn't forget Hi-Bub and his reaction to the talk about Canada. Giny and I have no children of our own, and perhaps from the viewpoint of child welfare it is just as well. I would certainly spoil them. It is too difficult to say "no," and stick to it. That expression on Hi-Bub's face when mention was made of the planned Canadian canoe trip-it was a thing of beauty, like a dawn or a display of the aurora borealis. It was founded on natural, boyish enthusiasm and interest. I had seen this change to something gray and lusterless as when a veil of forest fire smoke creeps over the landscape and screens the beauty with heaviness. Something of his joy was lost, and with it went some of mine.

I turned from side to side in my bed as arguments filled my thought. Perhaps he could meet all the hardships and endurance tests this canoe trip might include. After all, such an adventure is not extremely severe. But I rebelled at the responsibility involved. Hi-Bub was young—younger than he looked or acted. He would need constant watching in a land so rugged and challenging. Giny and I had no time to devote to such purpose, for we would be absorbed with our photography and observation work.

"Anyway, Bob and Marge would never let him go with us" came Giny's voice out of the darkness. "You might as well dismiss the thought and go to sleep."

"Reading my mind again?" I asked laughing.

"It's not so hard to do, even in the darkness." Giny knows me so well.

"All right, they won't let him go. At least I can sleep on that."

The day that followed was once more unseasonably warm, and unbelievably beautiful. Giny and I devoted some morning hours to catching up on correspondence, but we

couldn't resist the call of the outdoors for long. We stepped out to breathe deeply of the bracing air. Other hotel guests were there, and their cheery greeting reflected the mood of the day. They were donning snowshoes and skis. I walked over to the rack where the hotel's supply of such equipment was kept, and noticed the many sizes and kinds of skis. One pair was like those Hi-Bub wore, and I laughed as I recalled his struggles of the day before. While we stood there, a car drove up and Hi-Bub and his daddy got out. They returned our greeting with waves, but it was easy to see that Hi-Bub was not his jolly self. As they reached us, Bob said, "Our boy here insisted on seeing you today, Sam. He has something to say—haven't you, Old Top?"

"Yes," said the smileless Hi-Bub, his eyes on the ground. "I am sorry for what I said last night—you know, when I teased to go to Canada." He tried to say something more, but couldn't.

"You didn't tease!" I said strongly, putting my arm about his shoulder.

"I should say not," agreed Giny.

"Why, you had a perfect right to ask to go along," I continued. "You have our promise to take you to Canada, and promises ought to be kept. It is only that you are___"

"Hi-Bub understands, Sam," said Bob, helping me out.

"We had a long talk last night. He realizes he is still a bit young. He wants to help you, really, and he knows he couldn't be of much help now. Besides, we just couldn't let him go without us, even if you wanted to take him. He understands that now."

Hi-Bub understood it, but he still looked like some little thundercloud seeking a place to weep.

At this moment we were interrupted by several of the hotel guests who had come up with a bright idea. "Let's get Sam Campbell on some skis!" they cried.

"A swell idea," said one, himself a fine performer. "Come on, Sam, you have been waddling along on snowshoes for years. How about getting on something that can really take you places?"

"Come, Sam," put in Bert, the skiing instructor who is known internationally for his skill. "It's high time you get started at this business. Come on, I'll help you."

For years I have used every argument against my doing any skiing. I reasoned I was built too close to the ground, too wide, and too thick for any such thing. Anyway, I had lived a lot of life without barrel staves under my feet, and it seemed likely I could continue the same way without any startling loss.

This winter I had come north armed with the same arguments. There wasn't any more reason to get on those sledless runners than there ever had been. Back in the woods the snowshoe is more practical and, since I intended to be back in the woods most of the

time, snowshoes were all I needed. In spirit of high generosity I reasoned that if I wasn't on the skis someone else could use them.

My friends were adamant. I had to go skiing even if they must take me by force. With an attitude of resignation I walked over to the ski rack.

"Hi-Bub," I said—misery seeking company—"here is a pair your size. Want to join me in a skiing lesson?"

"No, thank you," said Hi-Bub, from the depths of gloom.

"Wish I could do something to clear that up," I said over the boy's head to Bob.

"Aw—don't worry. He'll snap out of it," Bob assured me. "Come on, show us something about skiing."

Before I knew it, I was standing on some runners that my friends had selected for me. Bert said that they were "just right," but from my view they reached much too far ahead of me, and much too far behind. My feet were hitched to them in a way that did not savor of gentleness, but rather of the ball and chain nature. In my hands were two of those spiked poles, and on my face a smile that didn't even go skin deep.

Bert, the instructor, was sincere, efficient, and—fortunately—patient. He showed me how to hold the poles, explained their uses, made me bend my knees and get all ready for something or other. Then he moved forward with such ease and grace demonstrating his points that I was inspired to attempt an imitation. I started out with the best of intentions and considerable confidence—poles behind me, knees bent, and a sense of self-reliance that proved to be fleeting. The next moment no one in the world could have convinced me those skis didn't have minds of their own. If they were a pair, as Bert insisted, they were certainly mismated. Surely there was no hint of romance between them. One started for the hotel, the other for the opposite horizon. Each one

tried to take me along. I never knew before that my legs could stretch so far. I felt like a Russian dancer caught at the top cycle of one of those deep knee bends.

Now with both skis out from under me, I had come to rest on a peculiar arrangement of the two poles. I couldn't fall down and I couldn't straighten up. Feet and skis had gone beyond recall. Bert was still demonstrating. He was skating away in a whirl of flying snow, singing a Swedish song that to my listening ears sounded like "Good-by forever!"

The prospect of being in my present position for the rest of the winter wasn't very pleasant to me. My cap was over my eyes, and I discovered that my coat was twisted until the buttons faced the back. I tried to get my hands free, only to find that they were tangled in the strap loops that dangle at the top end of the spiked poles. I think I had some of the sensations known to victims of the rack in medieval days.

The skis kept straining to continue their divergent journeys, and I was still a part of everything they did. A blue jay lighted in a near-by birch tree and looked me over critically. "Four pounds of peanuts if you can get me out of this," I called aloud. The villain flew away making a sound that was all too much like a laugh.

In my dilemma I recalled some lines of Scripture which I had heard somewhere or other: "God ... will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able"-and there was more to it about providing a way of escape. With this came a ray of hope. I had tried everything I could think of except to turn my ankle. With supreme effort I twisted at my right foot. To my delight I was able to turn that stubborn ski over, and my foot broke out of the locks and chains that had bound it. I shall never forget the heavenly thrill of having that right leg underneath me again. It was grand to be returned to conditions and positions I understood. Then I got the other ski off with the same maneuver and stood upright and dignified the way Homo sapiens is supposed to be.

I had just become well organized when Bert arrived with the remark, "Oh, your skis came off! Here, let me help you put them on again." And I had hoped I was through with them forever.

"Oh, keep on," came a voice from the increasing crowd of spectators, "you are doing fine!"

Many other things happened during that first ski lesson-too many to list here. Bert said it was nice, soft snow.

I didn't find it that way, and I fell on it often enough to know. If there was one thing more than all others that made me want to start a campfire with those aggravating skis it was when they stepped on each other. I have never faced anything more irritating than when I wanted to move my left ski and found the right one standing on it. It was amazing how often this could happen.

One more item worth mentioning was my first trip down a small hill. Bert said I could do it, though I had my misgivings. I never expect to face a more baffling circumstance than when I had just begun to slide forward. I wasn't ready to go as yet. I wanted one more breath, one more glimpse of life. But those skis were tired of waiting. They started moving and so did I. Bert called some instructions which I couldn't carry out, and reminded me to keep my knees bent—but I wasn't sure I had any. Down that hill we went, those skis and I, I doing four sets of daily dozen bending exercises all at once, reaching for clouds, sky hooks or any other kind of assistance. The hill looked about twice the height of Pike's Peak. Somewhere near the middle of the infinite slope I sat down on the back of my own runners. It was a wonderful idea, and I wondered why I hadn't thought of that before. The combination of the skis and myself made up a good toboggan, reminiscent of Slippery Slim, and I enjoyed the rest of the trip.

Bert had one more idea to make the day complete. If I was going to fall down so much, and it seemed that I intended doing so, I must learn the proper way to get up. Sounded logical. However, he insisted I get up without removing the skis. Imagine trying to rise with all those shackles around my ankles. He demonstrated how simple it was by falling to the ground, then lifting himself up easily with the poles. Since I can chin myself without effort, I fancied this would be no trouble. For once I went down on purpose. With confidence I planted the spiked poles firmly beside me and lifted at my weight. Instead of my body going up, my skis moved forward and I found myself in the same position as before-but about three feet ahead. I tried it again with the same results. Before I had learned the knack of this maneuver I had pushed myself over about two acres. Snow was down my neck, up my sleeves, all over my face, and where my cap was was anyone's guess.

That was enough! I took off the skis, and there ended the first lesson. I headed for the hotel and a steam bath.

It was then that I took notice of my spectators. I couldn't imagine where they all came from, since the event had not been advertised. Everyone was laughing, and I ran a gauntlet of taunts and witticisms as I went by.

And Hi-Bub! He was leaning against a tree in a fit of laughter that was little short of hysterics. I paused, assumed an attitude of self-righteous indignation and glared at him. His merriment increased. He held his hands to his sides and bent forward, laughing so hard that not a sound would come out. It was worth all the bumps I had taken. His yearnings were forgotten—for the hour at least.

V
SPIRIT OF THE WILDERNESS

FOR many moons folks of the North Country talked and laughed about "The first time Sam Campbell was on skis." The story was written up in the local paper. It was repeated over the local party lines, with all the parties thereto listening thereunto. That performance was about the finest thing I had ever done for my fellow beings. I have no doubt the community was happier, and healthier too because of that event. It kept their minds off politics, wars, and rumors of wars, taxes and trivials.

I was on skis many times during the remaining days of our winter sojourn, but never again from the entertainment viewpoint did I equal that initial experience. Giny entered the sport too, and did remarkably well. We realized that if in years to come we were to live much of the winter at our Sanctuary, we must be proficient at all the wintertime skills.

The hotel where we stayed, modern and luxurious as it is, offered much in the way of wildlife interest. Its owner was a kindly man having a deep love of forest creatures. The woodland acres that made up the hotel estate were a haven to any wild thing that cared to come. It was astonishing how news of such a realm got around among the forest folk. Into the protection of this refuge came Peggy, a fawn badly in need of a home. Why she came, what had been her experience in the world prior to that time will remain a secret. Obviously she needed care and help, and she got it quickly. Half the staff at the hotel devoted its time to feeding and protecting that fawn. She enjoyed unrestricted privileges at the beautiful place, and no reservation was necessary. When she appeared at the doors, they were opened to her. She walked about the lobby with the air of a society queen. If she were in a lounging mood she curled up on an oriental rug, or in one of the richly upholstered chairs. "Peggy," said the owner sharply one day, "if you dare to ruin one of my chairs—well, I'll get another one."

Peggy loved to come into the dining room—mainly because she wasn't wanted there, I guess. One time she walked up to my table and began eating my salad, much to the amusement of all who saw her. Of course, I let her do it. There I go, spoiling children again. Presently the headwaiter saw her. He called forth all the tact and diplomacy of his craft. "M'mselle Peggy," he said with a bow, "you are wanted on zee telephone, in zee lobby." Peggy kept right on eating the salad. "But, M'mselle, eet ees vairee importan'," he insisted, bending still lower. "A call from zee queen, I believe. Will you come?" Peggy stamped her little foot and nibbled more lettuce. "Oh, I see!" he continued, with characteristic gesture, " you are tired, M'mselle Peggy. You do not weesh to walk. May-bee zees old carpet is not fit for your pretty feet. See—I help you!" So saying he picked up the fawn and while she showed her displeasure by kicking and struggling, he carried her to the lobby.

"Zee queen, she is hung up," he said as he walked past us again. "Too bad!"

Peggy contented herself by nibbling the blotter on the desk.

Another hotel guest capable of causing considerable commotion was Annie, a yearling black bear. Annie's past was obscure, too. A conservation warden had brought her there when she was all too young to be alone in the world. Annie had no mother, the warden said, though he didn't say why and no one pressed the matter. Annie was there, that was the important thing, and life began that moment.

There were a number of people around to see the cub, but only one personage present interested her. That was Rusty, the cocker spaniel, who considered himself the general manager of everything and everyone. Rusty had a peculiar disposition. The coming of wildwood creatures to the hotel was a constant challenge to him. It was easy to see he had a struggle with jealousy. When anyone was gushing over Peggy and petting her, Rusty would force himself right into the center of things and with his paws pull the caressing hands down to himself. Yet, let anyone move to harm Peggy and he was on hand bristling with belligerence.

Now came a new problem to him in this black-haired little creature with a tail so short there couldn't be a good wag in it. Annie ran right up to Rusty and came to a full stop directly in front of his nose. Rusty stiffened up, growled and stood his ground. The cub didn't like this greeting. Likely it was some of those stiff manners one could expect around such a hifalutin establishment. She whined a little and then throwing care to the winds she jumped right up in the air, landing on the back of the surprised dog!

There was a mixed-up mess of black hair and brown hair, paws and feet, barks and growls as the two rolled over and over. Then Rusty, who is far from a panty waist, succeeded in biting the cub hard right in the stomach. What a reception! Annie whined with indignation. If that was the kind of treatment this place offered to its guests, Annie wanted nothing of it, and she ran squealing to the warden's car. Rusty ran the other way.

In spite of the appearance of this melee, here was the beginning of a beautiful friendship. Rusty and Annie had learned to respect each other, and that is fundamental to good companionship. Annie found out that if she got too rough she would get her tummy nibbled every time. Rusty, too, learned that he had better pull his punches, or he would draw upon himself the remarkable power of those black paws and strong jaws.

Thereafter the antics of the two were a floor show. Whenever they saw each other it was the signal for a rough and tumble wrestling match. At first it was rather even, but as months went by Annie kept getting larger while Rusty stayed the same. Still he never backed up, never asked for mercy, though sometimes things were pretty rough.

Annie did not hibernate. Life was too full of interest to waste any months in sleep. There was Rusty to play with and her keeper to torment, and really it kept her busy.

Annie was partially confined. She had a good-sized cage with a tree growing in the center. Each day she was taken out and allowed to play. This wasn't quite enough liberty, so she began escaping at night. Always she headed for the kitchen door at the hotel. There were tantalizing odors coming from that place. Once she succeeded in getting it open. No one could describe the havoc she created. At last the cook, armed with a broom, launched an offensive that sent her squealing out the door. He threw her a ham bone by way of apology, but he cautioned, "If you want a meal at this hotel, you go and be seated in the dining room as you should. Where are your manners?" Annie's keeper led her back to her cage by the promise of a bottle of pop if she was a nice girl. She was nice-temporarily. The next night she escaped again. It cost another ham bone and two bottles of pop to get her home.

Everyone was puzzled about her method of escaping. The cage was a solid one. Several nights we stayed near it watching her until we were half frozen, but she made no attempt to leave. That is, she didn't until we were in our room in bed, and then she appeared at the kitchen door, scratching, clawing and whining.

At last we discovered her method, however. During a snowstorm we hiked down to her cage, and I suppose the falling flakes somewhat concealed our presence. There was Annie up in the tree that centered her cage. Slowly and cautiously she worked her way out on a long limb that reached beyond the enclosure. She walked upright as far as she could, and when the limb was too small, she hung upside down proceeding like a sloth. Once beyond the cage she let go with her hind feet and hung by her front feet, just the way I have seen many a small boy do.

Then she dropped lightly to the ground, and went on the run for that favorite kitchen door. The next day they cut this limb off the tree, and Annie pouted all day long. I noticed the cook brought her ham bone and bottle of pop to her cage the following night.

Our visits to the island cabin continued regularly. Sometimes Giny and I went by ourselves, sometimes Hi-Bub, June and their families could be included. We held hopes of seeing the great old bear again, and several times went looking for him. We found his enormous tracks, but did not sight the creature himself. The unseasonable warm weather held on for a few days. Then it turned quite cold and doubtless our big friend took to hibernation. Snow flurries filled in his tracks, and we saw record of him no more. Deer had taken to their yarding places deep in protecting swamps, and their trails likewise were snowed under. We heard the voices of coyotes and wolves from far back in the hills, but we saw none of them. The north country became rigid in ice and snow.

Sharp-edged winds whistled through barren boughs of deciduous trees and drew low-pitched melodies from the "harps of the pines." Winter had returned to rule the land.

It was on one of these sub-zero days that we made our last trip of the season to the Sanctuary. We were bundled up until only our noses, eyes and cheeks were exposed, and we watched these areas closely against frost bite. The party was made up of the same ones who were with us the first day-even to Slippery Slim.

We weren't inclined to do much tobogganing, however.

Three times down the hill at Trail's End, and we headed back for the cabin. Our fires were forced to the limit, but the place could not be made very warm. However, we managed to be quite comfortable by wearing our heavy woolen things, and the joy of the occasion was not lessened in the least. The chickadees appeared on the scene, jaunty as ever. The frosty air was vibrant with their cheery notes. They were hungry, though, and when Hi-Bub and June went out with food, the birds settled on their hands, shoulders and heads.

Saucy little Nutty, the nuthatch, arrived too. I had to coax him quite a while before he would come to me. That mess of woolen togs was new to him, and he wasn't quite sure what or who was inside of them. When at last he did light on my hand, he looked right into my face and uttered his sharp "Neeya-a-a, neeya-a-a-a" as much as to say, "What is the idea of putting on all those duds? Want to scare a fellow? Why don't you get yourself some feathers and you won't have to make a complete change every time the wind shifts." He snatched a few bread crumbs and flew away.

In the evening our group huddled close to the fire, faces toasting while backs were cold. Hi-Bub and June knelt before the fireplace to prepare popcorn. All were in jolly mood, and the cabin was filled with song and laughter.

Pulling a cap down over my ears, I left the cabin and walked out onto the lake to see something of the night. The heavens blazed in ineffable grandeur. Everything was silver and ebony. A half-moon was just rising in the northeast, much misshapen as though pinched by the frost.

Circling the entire horizon the saw-toothed silhouette of the forest was sharply etched against the sky. The wind had ceased, and the still cold air bore the voices of wild things far in the distance. The rugged beauty of the vast undisturbed landscape was overpowering. It was the very essence of primitive grandeur. Tears that were not caused by the cold found their way down my cheek as I returned to the cabin. The beauty of that place deeply affected me too. The lights were cheery and inviting and laid a ruddy pattern on the snowdrifts. I could hear the happy voices of those inside. I couldn't keep from thinking of the symbolism of the scene—this world with all its wild, virginal beauty, and within it a home where man might live in safety and comfort.

"Just in time for popcorn!" cried Hi-Bub as I entered the door. "Come on. It's good."

"It looks it," I commented, accepting a large serving. "I guess you got well warmed up popping it."

"That we did," said Ada, "and when we think that the coming years promise many evenings like this at the Sanctuary, we are more grateful than ever to those chickadees."

"Well," I said, when a mouthful of popcorn was sufficiently out of the way to permit speech. "I saw something tonight that would have forced this decision, even if I had never met those chickadees."

"Now what did you see?" asked Giny, "a panther, a wildcat, a coyote"

"Or was it a moose mooing?" put in Hi-Bub.

"No, nothing like that," I answered laughing. "Maybe it is wrong to say I saw it. I guess I rather felt it. I felt the same thing the first time I ever saw this country, when I was about the age of Hi-Bub. I don't know what to name it unless just the `Spirit of the Wilderness.'"

They were interested, so I told something of my first visits to this forest many years before. An uncle who was familiar with the country brought my brother and me into this very area on a camping trip. Never could. I forget the effect that vast forest had on my thought. We lived in a city, but that was only from necessity. Our hearts and plans were always reaching toward natural open spaces. The forest exceeded anything I had pictured in my dreams. It was ancient, immense, mysterious, captivating. I felt as if there were some all-pervading force encompassing it. This I named the Spirit of the Wilderness, referring to the unbroken, primitive atmosphere.

"Sam Cammel," broke in Hi-Bub. "Then did you stay and live in the woods?"

"No, I couldn't, Hi-Bub," I went on. "I still had to go to school, and to live with my family. But I decided right then that I would live in the woods, and the day came when I bought this very land and moved here."

"It must have been pretty wild then."

"Yes, it was, Hi-Bub," I continued. "And that was what I loved." I recalled that our nearest road was nine miles away, and it wasn't much of a road. Much of the forest was uncut. Some Indians still lived in remote spots. But things changed rapidly. Lumber companies kept harvesting the great trees and wonderful woods were left a tangled mass of brush. Fires destroyed large areas of forest. Roads cut deeper and deeper into the wilderness. Summer homes appeared along the shores of lakes. Launches cruised over waters where only canoes had been.

"With each development it seemed to me I lost something of that feeling of wilderness," I explained. "I am not complaining. It was inevitable that this should become a resort

country. Now we have electric power at our very island, a road is coming to the shore of this lake and that very modern hotel is only a few miles away. With all this I felt as if I never again would get that feeling I knew in my first years here."

I paused for a moment. Everyone was quiet, waiting for me to go on.

"Now that is what I sensed out there tonight-that Spirit of Wilderness. It has come back with the winter. Snow has erased the scars left by man and the world is primitive again."

Hi-Bub kept looking at me with a peculiar expression in his eyes. "Mom," he said, turning to his mother, "you know why I like Sam Cammel?"

"Well, son, that is rather an embarrassing question before a group," said Marge laughing. "But since you started it, why do you like Sam Cammel?"

"'Cause he can say the things I want to say-only I can't."

That brought a laugh from everyone.

"Why, Hi-Bub?" asked Giny. "Do you feel the Spirit of the Wilderness too?"

"Well-that's what it is. I mean, that's what you're after when you go out in the woods. You know what I mean."

“Yes, we know what you mean, Hi-Bub," I said. "It is something hard to describe, but it is very real."

"I bet you can find the Spirit of the Wilderness up at Sanctuary Lake," said Hi-Bub.

"You surely can—more than at any other place I have ever been," I agreed.

"Ah—I wish"

His mother looked at him and shook her head. "Aw—I wish"

His father glared at him.

"Well, I can wish, can't I?"

VI
SQUATTERS' RIGHTS AND WRONGS

IT WAS early summer before Giny and I saw our Sanctuary again. Our travels had taken us to California for six weeks of camera work among the great redwoods, along the ever-interesting ocean front and among the animals in glorious Yosemite Valley. Then we went into the Canadian Rockies where we hoped we might see something of mountain lion and grizzly bear. We could not stay long enough to carry out this mission properly. However, from a native guide we heard of a secluded mountain lake reached over a difficult trail by pack horse, where these creatures could be seen and studied. And in our book of "someday plans" we entered the dream of a journey to that lake.

Perhaps if we had known what was awaiting us at the Sanctuary we would have gone right then into those Canadian Mountains and stayed there with the kitties and bears. In our work with animals we have learned that there is a price attached to everything-and we have never grumbled if it seemed a bit high. But never before had we faced such a complexity of problems as we found when we reached our cabin.

Work on the winter plans for our house had gone forward in the spring. The much-talked-of furnace had not yet been installed, though the insulating material had been placed in the walls and ceiling. The plan of our friendly contractor was to have everything in perfect order when we arrived. He knew how anxious we would be for home life after months of constant travel. So he did his job thoroughly and, after seeing that the place was spotlessly clean, he locked the doors and departed.

Hi-Bub and his daddy met us at the train. Thoughtfully they came to the Sanctuary with us to aid with our baggage. Of course Hi-Bub was the first ashore, and the first to peek in at our cabin windows. He ran from one window to another, giving little exclamations of delight, until he came to the back porch. Then he emitted a loud and explosive "Hurrah!"

"What is it, Hi-Bub?" I called, noting an unusual tone to his voice.

"Oh, Sam Cammel, something's happened!" he cried, pressing his nose against a window pane.

The three of us hurried to the boy, and looked through the window at the most awful mess I have seen since the time a raccoon got in our icebox. The floor was heaped with shreds of the material with which the walls were insulated. There was flour, rice, corn meal, torn paper napkins and paper towels, packages of gelatine, boxes of sugar—all chewed open and scattered broadcast. In the floor I could see a hole gnawed through by sharp, strong teeth, and there was another in the wall.

"What has done that?" asked Giny. "It will take a week to clean that up."

"Fine thing!" exclaimed Bob. "You have your walls insulated and before you have a chance to live a day in your house, something drags the stuff out."

"Yes, and there is the rascal that did it!" I broke in, pointing to Nuisance, our pet red squirrel, who came running up to us. "You beautiful scoundrel," I said to him, as he accepted a peanut from my fingers. "You have the whole woods to live in, and yet you must go into our house and make a mess like that!"

Nuisance took his reprimand very lightly, and then revealed the fact that he had his problems too. There was a wild chattering in the brush near at hand that caused Nuisance to drop the peanut and face around. An instant later another red squirrel appeared heading right at Nuisance in a most belligerent manner.

Now Nuisance had always been boss of the island, so far as squirrels were concerned. Others had lived there, but they stayed within territorial limits which Nuisance established and patrolled. Apparently a new champion had arrived. Nuisance had met his master and was wise enough to know it. He whirled about, then raced for distant regions, the newcomer close enough to snap at his tail. We noticed that one of the ears of this little stranger had been injured and lay back in unshapely form upon his head, resembling those cauliflower ears accumulated by wrestlers and boxers. Immediately Hi-Bub named him "Pug." Pug was not only the champion: he was a tyrant, we learned very soon. He chased Nuisance unmercifully. He chased the birds. And there was not a chipmunk on the island, a fact to be charged against his aggressiveness.

Well, the question before us was what to do about that back porch. I suggested we use the front door from then on and forget about the rear entrance. Giny couldn't see giving up part of her house. So Bob, Hi-Bub and I got brooms and shovels and set to work on the mess. Bob thought we should have a steam shovel too. Hi-Bub thought an atom bomb placed in the center of the pile might help a lot. I suggested applying about ten gallons of kerosene and a match. However, there was really only one thing to do, and we were working at it.

"Sam," called Giny, "would you please build a fire in the fireplace? The house is damp from being closed so long."

"Surely," I answered. And now we uncovered our second challenging problem.

I brought in an armload of wood, anticipating this first fire of the season. It was cold and damp, and a grate fire is most enjoyable at such a time. Hi-Bub followed with additional wood and some birch bark.

"This will be swell," he enthused. "May I light the fire, Sam Cammel?"

"Surely. You build it all yourself," I answered. "Show me what you have learned in scouting." So saying, I lifted the screen away from the opening. This resulted in a wild commotion up the flue, a flutter of wings and a shower of soot falling at our feet.

"What is that?" asked Hi-Bub, his eyes lighting with excitement.

"I hope it isn't what I know it is," I answered.

"Chimney swifts?" asked Giny.

"Chimney swifts!" I agreed with apprehension. "Come, Hi-Bub, let's get on the roof and have a look down that chimney."

Taking a flashlight, we climbed a ladder to the roof and made our way to the chimney. I felt encouraged at what I saw. Nowhere along the long black inner surface of the flue was there any nest.

"Hurrah!" I cried. "Maybe they were only roosting, Hi-Bub. We may have a fire after all. Come on, let's have a look up from below."

"Hurrah!" shouted Hi-Bub, not knowing just what he was cheering about.

Down the ladder we went and up to the fireplace again. Kneeling, I flashed my light up the flue. Again I felt encouraged when the light revealed no nest above. In looking from below and above I had surveyed every inch of the chimney now. Laughing gleefully, I was just withdrawing my head from the opening, now ready to go ahead with the fire building, when on the side of the firebox wall within two feet of me I discovered the chimney swift's nest! It was so close I had looked right past it.

"Oh, Giny!" I groaned. "It's here. The nest is right in front of me."

"It is?" cried Giny joyfully. "Is there anything in it?"

I had been investigating carefully and was ready to announce, "There are six little featherless rascals that haven't been out of the eggs more than an hour!"

Hi-Bub had to see, Giny had to see, Bob had to see, and we were bumping our heads against one another and against the fireplace stones. One of the parent birds entered the chimney from above. She, or he, came part way down; then, discovering our presence, departed in a fluttering of wings that sent out a shower of soot, mostly in our eyes.

"Hi-Bub," I declared, raising my arms in political gestures. "We are not going to stand for this. Under the Constitution of the United States of America and the Bill of Rights, we don't have to put up with this."

"Hurrah!" shouted Hi-Bub, catching the spirit of the speech. "Hurrah! Down with everything! Revolution!"

"That is what I say," I agreed, continuing my speech. "Where are the laws of our land that some people can move into the homes of other people? This is my home. I earned the money, bought and paid for it. Everyone has the right to do the same thing in this land of freedom."

"Hurrah!" cried Hi-Bub, though I wasn't getting so much support from Giny and Bob.

"Now what do I find?" I asked, in my best oratorical tones. "One family has moved into my back porch and pulled the stuffing out of my walls to make their beds. They pay no rent; they don't even say thanks. Now another is living in my fireplace. They didn't even ask me!"

"Hurrah!" shouted Hi-Bub, getting just a little too loud as boys are apt to do on such occasions. "Down with everything! Let's have a parade!"

"Now where do I find myself?" I asked, resuming my speech.

"Where?" asked Hi-Bub.

"Why, right here—that's where I am. My house is cold, my wife is cold, my friends are cold; and I can't build a fire, not even in my own home, for fear I'll singe those squatters. I can't go out the back door because I can't get over that mess. It's an outrage! I raise my voice in the name of individual liberty___."

"You better lower your voice. You're keeping that mother away from her nest," put in Giny, bringing an end to our revolution. "Those little things have nothing on, and if you feel cold, how do you think they feel?"

"Oh," I said indignantly, "I suppose I should give them the shirt off my back."

"You would if you thought they could wear it. Now be still and stop disturbing them. How long do you suppose they will occupy the chimney?"

"Five weeks or more!" I replied, for I had gone through this experience before. "You know the rainy days and cold mornings and evenings of this country even in summertime—and we won't have a grate fire."

"Well," said Giny, unsympathetically, "you have had lots of grate fires and you can enjoy your memories."

"Sam Cammel, how do they make that nest stick?" broke in Hi-Bub. He had withdrawn from the mob scene, and with the aid of the flashlight was examining the remarkable home of the chimney swifts.

We all stooped down to see it. It was a marvel of construction. Some of the twigs were coarse and strong. These were used in the outer parts, the inner portions being made of finer material, even a few pine needles mixed in. The nest was not lined though rounded and smooth on the inside. Hi-Bub had pointed out the amazing thing, that this material

remained stuck fast to the wall. No glue of human invention would hold to that soot-covered surface—and yet this nest was quite solid and dependable.

I explained to Hi-Bub that the chimney swift manufactures its own adhesive fluid in its saliva. It selects twigs of the preferred size and shape and "glues" them together. Really, the nest is not very secure. This fact has led to another interesting habit of the birds. When the little ones are about three weeks old, wings and feathers just forming, they abandon the nest and hang on the side of the chimney for the rest of their babyhood.

"How did they ever get to using chimneys?" asked HiBub. "There aren't any chimneys in the woods."

"Naturally they nest in hollow trees," I explained. "To them this isn't a chimney; it is just a fine safe hollow tree in the forest. They found this place unoccupied, and found it first, so it is theirs. Guess we will have to recognize their claim to it, won't we, Old Top?"

"Guess we will," agreed Hi-Bub.

We replaced the screen at the front of the fireplace and almost immediately we heard a parent bird flutter down and settle on the nest. There was no sound of greeting from the little ones, which meant that they were very young indeed. We discovered in the following days that they were capable of tremendous vocal outbursts.

After several hours' work we cleaned up the back porch. Bob, who is quite clever with carpenter's tools, repaired the damaged boards in floor and wall. Nuisance chattered his disapproval, but we continued reclaiming our back porch just the same.

Then we held a powwow. Something had to be done about those squirrels. We could give over the fireplace to chimney swifts for a season, but we couldn't have squirrels pulling the insulation out of our walls as fast as we put it in.

"What can we do?" asked Giny helplessly. "They can chew through these walls whenever they want to now that they have done it once. We could watch them while we are here and prevent it, but we will be gone so much

"Yeah, to Canada," commented Hi-Bub.

"We could live-trap them and take them away," I suggested. "I dislike to disturb them, but it is a question of who has this house from now on, they or we."

"Could we have them, Daddy?" asked Hi-Bub.

"No, son, not in town," answered Bob. "There are too many dogs around."

"This is a big, wonderful forest, with fine homes for squirrels everywhere," I reasoned. "We could take them some distance and release them early in the season so they would have plenty of time to establish themselves."

"Oh-I hate to give them up," said Giny sadly.

"Well, I do too," I agreed, "but what else can we do?"

We were all silent for a few minutes, seeking vainly for ideas. It was obvious though that the squirrels must be taken away. They had found their way into the house and nothing could keep them out.

"All right," agreed Giny at last. "Let's live-trap them. We will give them lots of food to start them in their new home."

"And we can go and see them often," said Hi-Bub, who had been at the point of tears at the thought of losing his beloved Nuisance.

"But won't they return?" asked Bob. "I have heard that the homing instinct of animals sometimes makes them return even from long distances."

"That we will have to learn," I said.

VII
SQUABBLE WITH SQUIRRELS

THE next morning there was an event that took our thoughts off our red squirrel troubles for a little while. Cheer, our red-winged blackbird pet, arrived. Ever since our return we had been looking for him. As it was late we had about decided we were not to see him any more. In the afternoon of a beautiful day we heard his cheery call at our feeding station. There he was, strutting up and down on a balsam branch telling us where he had been and what had delayed him, though we couldn't understand a word of it. He was back-that was the important thing-and the whole world seemed brighter because of his presence.

We did our best to deal with the squirrel problem fairly. It wasn't easy. In addition to Nuisance and Pug, we discovered Still-Mo, an old-time squirrel pet, was with us too. Still-Mo was the last remaining member of our famous quintuplets—Eeny, Meeny, Miney, Mo and Still-Mo. When you work with such creatures you feel deeply attached to them. Nuisance and Still-Mo had aided us much with our nature study. They had helped me write books by supplying me with material. They felt perfect freedom with us, would run in and out of my pockets and even into my shirt. Nuisance sometimes swam to the mainland. On a number of occasions he followed us over long distances as we hiked through the woods. We loved the little rascals, and it was hard to give them up.

Hi-Bub, who believes thoroughly that animals understand conversation, tried reasoning on them. I heard him telling Nuisance in most impressive tones that "Sam Cammel wants you to stay on the island, but you must not bite his house. That stuffing in the house is to keep it warm, it isn't for you to build a nest with. You go and get bark off the

cedar tree. You used to do that, you know. And if you don't bite the house, I know Sam Cammel won't take you away."

We waited several days to see if Hi-Bub's words had any effect. Nuisance didn't bite the house again—in the same place. About four o'clock one morning Giny and I were awakened by a noise that sounded as if our cabin were being eaten one board at a time, beginning right over our heads. I investigated, and found Nuisance calmly and deliberately chewing his way directly through a wall. He remembered only too well the fine, soft, cuddly material that lay in abundance within. On my insistence he ran away, scolding me in a manner that could not be misunderstood. He was back at his chewing before I could return to bed.

We tried bribery. We obtained some bird houses and placed them half filled with peanuts in trees where the squirrels would find them. They did find them, carried all the peanuts away, and then returned to chewing on our house.

There was no use to dodge the issue. The squirrels had to be removed. Even Hi-Bub realized it, and counseled with their as he fed them peanuts, "You will have to move to a new home, I guess, Still-Mo, Nuisance and you, too, Pug. You won't feel bad. What if you had to live in a zoo in a cage the rest of your life?"

I tried to be easy on the little imps. The live traps I planned to use were large, roomy affairs, especially designed so as not to injure an animal.

Catching the squirrels was a simple thing indeed. I set two traps with a handful of peanuts in each as bait. Within five minutes Still-Mo was in one and Nuisance in the other. Pug tried to get in, but he was too late. The little prisoners were puzzled about their sudden confinement, but not greatly frightened. After racing back and forth for several minutes to find a way out, they both settled down eating peanuts.

Smothering our feelings, Giny and I took the two creatures away. We took also a peck of peanuts to offer as compensation. We placed the two traps on the bottom of a rowboat, and while we made our way to a distant shore, Still-Mo and Nuisance contented themselves by getting into a word battle with each other. We released them in the forest on the north shore of our lake, one half mile from the cabin, pouring the peanut offering on the ground.

Immediately they started carrying the nuts away, burying them hastily close at hand and arguing with each other as to who should have the largest and most. We bade them good-by and, promising that we would come and see them often, we rowed away. We could hear them quarreling with each other even when we were some distance from the shore.

When we arrived at the island the place seemed strangely quiet and lonely. Pug was running around in silence, having no one to fight with.

"I feel awful," declared Giny. "Feel as if I had been mean and disloyal to friends. Those little tykes had such confidence in us."

"Now please don't soften me and make this job any harder than it is," I pleaded. "The only way I can carry this out is not to think of it. Pug is next, you know."

Pug was next. He entered the trap right while I was setting it. In fact, he and my hand were in it at the same time. I had to beg him to go away until I was ready. At that he jumped into the trap when I was trying to place it on the ground, and there I had my third prisoner.

Pug was taken to the south shore of the lake far from the area in which Still-Mo and Nuisance had been deposited. They had no attachment to one another, so it was better that they be far separated. Pug received a peck of peanuts as an apology, and there we left him busily burying his treasure.

We could not escape heaviness of thought as evening came on. Usually these last hours of the day were filled with the chatter of our squirrels, each one apparently telling the others to stay away from his home. To increase our concern we heard the voice of a great horned owl coming from the north shore where Still-Mo and Nuisance had been released. This famous nocturnal hunter is noted for his efficiency in capturing red squirrels.

"That is what worries me," exclaimed Giny, looking out into the gathering darkness. "Those animals are away from their hiding places, and I'm afraid they may be easy victims of that owl. Should we go over there?"

"Now that is foolishness!" I said emphatically, and after a moment's pause I added, "Come on, let's go."

Over to the north shore we went in our canoe. When we landed, the calling of the owl had ceased. We went to the spot where the squirrels had been released. They were not

to be found. Our contribution of peanuts had all been carried away. We called to our pets, but there was no response.

Rather concerned but feeling helpless, we launched out in our canoe again. As we did, we could hear the voice of the owl now far away on the south shore-where we had liberated Pug. Paddling as rapidly as we could, we headed for that area. There we were greeted with the same silence. The owl cried no more, Pug did not respond to our calls and the peanuts we had left for him were gone.

"Do you suppose that bird got all three squirrels?" asked Giny anxiously.

"Oh, I am sure that isn't true," I answered, assuming more assurance than I felt.

"Then why didn't they come at our call?" she persisted. "Well, it is night, and squirrels are seldom around after dark."

"But on the island they have come to us at night—when we called."

"Now don't worry," I insisted. "Those are real, rugged squirrels and they can take care of themselves. No doubt they are curled up in the hollow of some trees fast asleep, not worrying about us, the owls or anything."

"Well," said Giny, unconvinced. "You may be right. But I would like to know that all is well with them—even if I had to hear them chewing our house apart once more."

She didn't have many hours to wait for this proof. Dawn had just begun to spread its gray light over the forest, when we were both awakened by what seemed to be a riveter right in our ears. Even as we listened to the startling sound, trying to reason out what it was, from another direction came a desperate chewing, crunching, gnawing. Nuisance was peering in at our window berating us unmercifully, while Still-Mo took up the old gnawing job with renewed energy. She scolded me severely when I drove her away.

"I am for bigger and better owls!" I declared as I returned to bed and covered up my head to be rid of the chatter.

VIII
GENTLY BREAK THE NEWS

Now there was a battle of emotions afoot at the Campbell Sanctuary. Still-Mo and Nuisance swam a half mile at night through waters that were populated with muskellunge and northern pike in returning to their island home. Pug had come from the opposite direction through a half mile of forest and over a three-hundred-yard swim before he was home again.

"What a strong appeal this place must have for them!" observed Giny, as we stood watching them scamper about the place that morning. "It must mean as much to them as it does to us. Now what are we going to do?"

The story of the squirrels got around. The next evening we held another powwow in the form of a campfire dinner. The whole group that had taken part in our winter adventures was there: Ada, Ray, June, Marge, Bob and Hi-Bub. While we ate foods with that delicious open-fire taste to them, we talked of those chickarees. First our comments were in admiration of what they had done, next it was speculation as to what we were going to do. Our tangled sentiments in the matter were indicated in the fact that one moment the squirrels would be running right up to us taking food from our hands-the next we would hear those sickening sounds from the cabin some distance away, indicating that a hole was being eaten into the wall.

"Oh-h-h-h!" groaned Giny, dropping her head to her hand.

"Sam Cammel," said Hi-Bub, "couldn't you just tack some tin all over your cabin?"

We laughed. "Could be done, Hi-Bub," I answered, "but it would look rather odd. I am afraid you haven't the answer."

Bob suggested there might be some chemical distasteful to squirrels which might be mixed with paint and applied to the cabin. Ray thought that if we made a lot of noise and frightened the animals each time they started chewing, they might associate the sound with the experience and discontinue their efforts. Hi-Sub suggested we hire a squirrel-shooer whose sole responsibility in life would be to shoo our pesky trio away from the cabin. In fact, he applied for this job. June suggested that we just take our cabin inside where the squirrels couldn't get to it. We booed that idea down.

Anyway, Still-Mo, Nuisance and Pug enjoyed a respite while we worked on the problem further. I wrote to the Conservation Department of our state asking if any squirrel repellent had been discovered, and the reply was "no." There was a substance that would keep dogs away, and one that kept deer from nibbling on flowers-but squirrels seemed to like everything.

We tried frightening them. Whenever the gnawing began Giny and I, and Hi-Bub when he was there, sallied forth shouting and beating wildly on tin pans. For the first three times this worked encouragingly. The squirrels raced for the tops of trees, and stayed there an hour or more scolding and chattering. After they learned that all those bangs had no bullets in them, they ignored our noisiest efforts and just kept on chewing.

I painted the places they were chewing (now about halfway through) with red pepper. It never caused them to miss a bite. Then I tried turpentine. They loved it. I tried a dozen other distasteful things, but it was just salad dressing for them. When I tacked bits of screen over the spots on which they were working, they simply selected new places and started over again.

In our scheming and planning we went in a circle and arrived at the same place we had been. Deportation was the only thing. The traps were brought out again, and within a

few minutes the three chickarees were prisoners. We took them to a spot we reasoned should be especially good for squirrels-a heavy growth of oak and soft maple trees. Surely the acorns of the oaks and the winged seeds of the maples would make wonderful food. It was nearly two miles from our lake and this ought to settle the problem once and for all. In twenty-four hours they were back!

From then on it was an endurance contest. We trapped them as fast as they came home, they came back as fast as we took them away. We carried them north, south, east and west, trip after trip-but back to the island they came. In fact, I think it became sort of a game with them. They never developed the least suspicion of the traps. As soon as these were placed out, baited with peanuts-in the squirrels went. While we toted them in boats, canoes and automobiles, they sat calmly eating peanuts. They seemed to enjoy seeing America this way, with dining service en route. And we were having a lesson in the homing instincts of animals which we would never forget.

Of course, the battle of the red squirrels was not all that was going on at the island Sanctuary. The chimney swifts in our fireplace were active indeed. The little fellows in the nest were growing. Feathers were showing up on their wings. And they had found their voices! Oh, how so much sound could come out of such little things I do not know. To our dismay, we found they sounded very much like saucy red squirrels. When the mother or father came to feed, there would be a bedlam break loose that was all too much like Still-Mo, Nuisance and Pug settling their affairs of state.

In our experience with these birds we again saw evidence of Hi-Bub's remarkable power with animals. I was quite anxious to photograph the parent bird feeding the youngsters. To this end I installed flood lamps in the fireplace, and focused them on the nest. I tried time and again for the picture, but each attempt ended in failure because the moment the lights were turned on, the older birds left in flight. Hi-Bub asked if he might try. He knew the workings of the camera. With utmost assurance he began talking to the birds, "We just want to get a picture of your babies and you-so don't get frightened. You want your babies to have their pictures taken, don't you? Then Sam Cammel will show the pictures to lots of people, and everyone will know how beautiful your children are." This patter kept up constantly. The parent birds resumed their routine feeding-gathering insects and poking them into the never-to-be-satisfied mouths. Presently Hi-Bub switched the lights on and took the picture, the birds paying not the slightest bit of attention to him.

"Did I help you that time, Sam Cammel?" he asked, with a meaning look as he handed me the camera.

"Hi-Bub," I exclaimed, "that was wonderful. Pretty soon it will be so I can't get along without you."

"I hope so," he said, not intending that I should hear, though I did.

"What was that, Hi-Bub?" I asked.

"I say, I am glad when I can help you."

"Oh, thanks a lot, Old Top. You are a swell pal."

Andrea the raccoon and her family of six cute cubs were coming regularly, much to our delight. So were Cheer and Blooey and a host of grackles and red-wings. Now there were two more little figures, rather pathetic in appearance, added to our circus. Until now we had noticed an absence of woodchucks. In all previous summers we had had an abundance of them. Our famous old pet that we had called "Sausage" (because she was ground hog) had never missed a season. Her six grandchildren Wiener, Bratwurst, Salami, Patty, Thuringer and O. Bologna were a summer's entertainment in themselves. Hence we kept watching anxiously for the return of some of these interesting creatures. One morning Giny grasped my arm suddenly and directed my attention out a window. There were two baby woodchucks, the scrawniest little things I ever laid eyes on. Their skin didn't fit and their hair was short and missing in spots. They walked unsteadily, and all told, did not present a very healthy appearance. Obviously they were without parental care.

We could only speculate on what had happened. Perhaps the mother had met with a tragedy before these little fellows were fully raised. While yet at the milk stage they had been forced to eat harsh foods. And it was plain that they were not doing so well. We named them Orphan Annie and L'il Abner. When I suggested that they needed milk, Giny moved like a cyclone. A baby of any kind in need is sufficient to charge her with purpose and energy. Orphan Annie and L'il Abner didn't take to the pan of bread and milk offered them at once, but within a few hours they came to understand. Thereafter such food was right beside the hole in the ground in which they made their home, and we had the joy of watching them prosper and grow under proper nourishment.

One sunny day Bob and Hi-Bub made a surprise visit to us. The three squirrels had been taken away again, and we were enjoying a few quiet hours. I had our camp equipment out for an airing and was just inspecting our sleeping bags and tent to detect any damage, when I saw their boat approaching.

"Getting ready for the Canadian jaunt?" commented Bob, after greetings were exchanged.

"Yes," I answered, hardly daring to look at Hi-Bub. "It won't be long now before we will start."

"Well, I'd like to be going with you," said Bob, stooping to examine the tent.

"Who wouldn't?" said Hi-Bub with a heavy voice. He was feeling his lack of age.

"Have you seen much of wilder places, Bob?" I said, trying to keep too much longing from developing.

"Oh, yes, I have," he said, and added with enthusiasm, "During the war I reached Alaska several times. It was wonderful. Someday Hi-Bub and I are going to such spots, aren't we, Old Top?" He drew his son to him.

"If I ever get big enough," sniffed Hi-Bub, "and I guess I never will."

"Son," said Bob, changing the subject, "would you play by yourself for a few minutes? I want to talk with Sam."

Hi-Bub looked up questioningly, then in obedience walked over to where our cooking utensils were spread out, and began handling them one at a time.

"Sam," said Bob, "I suppose I am foolish and maybe weak to come to you today. Something has come up that I am afraid is going to give Hi-Bub a heartache. I am as bad about that youngster as you are about your squirrels."

"What is it, Bob?" I asked. "Nothing serious, I hope."

"Well, in a way it is serious," he said, looking over his shoulder at his son. "Especially coming right now when he is feeling bad about being too young to go with you."

Bob hesitated a moment, then continued. "You see, I haven't been satisfied with my work here. We came first because I needed to be in the open air for my health. But there isn't much future here for me, not much chance for me to give my Marge and Hi-Bub the things they should have. Now Hi-Bub is nearing high school. I have been on the lookout for a good business opportunity elsewhere, and now one has come. There is a wonderful opening for me in a city where Hi-Bub would have a splendid high school to attend—the very one I attended years ago. I know it is the thing to do, and I have accepted the offer.

But how am I going to tell that boy we are moving away from this country?"

It was a shocking bit of news. To take Hi-Bub to a city was almost like putting a robin in a cage. Yet, I could see Bob's viewpoint, and I felt sure he was doing the right thing.

"Do you suppose you could tell him?" he was saying. "He almost worships you, and maybe you could put it in a way that wouldn't make him feel so bad."

"That's a tough one, Bob," I said with a shake of my head. "I thought red squirrels were a problem, but this is worse. All right. I'll try, but I can't guarantee the results."

We walked back to Hi-Bub. He had our cooking utensils laid out in order, table all set, and probably in his imagination was cooking a dinner on Sanctuary Lake.

"Come along, Old Top," I said to him, "let the three of us go to Sunset Point and sit on that big log. I want to have another powwow with you."

"About the squirrels?" asked Hi-Bub.

"Well, probably we'll talk about them before we are through. There is something else on our minds today, and I think it is something mighty fine."

We reached Sunset Point and talked about casual things while I tried to find a suitable approach to the main object of the meeting. Presently I sensed an opening.

"Hi-Bub," I said, looking at him seriously, "do you know what is one of the surest signs of manhood—one that means you really are growing up?"

"What?"

"Well, it is when we are cheerful over things that disappoint us. In this world we often have to do things we don't think we want to. When we are quite young we make a fuss about such things, but when we are men we smile and go ahead. And I have found that many times the things I wanted so much to do were not the best things at all, and what I had to do was really best for me."

"Well—you mean this is what I should think because you can't take me to Canada?"

"Yes, that is part of what I mean. I didn't have that one thing in mind altogether, though. I am just saying that when we grow up we do not let ourselves feel disappointments so deeply, and we go right on being happy and doing the best we can."

"Uh-huh."

"Do you remember, Hi-Bub, that I told you I went to school in a big city?"

"Uh-huh."

"And you remember that I learned things in school that made it possible for me to come to the woods and live all the time?"

"Uh-huh."

"Well, you see I didn't really want to go to school; I wanted to stay right in the woods even when I was a boy. But I had to go to the city, for my parents worked there and it was the only place I could live. So, whether I would rather do it or not, I had to go to the city."

Hi-Bub was looking at me with a puzzled expression.

"You see," I continued, "if I hadn't been forced to go to the city I never could have lived in the woods the way I do now. So, whether I saw it then or not, it was the best thing for me. Do you see what I mean?"

"Uh-huh."

"Now—I am telling you this because the same kind of an opportunity is coming to you. You are going to have a chance to study and learn and then someday, if you wish, you can have a Sanctuary of your own and just study animals."

Hi-Bub looked up asking a thousand questions with his eyes.

"Yes." I began talking faster now. This was the climax. "Yes, your daddy has arranged to move into the city. He will go in business"

Hi-Bub caught his breath and looked sharply at his daddy.

"That is true, Old Top," said his father. "We are going to move to the city as Sam says. Now you are going to be manly about it, I know. I am going to stop work here right away, and you and I are going to play together for the rest of the summer, so you can get all of the woods you want."

Hi-Bub caught his breath again, as though he were having a hard time comprehending all this. I thought a flow of tears was at hand, and that all my tact and diplomacy had failed. But the results were the opposite. His eyes brightened and I saw that marvelous inner enthusiasm developing.

"Daddy!" he cried. "You say you won't work this summer—you are going to play?"

"Why, yes, son," said Bob. "I realize you will not want to leave the woods, so I plan to have all the fun we can before we go to the city. I am giving up my work here now and you, Mother and I are going to be in the woods every day. We will have picnics, we will photograph animals, we will camp__"

"Sam Cammel," shouted Hi-Bub. "Sam Cammel, we can do it!"

"You can do what?"

"We can go to Canada with you. Daddy doesn't have to work. Mother can go. They can take care of me."

Bob and I both stared at him in silence.

"Don't you remember?" he asked, nearly popping with enthusiasm. "Last winter you said I could go if there was someone to take care of me—and you said you would like to have Mother and Daddy along. Didn't you?"

"Yes, I did."

"Well, don't you see, now we can go!"

"But, Hi-Bub," cautioned his daddy, "Sam Campbell just said that because you teased so much. He doesn't really want us. He has work to do."

"But wait a minute, Bob," I said. "I do want you. Giny and I would love to have you along. It is much better to go into that country in two canoes than it is in one. Would you want to go?"

"Would we!" exclaimed Bob. "Marge and I have been as bad as Hi-Bub about the idea, only we hid our feelings. Are you sure__"

"Yes, I am sure. Giny will be anxious to hear this good news."

Giny heard the news immediately, and it didn't take a telephone or radio to convey it either. Hi-Bub was nothing short of a wild Indian. "Hurrah!" he yelled. "Hurrah! We're going to Canada. We're going to Canada. Mrs. Cammel, Mrs. Cammel!"

Hi-Bub ran as fast as his legs could carry him. When we arrived at the cabin the story had already been told. Tears were flooding Hi-Bub's eyes, and Giny's too!

Hi-Bub had won, as he always does.

"The boy will be President someday," said his daddy glowing. "That is, he will if he wants to be. Right now he would rather go on a canoe trip."

Not a comment about the city plans came from the boy. Nothing mattered now, except that he was going to Sanctuary Lake. He was going to travel by canoe, camp and see moose. He was going to find the Spirit of the Wilderness again. Heaven had come to earth.

IX
OF MOOSE AND TENTS AND FRYING PANS

UNTIL Hi-Bub, Marge and Bob entered the picture, our anticipation of the coming Canadian adventure was not all it should have been. Oh, we loved the thought of going to this wilderness of forests and lakes. Its utter wildness led us to name it our favorite land, not even excepting the region where our Sanctuary lies. It is an ancient, ancient land where one feels the primitive loveliness of nature reaching endlessly into distance and without limit into time. Yes, we wanted to go, but there hadn't been that consuming enthusiasm that makes one think, talk and dream constantly of what is to come.

There was new life in the plans now. Hi-Bub saw to that. He beamed like an arc light. His parents could hardly get him to eat his meals. Bob described a typical dinner experience to us.

"You know what I am going to do, Mom?" Hi-Bub asked, as they were seated at the table.

"Well, I hope you are going to eat your dinner."

"Yes, I will. But I"mean up'n Canada," he enthused, picking up a fork and laying it right down again. "I'll get up every morning at five o'clock. No, I guess it better be four o'clock. Maybe three-thirty. And I'll go by myself to see moose."

"Yes, I know. But right now, would you please eat your dinner before it gets cold?"

"Yes, ma'am-and-and__" He picked up a fork and promptly laid it down again. "An' I'll have to be out at night, too, because then the bears will be around__"

"You do plan to sleep, though," put in Bob, "well, say between one-thirty and three-thirty in the morning?"

"Uh-huh. But sometimes Sam Cammel stays out all night long so he can see wildcats."

"And you wouldn't want him to be alone, would you?" Marge was getting a little impatient. "Now please eat your carrots and your spinach."

"Yes, ma'am!" He picked up his fork again and held it poised aimlessly while his eyes stared straight forward, not seeing a thing. "Daddy," he broke out again, "how high is seven feet?"

"Well, son, it is pretty high. Please eat your dinner."

"Well, is it as high as the top of that door?"

"Yes, it is higher than that. I can just reach seven feet high—here___" Bob walked over to the wall and touched a point with his finger tips. "That is seven feet from the floor."

"Seven feet from the floor?" exclaimed Hi-Bub.

"Why?" asked his father. "What is so amazing about that?"

"The book says moose are sometimes seven feet high. Look." Excitedly he left his chair and walked over to the wall where Bob had made the measurement. "See how I would look beside a moose."

"Don't you ever get that close to a moose," put in Marge. "Oh, please come and have your dinner. You haven't eaten a bite!"

"Could I get this close, then?" He walked several steps away.

"No, that is too close. Please___"

"Well, could I get about this close?" He went to the other side of the room.

"Yes, I guess that would be all right. Now come on."

"Daddy, would you show me again how high he would be?" Reluctantly Daddy got up and touched the high spot on the wall again.

"You know how I would walk so I didn't scare him?" exclaimed Hi-Bub.

"Well, walk over to your chair and let's see how you would do it," said Marge.

"See, I would go this way, and never make any noise. Look, Mom." He walked on tiptoe, carefully selecting each step as he avoided imaginary twigs and leaves, all the while watching that seven-foot spot on the wall where the withers of the moose was supposed to be.

"Wonderful!" said Bob. "Now what do you say to a little carrots, spinach and___"

"But this isn't Moo-Moo!" declared Hi-Bub, pointing to the wall.

"What isn't who?" asked Bob, bewildered.

"No, it isn't Moo-Moo!" Hi-Bub was very serious. Bob and Marge both laid forks down and looked questioningly at Hi-Bub.

"Who in the world is Moo-Moo?" They never knew who or what Hi-Bub would bring into their home, either in reality or imagination. Mice, woodchucks, snakes, lizards, turtles, chipmunks, dogs, cats, bumblebees and birds had all been in their basement at one time or other, while his imagination had filled the house until the roof bulged with such creatures as elephants, giraffes, dinosaurs and what not.

"Why," said Hi-Bub, surprised that they didn't already know, "Moo-Moo is the baby moose up at Sanctuary Lake. She's there—wait and see."

"Well, let me tell you one thing, young man," exclaimed Marge, her patience now exhausted. "If you don't eat your dinner, you won't have the strength to do your part on this trip, and Sam Campbell will be sorry he took you along."

Hi-Bub ate his dinner with no more interruptions, except an occasional glance over his shoulder to the place on the wall where the "moose" stood.

There was nothing stoical about our trip plans and preparations from that time on. Anticipation reached the highest possible level. Hi-Bob's measureless enthusiasm infected us all. Our campfire gatherings now were monopolized by talk of the coming trip. Inevitably maps were brought out, and every nook and corner of the canoe country discussed. Ada, June and Ray, bless their unselfish hearts, were as excited as we were, even though they were not included. Ray's business would not permit him to leave at that time, though he made careful note of the route we were taking and where

Sanctuary Lake was located. "You never can tell," he said with a wink. "We might come calling on you some evening along about dinnertime."

"Could you?" burst out Hi-Bub, looking right at June. For the moment he forgot to be a woman hater. "Could you come? That would be great!" Then seeing we were noticing him, he added, "You could help Sam Cammel too."

June just smiled and looked at Ray.

"We will always be watching for you," I declared. "No one could be more welcome. You know the woods so well."

"It just might happen," said Ray. "We won't count on it, but if we do come, we will have our own full equipment and supplies."

"We'll be hoping," said Giny.

"Yes, we will," added Hi-Bub.

As the date for our departure neared, we designated a day for final inspection of our equipment. Bob, Marge and Hi-Bub came out to help with the many little tasks which needed to be done.

The inveterate canoeist has a deep sentimental attachment to his equipment. Even as the smoke of the campfire clings to pots and pans, so some of the joy of the adventure adheres to every inanimate thing taken along.

My short-handled, two-bitted cruiser's ax needed sharpening. As Hi-Bub turned the grindstone and I held the backwoods treasure in my hands, I recalled experiences we had had with it in the far north country. That was the ax that had prepared the firewood for our camps for many years. Always it came back with its edges turned and badly nicked, for that is granite country and you can't miss the rocks all the time. It was that little ax that chopped open the portage trail from Agnes Lake to Lake Kawnipi, after a small cyclone had laid trees over it as an impassable barrier. It was that ax that we rescued from the bottom of Maligne River, when our canoe overturned loaded with equipment. That ax blazed miles of trails through marvelous forests when we were searching for Sanctuary Lake. It had supplied tent poles, built crude tables and benches and cleared scores of remote wilderness camp sites.

"Yes, sir, Hi-Bub," I said as I tested the newly made edge with my thumb, "it is a great ax, and I'll wager it is glad to go back to Canada again."

"I'll bet it is," agreed Hi-Bub, looking at the ax as if he expected it to talk.

Our "silverware" was of the most crude and sturdy stock. We counted out a knife, fork, teaspoon, tablespoon, cup and plate for each of our party. The cups and plates were of aluminum and bore dents from the rocks of the canoe country. What grand repasts they

recalled! Yet, if the same kind of food were served us in a city restaurant, no doubt there would be an indignant complaint registered with the manager at once.

Next came the cooking utensils, a lightweight collection of nesting pans and kettles. They were clean on the inside, but black on the outside. It is the tradition among campers that no kettle can cook palatable food until it has a thick veneer of black from campfire smoke. For a moment I held our veteran frying pan in my hands looking at it. For a quarter of a century that utensil had been with me on every camping adventure. How it had responded to the heavy demands those inflated outdoor appetites had made upon it!

"Hi-Bub," I said, "wait till you smell the pancakes cooking in that thing some chilly morning on Sanctuary Lake! You have never tasted such cakes as it can turn out. Every cake is perfectly browned on both sides, and duly flipped in the air."

"Flipped?"

"Yes, flipped!" I said, severely. "You wouldn't turn a real, he-man north-woods pancake with a turner, would you?"

"No," agreed Hi-Bub, disgusted at the thought. "May I learn to flip 'em?"

"I'll teach you to toss them to the treetops!" I agreed, placing the skillet among the things to go.

To get the most out of a wilderness adventure, you should go light. Only those things which are absolutely necessary should be taken, and not all of those. One of the triumphs of canoe travel is to see how many things generally regarded as essential can be dispensed with. It actually gives a feeling of freedom and joy to eliminate the many extras we have believed are necessary to our comfort.

Next in our line of preparations came the tent. There was a small hole in it which needed to be patched. As we stretched it out on the ground, I felt a thrill from head to toe. Strange that a bit of waterproofed cloth like that could be so important. On the front flap of the tent was a long list of camp-site names, where this tent had been pitched. "Yum-Yum Lake, four days of rain" was one entry, and it should have been added that the fine old tent hadn't leaked a drop. "Island Camp in Lac Le Croix" was another notation, where a windstorm had struck and the sturdy tent held fast. "Moose Jaw Camp on Agnes Lake" was a title that brought memories, for here we had found some supplies cached by an earlier traveler, and most welcome they were, for our stock was running low. Other treasured names were listed: Sarah Lake, Saganaga, Sturgeon, Pickerel, Tanners Lake and many more.

"That isn't just a tent, Bob," I said as we worked at the patching job. "It is a treasure chest of memories—and a cornucopia of promises. You will love it as much as Giny and I do by the time we come back."

"Bet I know what a corny copus is," put in Hi-Bub.

"That doesn't sound just like the word. But what is a corny copus?" I asked.

"It's a big long horn with a lot of candy and fruit spilling out!"

"Son, you'd better write your own dictionary," commented Bob.

We sat and talked over our plans. Giny and I would use the tent which we were now repairing. We would carry our aluminum canoe on our car. At the outfitter's station at the end of the road we would rent another canoe, tent and certain other equipment for Bob, Marge and Hi-Bub.

"Can't we go now?" asked Hi-Bub. "What are we waiting for?"

"May I break into your Canadian dreams for just a moment?" asked a voice, and we looked up to see Giny standing there. She wore an expression of one who bears bad news.

"Just thought I ought to tell you-Still-Mo, Nuisance and Pug have come home, for the eighth time!"

"No!" I exclaimed. "Anything but that."

My answer was a series of sickening sounds coming from the direction of the cabin. First it was like three riveters at work, then the rasping, crunching noise of slivers being chewed out of our house.

X
FOREST GHOST TOWN

OUR departure for the Canadian canoe country was delayed while we dealt anew with the squirrel problem. What to do with the red-skinned rascals now was a baffling question. They were housebreakers and chewers and nothing short of human dwellings satisfied them. That old-fashioned idea of living in a hole in a tree lined with cedar bark and leaves was all right for the former generations but not for Still-Mo, Nuisance and Pug. They had tasted of modern luxury and nothing less would do.

In reality we were having a right good time with the problem even though we did not know the answer. There is no "back of the book" in nature's arithmetic. You figure things out yourself, or else you do not learn.

We had seen this remarkable homing instinct at work before among our Sanctuary animals-but never such a display of its powers as we now watched in our three chickarees. Cheer, the red-winged blackbird, was an example of it, having returned to our island now for five consecutive years. His winter flight took him at least fifteen hundred miles south and back. We recalled the impressive performance of Salt, our pet

porcupine, who reached the nuisance stage and caused us to invite him elsewhere. In his slow sluggish way he came back, once over a distance of about three miles. Bobette, the pet deer, was seen many miles away, yet reported in at the Sanctuary with no difficulty.

However, our trio of squirrels were the crowned champions of this home-coming stunt. There were many mysterious angles to the situation. We had never seen them swimming to the island, though of course this had to be done. We never saw them wet in appearance either. They were just suddenly present-scolding, chasing one another around and gnawing. We wondered if they traveled together-a highly improbable idea since they were continually battling one another. Yet, when one showed up on the island, the other two were immediately at hand. The longest distance we had taken them was four miles! In the most direct line they would have had to swim two lakes and several streams. It took them nearly three days to make the journey, but they did so successfully and finished full of energy and as pestiferous as ever.

Giny and I had reached that stage of desperation where we sat with our chins resting on our hands and stared straight ahead helplessly. We had run out of ideas, at least out of faith in the idea we were pursuing. Of course, we could take them many miles away and liberate them. We balked at the idea because they had shown such a determination to return we felt sure they would attempt the journey and continue until tragedy overtook them. What we wanted was to see them contented in a new home, satisfied to stay there.

Ray had a suggestion. He and his family made a special trip out to the Sanctuary to tell us about it. In his forestry work he had followed an old tote road back to an abandoned lumber camp. The rough board buildings still stood, a virtual ghost town in the forest. If the squirrels were determined to have buildings, why not take them there? Of course, he said, the buildings are not modern, not insulated and lined with knotty pine like our cabin, but they were good things to chew on and offered good shelter.

Out came the traps again. The squirrels acted as if they were waiting to get in them. Within a few minutes, Still-Mo, Nuisance and Pug were in their separate compartments again, ready for another journey.

Hi-Pub, with his highly developed ability to know what animals are saying, observed: "Still-Mo says, `Where are we going this time, boys?' And Nuisance answers, `Don't know. But I'll bet I beat you back.'"

It was quite a journey to the old logging camp, not so far in a straight line, but we had to go indirectly over a winding road so nearly grown over with brush it was difficult to follow. With us went the usual pecks of peanuts, and also some of the insulating material left over after the work at our cabin.

The logging camp was nicely located. It was surrounded by young oak and maple trees, and near at hand was a little pond. Food and water were available for our squirrels, then. We placed peanuts in several of the old buildings, tossed around little bundles of the insulating material where it could be found and then liberated our captives-one in each building. As previously they immediately began carrying the peanuts away. Now, however, the places interested them. They made a thorough investigation. When we left them they were running over the roofs, in and out windows, over rafters, chattering loudly at what they had found.

"Oh, please like it," Giny said to the squirrels in a wavering voice. "We not only offer you a house, but a whole city just your own."

"The rent is free and we will make it half as much if you will just stay here!" I called.

Neither nature nor her children answer by words, only by deeds. The squirrels would tell us what they would do simply by doing it.

There had been an interesting development with the chimney swifts in our fireplace. Within two weeks the little ones had grown until they were spilling over the side of the nest.

Orphan Annie and L'il Abner, the woodchucks, were making impressive gains in strength and appearance. Giny saw to it that they were well supplied with milk and vegetables. A woodchuck can put on weight at an amazing rate of speed. They must do a year's worth of eating in about six months, for they sleep the rest of the time in this climate. It wasn't long until they were just waddling around with their stomachs barely missing the ground.

They became playful, too, which is another sign of good, health. We saw them wrestling and chasing each other all over the island. One of their stunts gave us a big laugh. They had a hole dug right near our front steps, and in and out of this they dashed all day long.

One day Orphan Annie was in this hole trying to come out and L'il Abner wouldn't let her. He bit at her nose and paws. He clawed her in the face. She fought back, but she certainly was at a disadvantage. Talk about striking a fellow when he is down! Annie wasn't just on the ground, she was in it. She couldn't bite or strike effectively, and both of them seemed to know it. Still she kept trying to get out, telling L'il Abner in woodchuck language what she thought of him. He was relentless, however, and kept close guard. We were sure this was in the spirit of play, for Annie could very easily have gone down into the tunnel and come out at another entrance that was at the side of the house. But, no, she wanted to come out right there, and he didn't want her to.

The situation continued for many minutes, and then got worse. L'il Abner deliberately stretched himself over the entrance to their underground home and covered it with his tummy. Annie was disgusted. She tried to poke her head out one side and then the

other, but Abner wouldn't budge. Apparently this was going beyond the boundary line of play. Annie kept her temper while they just sparred and nipped at each other, but this business of him sitting on his tummy in her face wasn't to be tolerated. We heard L'il Abner let out a squeal of surprise mixed with pain. He jumped up and raced into the brush. Annie, having cleared the way with a good bite right in his stomach, emerged triumphant and still belligerent. L'il Abner wasn't allowed to return until he had said in four different languages that he was sorry.

The nightly visits of the raccoons now resembled an invasion. Andrea and her family of six no longer monopolized the show. There was another family of a mother and three cubs coming regularly. A huge male usually showed up at the same time Andrea's tribe arrived. He was much larger than Andrea, and yet she abused him unmercifully. He tried every way to reach the feeding station and at least a nibble of dinner, but she would run at him and chase him away. He did not fight back, but just went into the brush whining pathetically as if saying, "Now why do you treat me like that?"

"Must be her husband," observed Hi-Bub. "Otherwise she wouldn't be so mean to him."

The young coons were becoming very friendly. It has always amused us greatly to see the way the raccoon feels about with his sensitive front feet. He seems to depend on this sense a great deal. It was particularly amusing to see the little ones, still at the play stage, sit on their haunches like a bear, and roll a peanut or a grain of corn back and forth between their paws "looking it over" before they ate it. One climbed into my lap on several occasions. He was highly curious about my face. He reached up with his front feet and thoroughly investigated my nose, feeling all over it, and pulling on it to see if it were fast. He investigated my eyes and ears the same way, felt over my tightly closed lips and then tried to force his way into my mouth. I rebelled at that.

Four days had passed since we placed Still-Mo, Nuisance and Pug in their new forest home. It was high time we were on our way to Canada. Our equipment was ready and packed. Ray, Ada and June had promised to watch over the Sanctuary and its animals. Hence it was decided that we should go to the old lumber camp and see what was going on with our squirrels. We approached the silent village a little apprehensively. There wasn't a sound except the song of a hermit thrush coming from the forest depths. "They must have gone," whispered Hi-Bub.

"Which means that they are on their way to the island again," I answered in low voice.

Giny started to say something, but was interrupted by a loud and angry chattering coming from the roof of a building. "Pug!" she exclaimed excitedly. "It is Pug. I can tell by the way he holds his head."

There was a second chatter, likely in answer to the first rather than to our presence, and Still-Mo came bouncing over a pile of decaying lumber. A moment later Nuisance came racing up to see what it was all about. It seemed to me I had never seen anything in the

forest that gave me more joy than the sight of those three red squirrels. Apparently our troublesome trio liked their new home. We found where they were padding nests and settling down to stay. They were happy and contented.

"Hi-Bub!" I cried, so loud the three squirrels went scampering. "Our problem is solved. Waho-o-o-o! We're off to Canada."

Hi-Bub tried to emit the biggest "Hurrah!" he had ever made, but his voice broke and he sounded like a frightened blue jay.

XI
THRESHOLD OF THE WILDERNESS

IT WAS near noon of an eventful day that we arrived in the little frontier village of Winton, Minnesota—the end of the road! Since dawn we had been traveling in our two cars, Marge, Bob and Hi-Bub in one, Giny and I in the other. One canoe rode on the top of our car, and in both cars the rear-seat space was occupied with packsacks, bedrolls, tents and utensils. I also carried my guitar, for to Giny and me a guitar is as necessary to a camp as a tent.

There had been a sense of competition with the road. It was the thing we must conquer before we could enter the canoe country. Through hours we wrestled with its twists and turns, its hills and valleys, as though it were a great serpent which we must bring into subjection. It was a joyous contest, however. At the wayside was the rugged beauty of the Lake Superior country, and the day was bright, cheery and filled with promise. At last the load had exhausted itself and lay conquered behind us. Beyond this point all was canoe travel-lakes, streams, portages, woods, wilderness.

We stopped in front of a large, rough building, the warehouse of a canoe outfitting company. Almost at once the door of the building flew open and out came a tall, square-shouldered, bronze-complexioned young man, arms raised in greeting, face wreathed in a beaming smile.

"Hi, Giny and Sam! Welcome!" he cried.

"Sandy! Sandy!" Giny and I cried in unison, climbing out of our car.

"Sandy! It's Sandy. Let me out," I heard Hi-Bub say in the other car. There was a wild scuffle as he came tumbling through the door that was almost snapped off its hinges.

What a thrill it was to see Sandy! Nature does forge fine friendships. The same capacity for attachment is with us in cities, of course. But there are so many substitutes and diversions. Sandy, Giny and I had faced the forest together. We had worked over challenging portages, battled strong headwinds and met the problems of forest living where comfort and sometimes life itself depend upon one's initiative. Then we had sat before campfires under spell of that imponderable silence which banishes all guile,

deceit, pretense, and forces all to reflect that grandeur of character with which the Creator has endowed His creatures. Such things do bring hearts close together, and our greeting with Sandy reflected that fact.

The meeting of Sandy and Hi-Bub was a thing of beauty. Involuntarily Giny and I stepped back slightly and Bob and Marge halted in their approach to watch the two. The manly boy and the boyish man stood several feet apart smiling and looking at each other for a moment. In Hi-Rub's eyes was adoration almost to the point of worship. Sandy was his ideal, his hero. In Sandy's expression there was just genuine love, mixed with a measure of astonishment. The growth and development of the lad was hard to comprehend. He had known Hi-Bub more as a baby, and his affection for him then was of the fatherly nature. Now the youngster was meeting him on the level of manhood.

"Hi-Bub!" exclaimed Sandy, grasping the boy's hand. "I don't believe it. Why, you old badger! You black bear cub! You heron! You loon!"

"Sandy!" answered Hi-Bub. "You—you —"

The handshake was not satisfying, and in a moment they were in each other's arms. Bob and Marge smiled feelingly as they looked on. Giny wiped away a sly tear.

After Bob and Marge had exchanged "hellos" with Sandy, we went into the warehouse. I have always loved the atmosphere of such places. About the floor were a score of canoes, some of them being repaired by powerfully built guides. Packsacks sat about in little piles, bedrolls and tents adorned shelves. There was something rough and ready about the place. It all savored of the frontier.

Two broad-shouldered men walked through the room commanding our attention. They looked like Hollywood's ideal of a lumberjack-heavy woolen shirts, heavy shoes, trousers rolled up above the ankles and such a thick growth of whiskers it was difficult to find the faces behind them. Hi-Bub stared at them in amazement.

"Not lumberjacks," said Sandy after the two had passed. "In fact, they are college professors. Just spent a month up in the Sarah Lake Region. Said they lost their razor the first day out, but I think they threw it away. They come here for their vacation every year. Very few of our guides can keep up with them."

Hi-Bub was having a hard time taking everything in. There were far too many things going on. He dragged his parents this way and that to look at each new marvel. Then he came to awestruck silence as he discovered the head of a gigantic bull moose hung on the wall. He just stood and stared. The horns of the great beast reached nearly six feet from tip to tip. Hi-Bub couldn't believe it even when he saw it.

"Sam Cammel, is that real?" he asked.

"Very real indeed," I said.

"I have all your supplies ready," Sandy now said, indicating a large collection of various-sized articles. "We'd better check them over. When you leaving?"

"Can you get us a tow on the morning boat?"

"Sure. That is what I thought you would do. No need to hurry out tonight, because it would be dark before you reached your first camp. Going up Basswood to North Bay, I hope."

"Yes."

"I recommend that," said Sandy. "There have been several large groups go up the Agnes Lake route, so you might have competition for the camp sites. You won't have any trouble the way you are going. Think you can find Sanctuary Lake again?"

"I know every balsam tree along the way!" I declared. "I have dreamed of that place daily since I was there. Has anyone else discovered the lake? Will it still be as wild as when we found it?"

"I never hear of anyone going there," assured Sandy.

"The guides never mention it-too much work to get there. Of course, I never tell anyone. Sometimes folks try to tease information out of me."

"What do you tell them?"

In answer Sandy broke out with the last verse of our old Sanctuary Lake song, words set to the Marine's Hymn

> Now our campfire glows upon the shore
> Of our Sanctuary Lake.
> If you seek our forest paradise,
> Here's the only route to take Pack along the north horizon
> In the home of goose and swan. It is somewhere east of sunset

And it's somewhere west of dawn.

We gave a cheer. "That's it, Sandy!" I cried. "Anyone who can find it with those instructions will be welcome. Wish you could go with us again."

"I wish I could too," said Sandy, definite longing in his voice. "Too much to do right here now," he said, indicating the warehouse. "If I get free later I may pay you a visit. Will I be welcome?"

"Welcome as a bull moose!" I said, knowing that Sandy would understand just how welcome that would be.

We checked over our supplies. Each wilderness traveler has his own notion of what he should take along. Following are the main articles on our list:

Dried apricots

Dried peaches

Dried beans

Dried peas

Rice

Dehydrated vegetables

Dehydrated soups

Corn meal

White flour

Prepared biscuit mix

Pancake flour

Macaroni

Cheese

Powdered milk

Cocoa (for Hi-Bub)

Some sugar

Salt

Canned butter

Cooking oil

Sweet chocolate

Mixed peanut butter and honey (Very fine!)

"Are you going to take candy along?" said Hi-Bub as he noted the chocolate cakes.

"Yes, indeed, take chocolate along—as much as you can," answered Sandy. "You have no idea how hungry you get for sweets. It really is important. Don't take much—just enough so you can have a bite each day. And that bite will taste better to you than any pie, cake or ice cream you ever ate in town."

"Uh-huh," agreed Hi-Bub. Whatever Sandy said was final with him.

We talked out our plans with Sandy, and received his valued advice on routes to take and routes to avoid. His guides had reported one portage closed by a bad storm which had laid the trees low; a stream we were to follow was almost impassable because of beaver dams; a lake along our planned route had seeped away until it would hardly float a canoe. These bits of information saved us hours and perhaps days of travel.

"Above all, it is moose we want, Sandy," I said. "We want to see them, study them and photograph them. No doubt the finest place is Sanctuary Lake."

"I am sure you are right," Sandy agreed. Then he added quickly, "It might help you to talk with Ancient."

"Ancient?"

"Yes, an old-time French-Canadian. Has some long French name, but everyone calls him `Ancient.' No one knows how old he is but Ancient himself, and he won't tell. He came from New Brunswick a few years ago. Knows more about moose than any other man I ever met. It is hard to get him to talk, and when he does, it is even more difficult to understand him. But it is worthwhile trying."

A messenger was dispatched to Ancient. Where would he find him? Well, right now it was about three o'clock, and he ought to be sitting on the curb in front of the post office.

While we awaited the success of this idea, we all walked down to the water's edge, and looked in the direction of our land of promise. Hi-Bub's face was a study.

"That's it!" I said to the enchanted lad. "There is the north horizon. It is a land of primitive nature, Hi-Bub—vast, beautiful, silent and wild."

"It amazes me how they keep it that way," commented Bob, his eyes searching the distant pine-crowned hilltops. "What has kept commercial interests from spoiling it?"

"It hasn't been easy," declared Sandy. "There has been a constant attack on the region. A few public-spirited men with the love of the wilderness in their own hearts have saved it so far. First came the lumber interests who would have made all this merely a land of stumps. They did get some of it, but staunch wildlife defenders in both Canada and the United States saved much of it. Then an attack was launched by water-power interests. They would have dammed up streams and created a lake here almost as large as Lake

Superior, flooding all islands, killing shoreline timber and destroying the wilderness. Again public-spirited citizens defeated the move. The latest fight has been to keep roads from there, and for the time being at least that attack is beaten. We still have the wilderness, but it has been a struggle to maintain it."

"We are certainly indebted to the men who put up this fight," I interposed. "Now Hi-Bub and other fine American boys can come here and experience living in the atmosphere of the wilderness. It is a victory for everyone that the land has been saved."

"It is saved now, is it not?" asked Marge. "There isn't anything else to spoil it, is there, now that those first battles are won?"

"I wish that were so," said Sandy, a bit sadly. "Today the wilderness is faced with the worst threat of all-the hardest one to fight."

"And that is?" I questioned.

"The airplane!"

Just that moment a guide came to tell us that Ancient was at the warehouse.

XII
A REAL VOYAGEUR

As WE made our way back, Sandy gave us instructions.

"Remember, you can't make him talk, you have to let him talk," he cautioned. "You know how these woodsmen are, Sam-you can't press them. If you try to pump him, he will close up like an oyster. I hope we can get him started, for he certainly has lots to tell. And oh, if you could ever get him in a camp! I have been on trips with him. It is a real education."

Ancient was all that his name implied. We found him outside the warehouse door awaiting Sandy. He walked with a cane, although Sandy assured us he could still carry a ninety-pound canoe over a mile portage without resting. He was about medium height, shoulders surprisingly broad, carriage erect. He wore a wool shirt of many colors, loose-fitting trousers—the cuffs rolled up above his shoe tops—and heavy shoes. About his neck was a bright-colored kerchief, in itself evidence of his colorful breed. There was a combination of mustache and beard that formed a perfect circle about his mouth and chin. His hair was long, straight and streaked with white. It came streaming out from under a hat that looked as ancient as the man. His eyes were sharp, clear and defiant.

"He hears very well, though sometimes he pretends he does not," said Sandy in a low tone. "He worked for the Hudson's Bay Company traveling those rivers while birch-bark canoes were still in use. He speaks several Indian dialects and has been an expert canoeist. He knows the old French-Canadian songs, plays a fiddle and sings them "

"Like the voyageurs?" whispered Hi-Bub excitedly.

"Yes. In fact, Ancient is truly a real voyageur. His father traveled with the canoe brigades that made this country famous. Ancient came in just when that historic period was closing. He was practically raised in a canoe. In his boyhood he saw some of the great characters of this frontier. He carried on travel and trade just as they did in this region one hundred years ago."

We were too close to Ancient to talk more, but Hi-Bub recognized that here was a real voyageur—what more could a boy want?

"Hello, Ancient," said Sandy cordially as we approached.

Ancient replied with a grunt that is hard to describe. It was something like the fabled Indian "Ugh" with a French accent. It came from somewhere inside the circle of whiskers and mustache, but there was no discernible movement of the lips. I write the sound as "Anh," but that isn't accurate. Likely there is no combination of letters suitable. Later I learned that the utterance is quite a convenience. With slight change of inflection it has a number of meanings, such as "Hello," "Good-by," "Oh, yeah?" "No," "I understand," "You don't say so," etc.

"Yes," Sandy continued, "I got a shipment of that bacon you like so well—thought you might like a chunk—on the house."

"Anh!" commented Ancient, with a downward inflection which likely meant: "Fine! Thanks. Mighty nice of you."

"Want you to meet my friends here," Sandy said as if it were an afterthought. He presented Marge.

"I am glad to meet you, Ancient," she said extending her hand.

"Anh," said Ancient, giving her hand a single shake and letting go of it as if he were glad to be rid of it.

Giny was presented next. "It is a pleasure to meet you." She used her sweetest tones.

"Anh," said Ancient, along with another single shake. Somehow the tones sounded like "O.K., but the pleasure is all yours."

Bob and Hi-Bub were presented and rewarded with grunts.

"And this is Sam Campbell. You know of him, don't you? Writes books and gives lectures." Sandy was working hard to impress him. "Mr. Campbell is a naturalist, and he is here to study moose. He wants to make pictures of them and write about them."

There was quite a different "Anh" this time, accompanied by a slight nod of the head. I wasn't flattered. It sounded too much like he meant: "So what? Bet he could write all he knows about moose in two sentences. He looks as if he spent most of his time among contented cows." I did get a double-stroke handshake, however, which was some concession.

"Come on in," said Sandy, leading the way. "You folks get acquainted while I find that bacon."

We filed into the warehouse. Sandy searched long for the bacon to give us time. But it didn't work. I never felt more awkward in my life. Ancient walked over to our packsacks and poked one a little with his cane. "Pretty heavy," I said, and there couldn't have been anything worse to say. Reaching down he picked up the pack, raising it easily above his head. Then he put it down again, giving me a look of disgust. He didn't even grunt, but he looked as if he wanted to say: "If you call that heavy, what are you doing up in this country? I could carry a pack like that in my teeth." I had erred and I knew it. The pack wasn't really very heavy, and why did I have to say it was?

"Nice day, isn't it, Ancient?" said Giny. Ancient just nodded his head.

"Fish biting?" asked Bob.

Ancient swung his head from side to side like an elephant eating hay.

"Do you live near here, Ancient?" asked Marge, with one of her prettiest smiles.

A wave of his cane indicated a residence in the village, and a grunt said it wasn't far, but that was all.

I tried appeal to his professional pride. "How is the route up Lily River nowadays, Ancient? Can we get through?" I knew already the river was blocked with beaver dams. My reward was two words. "Bad!" he said, in a deep voice. "Beaver."

That was all though. Immediately he lapsed into silence again. How I wished he had the nature of a jukebox, and that I could drop a coin somewhere and get the stories back of that stoical appearance.

"Sam, can you folks come here a moment," called Sandy from back in the warehouse. Four of us went, Hi-Bub remaining behind. "I'm afraid he is on to us," said Sandy. "If that fellow thinks you are trying to dig a story out of him, he won't give in. Stay with me for a few minutes so he thinks you don't care. Then we will go back."

We became quite absorbed in looking at some new maps of the region which Sandy had just acquired. They were made by aerial survey, and one had Sanctuary Lake on it. This was the first map we had ever found that showed our lake. It was a tiny little area and the map gave no name to it, but it was there. We were quite excited about it, and got very much absorbed in discussing it and the surrounding territory. We really had forgotten our problem with the silent and defiant Ancient, when we heard Hi-Bub in a fit of laughter. He was joined by a much deeper voice.

"What is this? What is this?" exclaimed Sandy, walking toward the place where we had left Ancient and Hi-Bub. We all followed cautiously.

"That boy has done it!" said Sandy, peering around a pile of canoes. "He has Ancient talking and laughing. I would never have believed it. Easy now, don't make either one conscious of what they are doing. Don't spoil it."

We walked up as casually as possible. Hi-Bub had done it. Ancient was like a different person. His eyes were dancing and he emitted a deep chuckle as he said to Sandy, "Dees fella ees wan gran' boy. But he don' know moose. You know what he say?"

"No, Ancient, what did he say?" said Sandy, as we gathered around.

"He say dees—" Ancient pointed to the mounted moose head-"he say dees ees biggest moose in zee worl! Ha, ha, I laugh. I tell heem I fin' moose what mak zees one look like

puppy. An' you know what he ask me? He say, `Ancient, do a moose moo?'" and Ancient blew his whiskers out straight with a hearty laugh.

Hi-Bub was laughing too. We all joined in, not so much from the humor of anything said, but because to laugh furthered the freedom that was developing. Hi-Bub acted as if he had known Ancient all his life, he walked up to him and laid his hand on the man's shoulder. Ancient did the only thing a man could in the circumstances he put his arm around the lad and drew him closer.

"Well," said Hi-Bub between laughs, "you said a cow moose does make a sound something like a moo."

Ancient broke out laughing again. "A milk cow she moo, Leetle Fella—not a moose. In zee fall when she want mate—zen zee moose cow talk soft, lak zees—" And Ancient cupped his hand to his mouth, giving an imitation of a cow moose that would have deceived any bull moose in the forest. It was wonderful, and I looked at Sandy, winking to signify my admiration.

"Zee poppa moose, he not moo," Ancient continued. "Mais non, he bellow until zee trees shake. Eef I have horn I show you—here, like zees." Again Ancient cupped his hand to his mouth, and gave another startling imitation, this time the bellow of the bull. Then he repeated the soft call of the cow, and immediately the fierce reply. Closer and closer he brought the two animals together while we watched and listened spellbound. The expression in his eyes was fascinating. He was living the drama his impersonations were portraying. Hi-Bub, mouth open, was staring as if he expected two moose to emerge on the floor of the warehouse any moment. "Zee call keep oop until he come," Ancient broke in to finish the scene with description. "Zee man moose say, `You will be my wife, n'est-ce pas?' She say, `You betcha boots.' Now Leetle Fella, you see how a moose talk?"

Marge started to applaud the performance we had just witnessed, but stopped short at a quick glance from Sandy. It was unwise to let Ancient think he was doing anything or that he was on display.

"That was great," said Hi-Bub. "I never saw a live moose. I suppose you have seen lots of them, Ancient."

"See zem? Leetle boy, I live wis zem all my life. Oh, gran' L'Orignac." His eyes danced as he used the French-Canadian name for the animal. "I know heem on Quebec rivers, on sou'shore Hudson Bay —"

Ancient had suddenly become oblivious to his surroundings. His recollection of early experiences in the north woods of Canada and the United States was so vivid he was living them again. Seventy-five years back he had cruised the turbulent waters of those rivers that rush toward Hudson's Bay in his bateau-a name for the birch-bark canoe of the day. He traveled with other canoe-men or river men-the voyageurs! It was long ago,

but even then he must have been eighteen or twenty years of age. He told of their constant battle with dangerous rapids, of the vast, unbroken wilds through which they passed, of the brave men who made up this nation of pioneers. With his cane he imitated the paddle strokes-vigorous, powerful, skillful-that mastered the defiant streams and lakes. "And I," he cried, rising to his feet with one hand pounding his breast, "I am gouvernail!" He drew himself up proudly.

"Gouvernail—that is the word for steersman," whispered Sandy in my ear. "Only the most expert paddlers were chosen to be gouvernail."

Ancient continued to live the scenes of those days. He made us feel the sheer joy the men felt in their ability to carry great loads over portages, and to paddle from dawn to dusk. He broke forth in jolly mood when he told of the camps. "Everywan seeng," he cried, and he sang two of the rollicking songs in French, his cane a fiddle bow, his arm a fiddle.

"But how about moose, Ancient?" Hi-Bub broke in. None of the rest of us dared speak for fear of breaking the spell. "Were there lots of moose?"

"Oui, oui-leetle one, I forget. L'Orignac-what you call moose—he along river, lake, all over. I see heem, I hunt heem. Once in lake—-"

In language that is difficult to reproduce in print, Ancient told of canoeing over a perfectly placid lake. There was not a ripple to be seen. Suddenly right in front of the canoe, about three paddle lengths away, a huge dark form emerged from the water. Startled, he turned the canoe sharply to one side. There swam a large cow moose. She had been feeding on the bottom of the lake, completely submerged. Apparently she did not see them, for she swam for a moment while she replenished her breath, and then disappeared again. I was glad to have this information from him. Often I had heard of moose diving in deep waters, but I had never seen it. Ancient was not the kind of man who invents nature experiences and I felt sure that his story was accurate.

"Did you ever have a pet moose?" asked Hi-Bub.

"Oui, oui," said Ancient, nodding his head. "Plenty time. Leetle Fella "

He told of moose staying about his camps at various times. They are good pets, he said, except in autumn. This is the mating season, and they are not to be trusted.

One year he lived in a cabin in the Hudson's Bay region.

A young calf moose became so friendly, it would come right into the cabin. Often it slept on the floor, occupying so much space he could hardly get in the place himself. It would follow him as he went about in the woods. It disappeared in the autumn. Ancient also told of a team of moose he had trained in harness. They would pull either a sled or wagon, being stronger and faster than horses. They would obey his slightest command.

"Moose, he wan smart fella," said Ancient with a shake of his head. "He know plenty tricks."

He told of seeing two moose calves on a hill near a remote Canadian lake. He walked toward them, and they ran downhill, back of some brush toward the water. He was sure they could not escape without passing him or swimming the lake. Yet, they completely disappeared from sight. He searched for nearly an hour, examining every clump of bushes. Then he saw two objects near the shore that looked like the ends of water-soaked logs. Examining them more closely, he found the two calves lying completely submerged except for their noses. Here they could have stayed hidden for a day, if necessary.

"Oh, how he smell!" exclaimed Ancient. "You know how 'tis when you smell skoonk?"

Hi-Bub did.

"Wal-moose seenk you smell jes' as worse!" He laughed. He declared a moose can smell a man a mile away if the wind is right and that he will run frantically whenever that scent reaches him. He told of the care the cow moose gives to a calf, how she will fight in his protection. Once he saw a moose cow swimming a lake, and he noted a strange hump on her back. As she came closer he could see a calf with its head and forelegs over the mother's shoulders, enjoying a nice free ride.

Hi-Bub asked Ancient how big moose get. The old man stroked his whiskers as he thought. He declared he had seen many larger than the mounted specimen. Yes, in reply to Hi-Bub's direct question, he had seen them seven feet tall-that is to the withers, or shoulders. The head would reach higher. When we looked amazed, he said that in Quebec he had seen one seven feet six inches high. In Alaska much larger ones were to be found, measuring eight feet or more.

"But what was the biggest you ever saw?" asked HiBub, for boys are always seeking the superlative.

"Anh-I call heem to me," said Ancient. He told of an autumn long ago when he was in the forests near the south shore of Hudson's Bay. He made a horn out of birch bark, and began calling in the tones of a cow moose. "Lak zees," he said, raising his hand to his mouth and making a soft, mellow sound. He had continued calling for an hour. There was no answer from the forest, but presently he heard brush breaking and he knew that something was coming. He continued his call, and now gave us a demonstration of the great variety of sounds a cow moose can make--whines and grunts but not a "moo" among them. Twig breaking came closer and closer at hand as some huge creature approached. Soon from the brush directly in front of him emerged a moose so large "he look lak he walk on stilts." Ancient continued his calling, and the great moose came on. He reached forty feet away and halted for a few minutes. The calls were irresistible and on he came to thirty feet, to twenty, to fifteen. "He look lak hillside!" exclaimed Ancient

excitedly. "I measure heem seven foot six inches. His horn five feet four inches. He weigh mebbe sixteen hunder' poun'."

Hi-Bub thought for a moment, and then asked, "Ancient, how did you know he was so big."

"Why, I shoot heem," explained Ancient. "I measure heem wees my gun."

"You—killed—him!" said Hi-Bub, his face sobering. "You called him up and then just shot him? Oh, Ancient that wasn't fair. How could you?"

Hi-Bub was deeply affected. The vivid descriptions of Ancient had made all this very real to him, and it was almost as if he had seen the great moose shot down right before his eyes. There was an awkward silence. Ancient fastened his eyes on Hi-Bub. "Leetle Fella," he said, in a tone quite different from the one in which he had been speaking. "I weesh I not keel heem, now. Zen I not know." He explained to the distressed boy he hunted for food, that he really never liked to kill. "No, I lak see heem alive, see heem run, free. I not kill more," he said.

Ancient was tired and he arose to go home. Bob offered to drive him home in his car, and the offer was accepted.

"Remember your bacon!" said Sandy, bringing a large package to him.

Ancient had retreated to his grunts again. He patted Hi-Bub on the head by way of a farewell, but to the rest of us he gave no sign. We watched him as he walked through the door, a grand old character from yesterday—the last of the voyageurs. He had talked to us that day for nearly two hours.

"I wonder if you realize what a. rare experience we have had," said Sandy. "I have never known of him opening up like that before. Hi-Bub, how did you do it?"

XIII
UNDAMPENED SPIRITS

OUR first day in the canoe wilderness was not a strenuous one comparatively. At least, I planned it that way. It was necessary to learn the true metal of our guests. Giny had proved herself in this land often before. Marge, Bob and Hi-Bub impressed me as having the character it takes to do such rugged things and call it joy. Yet there is only one way to discover whether or not one possesses the true qualifications of a voyageur, and that is the test of travel.

Not everyone who enthuses over nature is equipped mentally and physically for this adventure. There are many original challenges to one's disposition in the canoe country. Can you count it joy to use your last ounce of strength to bring the packsack to the far end of a trail, when shoulder and leg muscles ache in rebellion and breath comes at a

premium? Can you call forth that something extra that enables you to paddle against a headwind that seems to be just as strong as you are? Can you walk slowly over a portage when you are tired, when the temptation is to rush and invite a downfall? Can you forget pampered tastes and appetites to eat simple food that, though it be wholesome, lacks the fussiness and finicky frills of homes or restaurants? Can you take a hard knock and, enjoy a long grind? Can you meet with sweet disposition that hour when the primary enthusiasm and thrilling newness of the experience are worn away? Can you be wind bound or rain imprisoned for a day and not vent your discontent on your companions? Can you do the same if this confinement lasts two days, three days or a week? If "yes" be your answer, then you are temperamentally suited to the adventure. The wilderness opens its arms to you. You are of the stuff of which voyageurs are made, and no other joy in life will equal that strong, rugged, hard-earned happiness that the canoe country offers.

Before you are the grand things which make poetry the kingly moose in his sequestered haunt, the graceful flight of the deer, the out-of-this-world cry of the loon, sunsets and dawns in unsoiled skies, the unspeakable freedom of it all, the cozy incomparable warmth of the sleeping bag. It is all yours, but you will work for it, my friend, and call forth strength of mind and body you never knew you possessed.

I really had no doubt as to the caliber of our guests. Yet, there was no need to make the opening test too severe. An easy first day, a more difficult second, a hard third this eases one into the experience.

We were on the move early, all atremble with excitement and anticipation. Our packsacks were loaded into the launch which was to carry us as far as that kind of transportation could go. Our two canoes were tied astern to be towed. With characteristic thoroughness Sandy checked the equipment to make sure nothing was forgotten. Just as we were saying good-by to him, we heard a voice calling, "What ho! Leetle Fella, you shove off?"

We looked up to see Ancient coming down the pier. "Bon voyage!" he cried. "Look, I breeng you good luck. I mak heem myself, long tam ago." He held up a moose hoof which had been made into a rattle, an article often used in Indian ceremonies. Hi-Bub, who had been speechless with excitement through the morning, managed to blurt, "Aw, Ancient, you didn't need to do that."

"Course I not have to, Leetle Fella," said Ancient with a flourish of his cane. "I want that you should see moose. You keep heem wiz you, he breeng you luck lak he breeng me plenty tam."

"Bless his heart," said Giny in a low voice, "I wonder if Ancient knows how much he has already given to us. Our experience with him yesterday has enriched our whole adventure!"

"Ah, look, you mak music!" Ancient exclaimed, having discovered my guitar among the luggage. I told him we liked to sing at our campfires. "Good!" he exclaimed. "Canoe-men say, `You seeng in heart-zee worl' seeng wiz you.' "

As the launch left the pier, Sandy was waving a farewell while Ancient stood beside him, his cane once more a fiddle bow playing an accompaniment to a song-likely the bon voyage song of the voyageurs.

Our launch took us the length of Falls Lake. We were then taken by motor truck over a five-mile portage to Basswood Lake, where another launch waited to carry us on to the north.

"Lac du Bois Blanc" the voyageurs had named this great, island-filled body of water, and our modern name is merely an interpretation of the original. It was part of the trade route used by the intrepid canoe-men before our nation was born. The pilot of our launch pointed out an island on which stood a bronze marker indicating the invisible line which separates Canada and the United States. We paused at another island to pass customs inspection. Hi-Bub got a great thrill out of this experience, as did we all. It was his first time outside the boundary of the United States. He stood staring at the Canadian flag floating over the log cabin which serves as the Ranger's office. Here we obtained our fishing licenses, travel permits and registered our cameras.

It was early afternoon when we arrived at the extreme tip of Basswood Lake's great North Bay. With our canoes and duffel we were put ashore. It was a beautiful point on which we landed, covered with towering red pines, and a rugged cliff rising back of the shore-line trees. "This is it, you old voyageur!" I said to Hi-Bub. "This is your first landing in the Canadian Canoe Country. Hi-Bub, it isn't a dream any more. You are here, lad. How do you like it?"

Longfellow's finest lines could have no more feeling in them than Hi-Bub poured into one heartfelt sigh as he flashed looks hither and yon trying to take it all in at once. "What's up on that rock?" he asked, pointing to the cliff.

I didn't know. "Would there be moose, or maybe bears?" he persisted.

"I think not, Hi-Bub," I answered. But, not wanting to spoil any enthusiasm, I added, "Of course, there could be. We are in their country now."

The pilot of the launch was ready to depart. Waving a farewell, he put about and headed south. We stood in silence watching him until he had disappeared beyond a distant island. It was like closing a door on the land of roads, towns, automobiles, telephones and all conveniences.

"There goes civilization!" commented Bob, and there was glee in his voice.

"There it goes," I agreed in the same spirit. "Who cares? Come on now, you voyageurs-a bite of lunch and we move on. We camp on Isabella Lake tonight. Where is the small food pack? And, by the way, where is Hi-Bub?"

Where is Hi-Bub? Little did we know how often that question was going to be asked in days to come. He had vanished completely. .

"Why, he was talking to Sam just a moment ago," said Giny. "People don't just disappear in thin air like that."

"Hi-Bub does," said his daddy resignedly. "I'll go searching for him. He may be at Sanctuary Lake by this time."

Bob and I went on the hunt for the youngster. We called for him separately and in unison. Presently the answer came—a faint high-pitched "Yoo-hoo" coming from above and beyond us. There on the very top of the rocky cliff we discovered our lad, waving his cap in great semicircles. "Sam Cammel," he shouted, "there aren't any here!"

"Aren't any what where?" I called back.

"Moose—there aren't any; I looked all over!"

"Of course not, Hi-Bub," I yelled. "Moose wouldn't be up there. They stay in the swamps."

"You said there might be some," he reminded me, teaching me anew to be accurate in my nature comments.

After a lot of long-distance conversation, Hi-Bub was induced to return. He disappeared again just after lunch was over, however, and it took another calling contest to locate him-this time far back in the forest along the lake shore. He thought moose might be there. Bob and Marge wished they had brought a cowbell to hang on his neck.

Our afternoon had its full share of problems and surprises. The route we had chosen was up Lily River. We had been warned that it was blocked with beaver dams. Far from frightening us away, this was an invitation to us, for I never tire of looking at the work of those wonderful engineers. That which was before us exceeded in extent anything I had ever looked upon, however. Within a distance of about three miles there were nine huge beaver dams. The largest of them would have been fully nine hundred feet long and seven feet high at the center. Each dam had created a good-sized lake back of it, so that the effect was a series of nine water terraces. All the work was in good repair, showing that the beavers were still present and very active.

In our plan of travel, Giny and I led the way in our canoe. We carried most of the duffel, to leave room for three passengers in the other canoe. Bob paddled stern and Marge and Hi-Bub alternated at bow paddle. The one who was not paddling sat amidships.

Of course, each dam was a barrier to our progress. On the lower ones we could stand on the top of the structure and pull our canoe over without removing the packs. It was a precarious job as footing was very uncertain on top of the wet logs and mud the beaver had placed there. On the higher lifts it was necessary to take all duffel out before the empty canoes could be passed to the next level.

Everyone helped, and everyone had a good time. I was especially impressed with Hi-Bub. He showed rare judgment for a youngster. He wasn't just in the way, as I recall my own efforts at helping when I was his age. He did things that were useful. One quick move left me in his debt. My movie camera was placed on a log at one dam where the canoes had to be unloaded. As we were reloading, a packsack fell against the log, jarring it and sending the much-prized outfit sliding toward the stream below. What water can do to a camera is beyond comprehension, and I gasped helplessly as I saw the impending calamity, being too far away to do anything. Hi-Bub, who was close to the equipment, with a very quick move jumped into the stream and caught the camera in his arms. He was wet, of course, and his boots filled with water, but the camera was saved.

"Thanks, Hi-Bub," I said when my breath came again. "What would we do without you?"

There was a new problem at hand now. When we reached the fifth dam, clouds were appearing over the treetops to the west, coming like race horses. At the sixth dam, they were black and threatening. At the seventh, the first drops of rain were falling, and at the eighth the storm broke. Oh, how it came down! We donned raincoats, covered bedrolls and camera equipment with tarpaulins brought along for the purpose, yet it seemed as if those drops would drive right through everything.

"Head for the shore," I called to Bob in the other canoe. "If we can make a landing we will turn the canoes upside down and sit under them."

"Mom, it's running down my neck," I heard Hi-Bub say.

"Good. That is one way of getting some water on your neck," answered Marge laughing.

"Never mind," said Bob unsympathetically, "we will wring you out when the rain is over."

Once on shore we located a tree that had been felled by the beavers, the end of the log still resting on the stump. We turned our canoes over, resting one end of each against this log.

Under the canoes we crawled, arranging packsacks so they made back rests, our heads up inside the hulls. The rain came down in torrents. It pelted the bottom of my aluminum canoe until it sounded like the battle of Gettysburg. Lightning flashed and thunder roared.

"How you getting along?" I called to Giny above the din of the storm.

"It's fun!" she shouted, though she was only about three feet away. "I wonder how it will affect them?"

We had our answer a few minutes later. There was a momentary lull in the storm and in this comparative quiet we heard a three-voice chorus from under the other canoe, singing lustily:

"Oh, it ain't agonna rain no more, no more, It ain't agonna rain no more. Oh, we'll have to erase dirt from the face If it ain't agonna rain no more."

Giny and I joined in. For an hour we were singing, while showers came and went. "Idiots!" exclaimed Giny, laughing. "Don't we know enough to come in out of the rain."

"Come in where?" asked Bob. "Who wants to come in? I never had more fun in my life."

"Me too," came Hi-Bub's voice.

"You know something about the weather, Sam," called Marge. "Look out and see if it is going to clear up."

I looked, but I think my decision was based more on hope than on judgment. "It is clearing now," I said optimistically. "Let's shove off. We can, dry out when we reach camp."

The rain had lessened to a few drops and immediately we were active again. Canoes were soon loaded and we were headed for beaver dam number nine. It proved to be the largest and most difficult of all. Our duffel had to be taken out while the canoes were passed over the dam. Logs were slippery and wet. We accomplished the task one way or another, and were afloat again.

It seemed as if the worst of our troubles were over. There were no more dams. It was easy paddling across the last beaver pond, and into the winding river beyond. This stretch of the river was so wild and beautiful that Hi-Bub asked, "Sam Cammel, can

Sanctuary Lake be better'n this?" Yes, it could, I assured him, though this was wonderful.

Rounding a little bend in the serpentine course of the river we came upon a magnificent buck. He had a fine spread of antlers, still in the velvet—that soft skin that covers the antler when it is growing. We forgot all about the rain, and about slippery beaver dams. Each member of the party gave soft exclamations of admiration at the beauty of the scene. The buck did not see us at once, but continued his eating. When he did discover us, he reared on his hind legs like a spirited horse, whirled and disappeared into the forest in a series of superb leaps. It was several minutes before any of us spoke, so affected were we by the wild beauty of the scene.

"Well!" said Hi-Bub. "Now let's get a moose."

If we had forgotten the rain, the rain had not forgotten us. Without preliminaries a new downpour broke on us. "You're not a very good weather prophet," said Giny, buttoning up her rain clothes.

"This isn't rain-just a little California liquid sunshine," I defended myself. But it was mighty wet sunshine! We paddled on, the other canoeload singing that it wasn't going to rain no more, though their notes ended in something like a gargle. We couldn't land because the banks were muddy at this point. On we went to the portage leading to Isabella Lake. It was the first real portage for our companions. Under usual conditions it was not difficult, being rather short and over level ground. But the path is over clay, and when wet it is slippery as oiled ice.

Carrying canoes and hundred-pound packsacks over such footing is a problem. Bob fell in the mud, his pack being so heavy he couldn't get up until I arrived to help him. A few minutes later I fell with a canoe on top of me, and he had to come to my aid. Some way or other we slid, slipped and skated our equipment across the portage, and stood muddy and dripping, looking out over Isabella.

"Sorry it turned out like this," I said to Marge, wondering just how much they could take.

"Sorry? Why, this is wonderful!" exclaimed Marge. "This wouldn't look half so wild in fair weather. See those mists rising out of the distant forest."

"Indian campfires, they call them," I said. "They only occur in cold damp weather."

"I wouldn't miss them for the world," assured Marge.

Bob chimed in, "Don't you worry about us, Sam. We can take it. You can't get it too tough for us."

Five minutes later he had a chance to prove his words. Giny and I had just shoved off and were headed down the lake for the camp site. We heard a shout and a scream

behind us, followed by a big splash. We looked about to see Bob, Marge and Hi-Bub all floundering in the water beside an overturned canoe. It was right at shore in shallow water, and they got to their feet at once. They were certainly a surprised and wet-looking trio. For a moment we just stared at each other, hardly able to comprehend what had happened.

"Why doesn't somebody laugh?" screamed Marge. "I never saw anything funnier in my life!"

And laugh we did. No one thought of helping them, and they didn't think to walk out of the water. They just stood there laughing. Finally we did think to rescue the equipment that was floating about. Rain was still coming down in torrents.

"Pour away," called Bob, looking up at the clouds. "We're wetter now than you can ever make us. Go on, do your worst."

They righted their canoe, and reloaded it.

"How did it happen?" I asked, when it was possible to say anything.

"I'll be blamed if I know," said Bob. "We were all in the canoe minding our own business. I guess it stuck in the sand a little and I gave a shove with my paddle. Next thing I knew we were all in with the fish."

There was a new outburst of merriment.

We hurried on to camp now. It is not wise to be indifferent to cold and exposure on such a trip. The rain ceased as we reached our home of the night. First we pitched our tents. We knew we would sleep dry and that the swimmers could have dry clothes, for the bedrolls and packsacks were waterproof. All wood was wet, but by using lots of birch bark we succeeded in starting a fire. We cooked a hot dinner with a big kettle of soup and a mixture of rice and vegetables. Our dessert was a moderate bite of chocolate bar. After dinner, the fire blazed high. We held and waved wet garments before it until they were dry.

A mood of perfect calm now ruled the evening. Isabella Lake took on the appearance of polished black marble, reflecting in its depths the star-filled canopy of the heavens. A thin vaporous haze hung over the wilderness landscape, softening the rugged outlines of pine-crested granite hills that rose abruptly from the shore.

I noticed Giny looking longingly out over the placid waters.

"Giny, can we resist that invitation?" I asked.

"Who wants to resist it?" she replied, understandingly.

"Likely you folks are tired and ready for the sleeping bags," I said to our guests. Hi-Bub's head had been nodding. "Please do just as you wish. Giny and I are going for a little canoe ride. We are in love with Isabella Lake."

In an instant there was animation in the other three. Hi-Bub's eyes were wide open, Marge's face lighted with a smile and Bob rose to his feet. "Mind if we go along?" he said. "Seeing beauty like this is more restful than sleep."

"No, indeed, glad to have you," I exclaimed, much pleased.

The two canoes slowly and silently circled the lake. Since the woods were wet we left the campfire burning. There would be no danger of it spreading. Frequently we looked back at the dancing, red flames adding beauty to the night. When our hearts were filled with the pleasant tranquillity which flooded the north land, we returned to our tents.

"So-o-o you were going to have the first day `easy,'" commented Giny as we were arranging our sleeping bags. ”Seldom have we gone through a more challenging one. Hope it wasn't too much for them"

She was interrupted by sounds coming from the other tent. Three voices joined in some harmonies that were a bit on the sour side; but the melody and the mood were unmistakable. With feeling they sang "When you come to the end of a Perfect Day."

"They will do!" said Giny.

XIV
CAMPCRAFT AND CALAMITY

WE DID not go by the most direct route to our secret little lake. We circled to take in some of my favorite haunts, our moves always governed by my desire to see, photograph and study moose. Almost every night we were at a new camp site, almost every day was filled with portaging and paddling.

We learned early in the trip that the first and last problem at each new lake and camp site was Where is Hi-Bub? No sooner would the bows of the canoes touch the shore than he disappeared just as he had in North Bay. It was impossible as well as unfair to restrain the lad. Each location was a world of wonders to him. Anything might be down in that distant grove of pines, on the top of yonder rock ridge, along the banks of the singing creeks, and in the myriad nooks and corners that make up the forest.

When we were ready to depart, he had to have one last look at several wonder spots he had discovered-an animal's runway, a moose track, an osprey's nest, a cave in the rocks where he felt sure some forest dweller lived. His energy and enthusiasm were inexhaustible. He was amazingly without fear. One would have expected that a youngster his age would have picked up some of the fallacies and superstitions which we human beings hand down from one generation to another. Not Hi-Bub. The

immense, imponderable darkness of the forest at night was simply a thrill for him, and if we did not watch him, he would wander far into the shadows without even a flashlight. He held no fear of animals, regardless of size or species. And getting lost? "Do you suppose I could get lost sometime, Sam Cammel—just for a little while?" he asked when I cautioned him about this. "That'd be swell—just me and that woods. Could I?"

"Hi-Bub!" I ejaculated, "of all the ambitions, wanting to get lost!" As I said this, I recalled how the same desire had been present with me when I was a boy-and how it still persisted. "Yes, you can get lost, without half trying. Nothing in the world would hurt you, unless you became frightened. But, Old Top, a real voyageur doesn't go looking for trouble. He uses his intelligence in dealing with nature, and nature expects everyone to do that. You and I have the intelligence to keep from being lost, to keep from getting hurt. That intelligence is our protection, and we must use it."

I saw that he had a small pocket compass, and taught him how to use it. "A compass doesn't point back to camp, as a person I knew once thought," I said. "It points north. When you leave camp, know what direction you are going before you start, then you know what direction will bring you back. If you ever feel that you are lost, above all don't be afraid. Nothing will hurt you. Climb a hill or a tree if you can, and look for landmarks you recognize."

On several occasions we went deep into the woods near our camps, and I asked him to guide me back. It was interesting to see him figure out the problem. He was just a natural woodsman. Not once did he lead me astray. We talked, too, about meetings with animals. I had no wish to create the least bit of fear in his thought. There are very few if any forest creatures that make a deliberate attack on man. However, there are certain precautions to be observed.

"It is a matter of good manners, Hi-Bub," I explained. "In our human society we like people to use good manners toward us. It is the same in the woods. A bear does not want you to pick up one of its cubs, or to act as if you meant to do so. A moose doesn't want you to come too close. Remember, he and all forest animals have been abused by the human race, and they have developed a fear of us. No animal likes to be caught in a corner, or to have one of us running after him. Be quiet, slow, cautious when you see any of them, and there is no danger."

"Uh-huh," said Hi-Bub. He never needed to be told again.

Game is not seen too frequently in the Canadian canoe country. Its rarity is part of its charm. The sight of an animal is always a thrill to me regardless of environment. However, I get more of a thrill out of the sight of one deer wild, free, alert in the wilderness country than I do out of herds of these animals in the protected areas of Wisconsin and Michigan. Such a sight we had as we reached the first little unnamed lake north of Isabella. It was early morning. We had broken camp soon after sunrise. The

forest still sparkled with the jewelry of dew. We made the first portage easily. By each one of us making two trips over, our duffel was transported. As we paddled out into the next lake, our attention was drawn to a movement on top of a treeless granite hill. There stood a beautiful, graceful doe. Her coat was the rich red typical of summer. Her ears were forward and alert. She stood still as a statue against the deep blue of the sky, acting conscious of her posing. As we drifted toward her, she stamped her foot impatiently, and snorted her disapproval. Deciding that she had seen all of us she cared to, she turned and ran slowly along the ridge of the hill. What a picture she made! I know, for my movie camera was catching every bit of it. She did not bound, as deer so often do when in full flight, but struck a single-footing pace, flag tail up and wigwagging. It was the very embodiment of natural beauty, grace and caution that we looked upon.

We saw our first bear on Sarah Lake-a fine, woolly old fellow who went racing back into the forest as we paddled by. I thought Hi-Bub was going to climb right out of the canoe and swim ashore, he was so excited. A bear in the forest is a stirring sight.

In the north arm of Sarah Lake we came upon an enormous beaver in broad daylight, sunning himself on a rock. He went into the water in a hurry when he saw us, and then by slapping the water with his tail resentfully and diving he told us what he thinks of anyone who interrupts a siesta.

While we all sat on a log at McIntyre Lake a mink came running down an animal trail toward us. Members of our party had become quite experienced in animal lore now, and they immediately became motionless. The oddly shaped creature actually ran over my feet as he went by.

In an island camp on the Maligne River, a wildcat paid us a visit. We had fish for dinner, and some of it was left in a pan within sight of our tents purposely to tempt some forest creature to come close. In the night we heard something at the pan. Rays from flashlights came reaching out from both tents, and played upon the area from which the sound came. There, whiskers, bobtail and all stood this wild kitty of the woods. For several minutes we were privileged to watch him while he finished his meal. Then he silently disappeared into the forest.

Still we saw no moose. We found their huge tracks in many places, and this kept us excited with anticipation. Hi-Bub and his parents learned to distinguish moose tracks from those of deer. The moose track is larger, resembling that of a cow. Moose tracks are common, as the animals are fond of muddy places and such soil records their coming very well.

Hi-Bub worked hard to bring moose into our immediate experience. He wished for them, he called for them, and he imagined every distant rock along the shores to be one. The moose-hoof rattle that Ancient had given him was used in every conceivable way. He held it high above his head and shook it, he did ceremonial dances of his own

design with it before our campfires, he slept with it and carried it with him into the woods. It was only right that he should see the first moose exclusively. This he did in circumstances not entirely to our liking.

We had reached Sturgeon Lake and camped at a favorite spot of mine on the south shore. Here a point of land shaped like a crescent moon reaches out into, the lovely clear waters of this great lake. The point is covered with splendid red pines—Norways they are called by some. Among these trees is a camp site that would delight the heart of any modern voyageur. It was early afternoon of a beautiful day when we reached this point. There was time to travel farther, but the place was so inviting we decided to camp at once. I am a firm believer in making camp early, anyway. Camp sites in this rugged country are not too numerous. In twilight it is very difficult to select a place that will be comfortable for the night.

We found the camp site had been used very recently. This is on one of the main canoe routes, and many pass this way. The previous camper had been a true nature lover. The camp site was clean and attractive. He had left a pile of split wood ready for the next corner, and thoughtfully had covered the wood with birch bark to keep it dry. His tent poles were piled neatly in one place. There wasn't a tin can, a cigarette stub, a piece of paper anywhere on the ground to detract from the natural beauty. I directed the attention of Hi-Bub and the rest of the party to the conditions of the grounds.

"Hi-Bub," I said, as we stood looking at the grounds, "there is a lesson in this. It is to do good, to be kind, thoughtful and considerate regardless of whom our favors fall upon. It is easy to do well by those we know and who are close to us. But every stranger is of the same nature as our friends. This camper did not know who would come next, but whoever it was, he wanted them to be happy and to find the camp site ready and inviting. We may be sure he is well paid, for he is accustomed to living that way. When an unselfish deed is done, the doer profits most of all."

"I have an idea," volunteered Giny, as it was time to change the subject. "Suppose Hi-Bub takes over camp management today—builds the fire and cooks the dinner. How about it there, old Boy Scout and voyageur—will you do it?"

Hi-Bub agreed. He had been hoping for this opportunity to show his accumulating skill at campcraft. The dinner had been planned in advance. It was to be good old north-woods beans. We had been carrying a kettle full of soaking beans for several hours. Hi-Bub started his fire while we pitched the tents and made camp secure. He suspended the kettle of beans over the fire in expert fashion.

"Remember, beans swell up and absorb the water," I warned. "Make sure you have enough water to cover them." Hi-Bub would. He put in some seasoning, and the dinner was on its way.

We decided to leave Hi-Bub entirely to his own devices. There was a little stream down the shore line about a mile, and we put out in our canoes to visit it. Hi-Bub was the target of a series of taunts as we left.

"Have dinner ready when we return, my good man," called Bob.

"For dessert I'll have some strawberry pie alamode!" added Giny.

"Make mine a chocolate parfait," requested Marge.

"You will take beans!" answered Hi-Bub.

As we moved away we saw him going busily about his task.

At the stream we found much to interest us. We saw no animals, but there were many tracks. There was a "bear tree" standing near the water's edge. Among nature students there is considerable difference of opinion as to what these great beasts are doing at such a tree. About six feet from the ground the bark had been torn away from a large section of the trunk by their powerful claws and teeth. I have seen a bear assail a tree in this way. It is a shocking display of power and ferocity. The huge beast struck at the tree as if he meant to tear it to pieces. Slivers of bark and wood flew far and wide. He bit right into it, pulling out large pieces of fiber. All the time he was snarling and growling as if he were in a fierce battle. Some students say this is the male bear's way of impressing a lady love. Others think it a challenge. At least it is a widespread custom among the creatures, and such trees are to be found through any forest where bears live.

As dinnertime was approaching, we paddled back toward camp. When we were still some distance away, we heard Hi-Bub calling to us from the shore. "Sam Cammel, I saw him. I did!"

"You saw what, Hi-Bub?" I called back.

"A moose!" he fairly screamed, jumping up and down in his delight.

"Where?"

"Right back here," he said, pointing inland. "I took my rattle with me for luck-and it works. I found him feeding."

"Was it a him or a her?"

"I didn't ask him."

"Well, did he have horns?"

"No."

"Must have been a cow moose," I concluded. We had turned our canoes into shore and were rather close to the excited boy now.

"How large was it?" asked Marge.

"As bigger'n an elephant," exclaimed the thrilled boy. "Good, Hi-Bub," I exclaimed, laughing. "You had that coming. You have worked so hard to see one. How did you come to see this fellow?"

"Well," said Hi-Bub, his breathing causing him some trouble. "I heard something back in the woods breaking brush. I looked and looked, and finally saw something so big I couldn't believe it. I put some wood on the fire so it wouldn't go out, then I took my rattle and sneaked back from one tree to another until I got close. I remembered what Ancient said about how well a moose can smell. So I circled around and came upwind."

"I hope you didn't get too close," I said. "Remembered your good manners, didn't you?"

"Yes. I could see him, or her, though. Was she big! Just now she ran away. I guess I stepped on a twig and made a noise."

"That is wonderful," said Giny. "But, Hi-Bub, we are starved. Did the beans get done?"

"The beans?" A wild look came into the boy's face.

"Oh, the beans!" he cried, and he turned and ran toward camp.

"Here, ride with us," called Bob, but there was no waiting for Hi-Bub. He was literally tearing through the woods.

"Oh-oh," said Marge, "I don't like the sound of this. What do you suppose has happened to the beans?"

We were not long in doubt. As we paddled rapidly toward camp, we saw an ominous blue smoke drifting out over the lake. When we sniffed it, it savored of beans that had been abused. We hastened ashore and up to the disappointed and disheartened Hi-Bub. There were tears in his eyes. On the ground at his feet sat the bean kettle, black as a cave at midnight, smoke pouring out of the top in volumes. The beans were burned to a crisp, and the kettle was ruined.

"Never mind, Hi-Bub," said his mother, taking him in her arms. "The first biscuits I ever baked for your daddy looked that same way."

"Hi-Bub," I said strongly, "this is wonderful material for a book. What would I do without you?"

XV
LOST AND FOUND

WE HAD worked hard over the final stretch leading to Sanctuary Lake. For a while we were lost, much to HiBub's delight. The secret part of the route to Sanctuary Lake takes off from the north shore of a famous lake. I won't tell its name, but if you are determined to follow our trail, here is a hint. There is a large oddly shaped point of land

which reaches out into the lake from the north. On the southernmost tip of this point is a high rocky cliff, on the crest of which grows a white pine towering above the surrounding forest. The top foliage of this tree resembles an eagle perching. Deep in a bay beyond this point is our trail. It isn't a man-made portage, wide and distinct. It is an animal runway.

Now animals make their runways for private purposes, and not for the convenience of a canoe party. They make as many of them as they want to, asking no governmental approval. I had only been to Sanctuary Lake once before, and this slight experience was not adequate. I picked the wrong runway! We took our two canoes and some duffel, leaving several packsacks for a second trip, and started over the narrow little trail, enthusiasm at high pitch, for this was supposed to be the last leg of our journey. It was rough travel. At places the runway was so crisscrossed with trees, a woodchuck could hardly get through. We kept going, however. At the end of this trail I had expected to find a swamp with a narrow open channel in the center. Instead, after an hour and a half of laborious walking, we looked out on the wide expanses of a beautiful lake.

"Is that Sanctuary Lake?" asked Hi-Bub.

"No, it isn't!" I replied, puzzled and a little exasperated. "I only wish I knew what it is."

"You mean, we are at the wrong place?" he puffed.

"Do we go back over that trail again?"

"We may." Bob groaned.

"Are we lost?" shouted Hi-Bub.

"Yes," I said, pressing my lips together. "We are lost. Anyone concerned?"

"Should I call a taxi?" asked Giny.

"I'll just ask a policeman the way to the nearest drugstore," offered Marge.

"Let's see," said Bob, "what does the book say about this? Do we rub two Boy Scouts together?"

"No, that starts a fire," corrected Giny.

"Anyway, you only have one Boy Scout," Hi-Bub put in. "All right, let's be serious." I broke up the wisecracking. "I have no more notion where I am than if I had walked across that trail to another world. Suppose you get some lunch together while I study this map a bit." Marge and Giny turned their attention to the lunch problem, while Bob and I spread a map on the ground.

We were sure we were correctly located when we landed at the animal runway on the big lake. However, nowhere to the north of our supposed position could we find another lake that had anything like the outline of the one we had come upon. The more

we studied the situation, the more baffling it seemed. Presently lunch was ready, and we put the map to one side.

"Where is Hi-Bub?" asked Giny.

"Oh-oh," said Bob, "seems to me I have heard those words before."

We went through the usual searching and calling routine. Presently Hi-Bub came, out of breath and much excited. "Sam Cammel," he said, "I know where we are." "That's more than I know. Where are we?" "We're on that big lake again."

"Impossible! What makes you think so?"

Hi-Bub explained that he had gone to the top of a hill and climbed a tree, just as I had told him to do if he were lost. Here he had a good view and looked for landmarks. "Way down there-" he pointed to the south-"I could see that tree that looks like it had an eagle sitting on it."

After lunch I took some binoculars, went to Hi-Bub's hill and verified his conclusions. There was the tree with the eagle-like crest. We had followed the wrong animal runway, portaging across that great point of land and back into the same lake again

"Was I some help?" our boy asked.

"Old Top, you have become the guide of this expedition. We couldn't do without you."

We paddled around the point, past the eagle tree and back to the place from which we had started. There were the rest of our packsacks waiting for us. We had worked almost a day and hadn't gained an inch! It was late afternoon by that time, and since I knew there were no camp sites short of Sanctuary Lake, we pitched our tents by the animal runway for the night.

The next morning we tried another runway several hundred yards down the shore. It proved to be the right one. At the end of this trail we came to the swamp I had been expecting. Our way was paved with difficulties. There were beds of water grass and reeds so thick we could hardly force our way through. On our previous visit we had named this region "The River of Ten Thousand Umphs," because of the grunts of effort it involved. Above this was a stream so shallow we had to wade and pull our canoes along. Next came a tangled mass of beaver dams, far more challenging than those of Lily River. Several times we chopped our way through the foliage of fallen trees. Through persistence we won our reward. At last we were afloat in the open water above the last dam. A short paddle up the beautiful winding course of the stream and we came out into lovely peaceful Sanctuary Lake.

"So this is it!" said Bob softly.

"Yes, this is it," replied Giny.

Hi-Bub couldn't even think of a word to fit his feelings. His greatest dream had come true and he could hardly believe it.

We paddled on with the canoes side by side. Giny and I pointed out landmarks already known to our guests through the weeks of conversation that preceded our coming. There scratched into the lichen-covering on the face of the cliff were the letters J 0 E once engraved there by the old Indian guide who had first told us of this wilderness retreat. We pointed out "Heron Cove," where we had watched these great birds feeding. There was "Bruin Hill," where we had seen our first bear on the previous visit; "Moose Meadows," a lowland frequented by these huge beasts; "Albino Falls," where the albino deer had appeared looking like some dainty spirit of the forest; the "Osprey's Nest," still occupied; "The Gateway," where we enter the lake; "Dawn View," from which we could see the days begin; "Sunset Rock," where we could see them close; "Blueberry Cliff," a high granite hill topped by a natural garden.

Then we came to "The Halls of the Forest King," that splendid forest of red pines wherein our campground was located. It was just as we had left it. Our old tent poles were there, leaning against a tree. The fireplace, made of heavy boulders placed in a semicircle, was intact. The great old log we used as a landing pier still reached out into the water; the table we had made of split logs stood as serviceable as ever.

There is a moment in camp making that finds me as thrilled and excited as it did when I was a boy having my first nature experiences. It is that instant when the tent is being spread and takes on the first appearance of a dwelling place. Until then it has been an unshapely roll of fabric to be lugged along. But when the ridge is fastened, and the sides spread, those thin canvas walls enclose a space that has suddenly become sacred. It is home, with all the security, protection and comfort associated with that divine word. I crawl into my tent when this moment arrives. The job of pitching it is still to be finished, but I have reached an important point in the undertaking. I pretend I am there to measure the height and spread of it, but I am not. I could do that from the outside. I want the "home feel" of the thing. Hi-Bub caught the idea from me, I guess, for the moment Bob had their tent at this stage, in the boy crawled. From within we would hear his comment: "Say, this is all right!"

Long before the day was done, our camp was established, and we felt at home. That evening we dined on bass from the cold pure waters of Sanctuary Lake. As if to welcome us, the heavens staged a sunset, the glory of which I have seldom seen equaled. Later in the evening Aurora drew her fantastic draperies across the north sky, her long, ghostly fingerlike rays pointing out the beauty of the stars. We sat and sang about our campfire until late in the night, and the voices of the great horned owl and the nighthawk joined us.

"So this is the reward for all the labor of the trails," commented Bob, and he added, as he looked about into the night, "I am much overpaid."

That night we spread our sleeping bags on thick mattresses of balsam twigs-a luxury we had not sought in the days of constant travel. But we had won our way to this wilderness paradise, fought for it, worked for it, and the best was none too good.

Before we dropped off to sleep we heard a persistent sound like the falling of hail on a thin roof. It was Hi-Bub, going through some extra ceremonials with his moose-hoof rattle.

"I hope it works," I commented.

XVI
FRIENDLY FOLK OF SOLITUDE

OUR first breakfast had not been finished when we were given to understand that we had neighbors. Four of those heart-appealing little northern chipmunks were scampering all over the place. They ran through the tents and over the roofs. Every packsack, bedroll and utensil had to be investigated. They are such little mites, with their spirited calls emphasized by constantly flicking tails. Many times newcomers to the woods think they are baby chipmunks, but they are fully grown. The eastern chipmunk so common in Wisconsin is twice the size of this northern variety.

Now through the foliage overhead went a red squirrel, saucy as a living thing can be. He leaped from one tree to another in that marvelous way of his kind, all the while scolding us as only a red squirrel can. He reminded us of our three red-skinned problems back at the Sanctuary—Nuisance, Still-Mo and Pug.

Then came the one for whom we had been hoping especially. We were just finishing our pancakes that had been baked by Hi-Bub with such skill, when Giny and I heard a call back in the forest that caused us to put down our forks and look about.

"It's a Canada jay," exclaimed Giny delightedly. "Jack, come here, old fellow!"

Jack was coming! Back through the woods we could see the bird gliding in his wonderful flapless flight from one tree to another. What traveler in the north country could remain unmoved at his approach? The number of the names by which he is known indicates the attention given him: Canada Jay, Whisky Jack, Meat Bird, Moose Bird, Camp Robber. At every camp one or more of these welcome visitors had come. Their manners were so similar, their friendliness so obvious, that it seemed it was the same bird following us from place to place. Hence the coming of Jack was joyfully expected. He wasn't alone either. Presently we discovered "Jill," as we always called the mate, and immediately a third appeared, who was properly styled "Jillette." Jillette was darker in color and

somewhat awkward in flight-Junior in the family. We noticed that nearly always these interesting birds travel in threes. Just why I do not know.

Jack and Jill and Jillette perched on limbs low over our heads, talking in their funny little language. It did not take them long to decide that we were harmless, and to glide to the ground where we had tossed pancake crumbs. Being natural borders, they filled their spacious beaks with this food and carried it away to secret vaults in the forest. All our camp activities were suspended while we made the most of their coming. We knew that as long as we stayed at Sanctuary Lake, these interesting creatures would be our regular visitors. Hi-Bub hurried to bake up the last bit of pancake batter to provide food for them. Placing our bribing morsels closer and closer, we gradually drew them up to our feet, then on our table, and at last to our outstretched hands. Life at Sanctuary Lake could begin now—the jacks had arrived!

Once our camp was set in order we began work on the main object of the trip-moose. The place most favorable to these animals was Moose Meadows, an area of lowland at the southernmost tip of the lake. Here a wide valley, walled in by two long rock ridges, led away from Sanctuary Lake. Likely at one time it was the home of a large river. Only a thread of a stream remained now. It came singing over pebbles and under logs down into our lake. The creek was not deep enough to float a canoe, but its rock-strewed banks did offer a route for walking and climbing to grassy areas beyond. These open spaces were fringed with low-growing trees-aspen, birch, dwarf maple, moosewood-on which moose love to browse. The grass is attractive to the great creatures too, for while the word "moose" comes from an Indian word said to mean "twig-eater," indicating their interest in overhead food, nevertheless the animals do much grazing. Up the course of this valley were occasional lily-filled ponds, and mud holes, all to the liking of our stilt-legged friend. It was simply a moose paradise, and at the same time ideal for our purpose. Along the ridges that flanked the valley we could secrete ourselves in places that would give us a wide scope for use of binoculars and camera.

I did not expect to find many moose in any one place. They are not as socially inclined as other members of the deer family. Sometimes three or four, or perhaps double that number, will live in a limited area together. But I have never seen or heard of gatherings among moose like those of the Virginia deer (white tail) and the Wapiti or elk. The tracks found in Moose Meadows might easily have led us to think differently, however. Particularly some of the runways crossing muddy stretches which looked as if a hundred animals had passed that way. Hi-Bub thought there must be a "million of 'em," but I cautioned a little moderation in the estimate, as even four sets of their huge hoofs can do a fearful amount of tramping.

One of the amazing things about moose is their ability to conceal themselves in the forest. In spite of their tremendous bulk, they blend so with their surroundings that one may be quite close and still remain unnoticed. Perhaps the irregular outline of his

ungainly body helps with this natural camouflage. The color of the animal is one with the forest. See a moose at a distance and likely you would pronounce him black. Closer inspection will reveal a variety of brown shades, all quiet, inconspicuous. The moose calf is a dull reddish brown. It does not have the pattern of spots carried by young deer. Within three months this brown coat will begin to darken. Through the seasons he is attuned to his surroundings. He is like the deep shadows of the forest floor, like the great irregular rock on the hillside, like the log at the water's edge.

Our first sight of a moose came on the third day of our explorations. At dawn Giny, Hi-Bub and I set out for Moose Meadows; Bob and Marge took the other canoe and went to the beaver flowages. The smaller the party the better for animal observation. It is best to go singly if possible. Two or three in the party isn't bad, if all are experienced in nature and equally concentrated on the task at hand. More than three is a great handicap, however good nature students they may be. It seems utterly impossible to keep a larger group at singleness of purpose. One wants to examine a flower, another a tree, a third to repeat some adventure from memory, a fourth to ask questions, while unvarying concentration is prerequisite. We decided to go in twos and threes most of the time, though occasionally to go singly.

Giny, Hi-Bub and I beached our canoe in silence, and quietly as possible made our way along one of the ridges that overlooked Moose Meadows. I realized what an accomplishment the silence of Hi-Bub really was. Giny and I were veterans at this sort of work. We knew the value of keeping thought focused on the purpose before us, and that the fewer our words the better. It isn't that animals hear every sound, or are easily frightened by such things. I have seen deer, moose and bear stand stubbornly in spite of whistles and shouts given to make them run for picture purposes. It is necessary to cultivate silent ways in this work. Silence sharpens intuition and keeps one attuned to the mystic ways of the forest. The restraint must have been a strain on Hi-Bub. No doubt

he wanted to be saying, "Sam Cammel, what is the name of this flower? What kind of a rock is that? Do Indians live here?" etc., etc. But he kept silent.

The morning sun was just reaching the floor of the valley with its rays when we came out on a rocky point from which we could see one of the lily ponds. I noted a disturbance in the water, and there made out the head of a fine bull moose, the rest of the animal entirely under water. It wasn't quite equal to the experiences related by Ancient, but almost. The bull was standing on the bottom, not swimming. He submerged his head, antlers and all, then brought it up again, his mouth full of the subsurface plants he was eating. I estimated the spread of antlers at five feet from tip to tip.

Hi-Bub could restrain himself no longer. "Look at those horns," he said in intense excitement. "You know what, Sam Cammel?"

"What?"

"I read that a moose uses those horns as snow shovels in wintertime." Hi-Bub was talking in a whisper.

I laughed. "It's an old story, Hi-Bub, often told but not true. Those horns are developed for the battles of the mating season. The male moose has them, and like the other deer, he grows a new pair every year."

"Is a moose a deer?"

"The same family, Hi-Bub. Those beautiful horns this fellow will wear until December, then they break off, or maybe he gets rid of them by butting into a tree. You see, that is early in the winter, so he couldn't use them much for shoveling snow, even if he wanted to."

"Do you think we can find some of the old horns?" exclaimed Hi-Bub.

"It isn't likely," I replied. "They disappear very quickly in the woods. No one is sure just what does happen to them. We know that porcupines chew on them and so do mice. Indians used to say that moose bury their antlers, though I doubt if that is true. There is another report that they have secret places where they go to shed them. Some hunters and trappers have given accounts of finding such places."

"Could we, do you suppose?" The lad could just picture himself carrying away a pair of six-foot antlers as a souvenir.

"Don't build up any hopes, Old Top. I do not believe the story. It is probable that moose horns decay fast and that porcupines and mice do gnaw at them and help this process."

"Look!" Giny broke into our conversation. "There is another one-a beauty. See, the first one is going out of the water to meet him."

A second bull was emerging from the brush at the far side of the valley, and making his way toward the pond.

He paused every few steps to eat some grass. When he did, he presented a most awkward and amusing sight. In order to reach the ground, he spread his long front legs wide apart and stretched his short neck and long nose to the limit.

"He looks like a giraffe when he eats," whispered Hi-Bub.

The first moose was coming slowly out of the pond, nibbling on lily leaves as he went. He looked simply immense. He walked toward the other bull. I wonder if ever I will cease to have tingles from my head to my feet at such a sight. Years of life in the forest have not reduced its effect on me in the least.

"Are they going to fight?" Hi-Bub was anxious that they should not.

I explained to him that battles do not occur during this season, as a rule. The bulls seem to be right friendly with one another for about eleven months of the year. They travel together, feed together and face their common enemies such as wolves and bears.

"Then in the autumn," I went on, "when some lady moose says, `Boys, I'll marry whichever one of you is the strongest,' the battle is on. Anyone who has ever seen a fight between two bulls will never forget it. It is a fierce and startling spectacle. They charge each other, using all their tremendous strength and speed. The impact of their horns can be heard for a mile on a still day. In their struggles they plow up the ground, break off good-sized trees, uproot bushes. The fights seldom end fatally. When it is determined who is the stronger, the other one runs away. All the time the fight is on, the lady moose calmly goes on browsing, paying no attention to it."

"Women!" said Hi-Bub disgustedly.

"No dinner for you tonight, young man," said Giny, hitting Hi-Bub a playful slap on top of his head.

"Oh, I just meant moose women!" Hi-Bub tried to square himself.

Our conversation was interrupted by the discovery of another moose, and still another. One was a mother with a well-grown calf, making a total of five animals in view at one time. The last ones had been lying down in the deep grass.

"Ruminating," I explained to Hi-Bub.

"Were they sick?" he asked, concerned.

"No, not sick-ruminating. They were chewing their cuds, the way cattle do. You see their food is swallowed unchewed. Then when they have time, they bring it up again and give it the chewing it deserves. Then they swallow it again, this time for keeps."

"Now I see. They eat each dinner twice. That's a great idea," commented Hi-Bub, likely thinking of what a short time he had to enjoy that treasured bite of chocolate rationed out each dinner.

As sunlight filled the valley, we saw our moose disappear into the woods. The morning had been rich with blessings and we were grateful. We knew that the group would likely return to this same area frequently, and we could see them often. Moose do not range far. Perhaps a ten mile stretch of this country would be all of the world they would ever use. Some sunny hillside close at hand would be their solarium where they would lounge and ruminate (whether Hi-Bub knew the word or not). In early evening they would be afoot after food again.

We walked out into the marsh and examined the huge tracks left by the moose. Hi-Bub learned to distinguish the hoof print of the cow from that of the bull. In this case there was quite a difference in size, though of course, that is not always true. In general the cow track is more slender, the hoofs coming to a fine point, the bull wider and fuller.

In a cluster of alder brush we discovered a moose wallow. It was a very muddy area about eight feet across, pawed by their hoofs and showing the impression of their great bodies. We could see plainly where one of the huge creatures had been lying in the mud, apparently trying to roll in it.

"What do you suppose they want to do that for?" asked Hi-Bub.

"No one really knows," I replied. "It is an old problem for students of moose. Almost always they have such a wallow. It may be that they get their bodies covered to keep insects away. Some hunters believe that the moose gets himself decked out in a thick coating of mud because it pleases his lady love."

"Women again!" ejaculated Hi-Bub.

"Remember, young man, dinnertime is coming," cautioned Giny.

We found one more object of extreme interest on this eventful morning at Moose Meadows. At the edge of the marsh, where the timber was able to grow, we came upon a conglomeration of tracks that followed a most peculiar pattern. They followed a circle about the size of a ring in a circus. In the center was not a single track, the ground being covered with moss and undisturbed. The outer part was pounded down as though by a great herd of moose. Strangely the tracks pointed all one way, indicating the animals had been going clockwise about the ring. There was no evidence of feeding on the moss. Could this be a dancing ground? Ever since the first pioneers came to America there have been periodic reports that moose indulge a kind of dance. Some woods travelers claim to have seen it, though I believe it has never been watched by a recognized naturalist. The story is that they circle about in such a place, all going the same way, tossing heads and uttering strange grunts. The dance is supposed to occur as mating

season approaches. Nature is a prolific source of dreams and fairy tales, and perhaps this is just another one.

"But there are the tracks!" Hi-Bub had been listening to my account of this strange story.

"Yes, Old Top, there are the tracks," I agreed. "But remember, if you are going to be a naturalist you don't repeat stories and traditions. You must see things with your own eyes before you can make conclusions."

Our dinner period that night was a happy one. We related our experience with moose, while Bob and Marge told about their fine adventures with beaver. Our party was wearing well. Interest and enthusiasm stayed at high level. For this again we were indebted to our boy. His energy and love of adventure were infectious and remained at the boiling point. Only in the food situation did I notice any sagging of morale. Certain of our supplies were getting low, particularly sugar. It is a major problem of pack trips anyway, for in our civilization we have cultivated a strong taste for sweets. I noted how each day the value of that little square of chocolate had increased, particularly when the day had been a strenuous one. On this particular night Hi-Bub caressed his portion when it was given him. He held it out and looked at it adoringly, sniffed it and then took mousey nibbles to make it last as long as possible. The conversation followed a trend which was recurring daily now:

"Who would like a chocolate sundae heaped up with whipped cream?" asked Giny. She was answered with a unanimous groan.

"I'll take a piece of banana cream pie," said Bob. Another chorus of groans.

"Extra thick vanilla malted milk for me," said Marge. Groans.

"Just make it a five-pound box of chocolates," ordered Hi-Bub.

Groans.

"All right, you softies," I broke in, testing them.

"Maybe we have had enough of this terrible country.

Let's pack up in the morning and leave for the land of cakes and cookies. In three days we can be buying out a soda fountain. What do you say?"

It was not groans, it was growls that greeted me. "I could live here forever," declared Bob.

"I could stay longer than that," added Hi-Bub.

XVII

A MOOSE NAMED MOO-MOO

THE days at Sanctuary Lake flowed by in interesting variety. Some were smooth and luxurious, making us feel like coddled kings with all the world serving us; others were rough with problems that tested our tempers and our strength. One unforgettable day was that on which the windstorm struck. It had been unusually hot and humid through the morning and early afternoon. This had been declared "camp cleanup day." Our bedding was out airing, our tents had the sides rolled up to permit the air to go through, our laundry was flapping on a line strung between two red pines. We had gathered in quite a stock pile of wood, stacked it and covered it with birch bark. While in for a swim we noted dark clouds rising in the northwest. Thirty minutes later our attention was drawn to a distant roar.

"It is wind!" I declared. "I have heard the sound before. Get everything in and secure the tents. Hurry, we haven't much time."

In fact, we didn't have enough time. While Giny, Marge and Hi-Bub hustled the bedding and laundry into the tents, Bob and I tried to stake down the bottoms. The wind struck before we were through. The tents looked like balloons and threatened to sail right off through the trees. Further effort at staking them down was impossible at the moment. Everyone had to join in the task of holding them. It looked as if we could not do so. We wondered if the fabric could endure the strain. One of our canoes, carried by a gust of wind, rolled toward the water, but we could not let go of our tents for a moment to rescue it. A large limb broke off a red pine and fell

close to Giny and me. Rain was driving down at such force the drops felt like pebbles. The sack containing our remaining supply of sugar was discovered forgotten on the table, but none dared loose his hold on the tents. We saw it being soaked, then topple over in the wind, fall on a root and break open, its contents spilling out on the ground where the rain took charge of it. We heard trees crashing back in the forest. Those about our camp were bending and whipping about furiously, though I felt confident they could withstand the strain, for we had inspected them well to make sure they were in healthy condition before we established our camp.

The storm ended as suddenly as it had begun. Within a few minutes we were in a relative calm. There were exclamations of relief from everyone. Bob and I hastened to finish our job of staking down the tent bottoms. Then we deepened the drainage trenches that we had dug about the bases of the tents. Our sugar was totally lost.

There was no time to grieve, however, for rain was falling again. The high wind did not repeat itself, though the rain that followed was one of the heaviest of my experience. For two days and two nights it continued. Water ran in rivulets through the woods. The

ground about camp was sand and gravel, so that it did not become muddy, and our tents did not leak a drop, so we had plenty of cause for gratitude. Nor did we let the rain confine us. We donned raincoats and boots and went hiking and canoeing just as we had in fair weather. We stretched our tarpaulin between four trees making a shelter under which we could build a fire. This enabled us to have hot food.

The mounting problem was that of dampness. Even though the tents were weather tight, the air itself was saturated with moisture which was communicated to bedding and clothes. Hi-Bub and I called out our Boy Scout training to meet that. While the rain pounded down, we built a fire reflector in front of each tent. Two stakes were driven so that about three feet of each extended above the ground. In front of these and resting against them, logs were placed one on top of the other until the pile was about two feet high. Against these logs facing the tent, fires were built. It was difficult getting the fires started, but once they had gained some headway the rain could not put them out. The log background reflected the heat of the fires right into the tents. Within two hours everything within the tents was completely dry, even though the rain kept pounding down.

There is a feeling of triumph in the overcoming of problems. Hi-Bub and all felt it, and the mood of the party was made merry by the accomplishment. Such experiences lead me to the conviction that the perfect state of being happy does not depend on the perfection of our surroundings but rather in the discovery of strength and ability within ourselves to master any situation. Anyway it was fun to beat the rain.

In the early evening of the third day, the rain stopped. Hi-Bub said it just got tired and quit. Surely it acted that way, for it came more and more slowly until there was no more. The great gray-black cloud that had covered the heavens from horizon to horizon broke in the west, revealing a cold blue-green strip of sky. The sun reached through just as it was sinking, to set the forest world to sparkling. Everything looked so clean, fresh and new. Each pine needle held a drop of water at its tip, and these scintillated like diamonds when touched by sunbeams. Everything in the forest was vivid green in the soft light of evening-the foliage, the moss, the lichens. Now from below the horizon the sun reached back with invisible hands and tinted the underparts of the receding rain cloud crimson. The smooth waters of Sanctuary Lake reflected the hues which brightened until the whole world beamed with glory.

Now nature entered that mood in which miracles are made. Mist and mystery decked the forest. Stars took their places in the sky and the cloud curtain crept away. The creatures of the forest, perhaps tent tired as we were, moved among the shadows. Out of the dark distances came the monotonous, persistent call of the great horned owl. Beavers were swimming in the lake, playing at their crash dives. Deer snorted on the far shore. A blue heron spoke out of the black obscurity of the distance. Nighthawks were

diving, making that odd sound that comes appeared from the other tent under the guidance of HiBub.

"See anything, Sam Cammel?" he asked in a loud whisper.

"Not much, but I'm still looking."

Nothing about the place seemed disturbed. The bacon rind was still on our table. Cooking utensils hung on a tree. This was evidence against the presence of a bear, for he would have been drawn to these things.

"Look between the tents, Sam," Giny insisted. "I do hear something breathing, I am sure."

Stepping out from the tent door, I flashed my light on the area between the tents. The sight I saw caused me to gasp in amazement. If someone had asked me what was the last thing in the world I expected to see that night in camp, I would have said "a moose." But whether I anticipated it or not, whether I thought it possible or not, there was a moose, not twenty feet from me, lying on the ground. It was a beautiful calf, likely about four months old. The light brown color indicated it was a female. The creature was looking in my direction, but not in the least worried about all the sights and sounds taking place.

"Hi-Bub," I said in monotones, "this is something that concerns you." His tent was turned so he could not see the moose without taking a few steps.

"What is it?" asked four voices in unison.

"Believe it or not," I answered, still in the monotone, "there is a moose calf lying on the ground so close I can nearly touch her."

There was a scurrying about in the two tents as Bob,

Marge and Giny hastily crawled out of sleeping bags, put on wraps and came sticking their heads out tent doors.

The young moose turned her head in the direction of the sounds.

"Oh, you beautiful thing," cried Giny, "where did you come from and what are you doing here? Is she hurt, Sam?"

"No, I think not," I replied. "I have been looking her over and she seems to be all right. She's fat and healthy looking."

"The little rascal," said Bob, from near his tent, bringing another flashlight into play. "What an adventure this is."

"Where is Hi-Bub?" I asked, puzzled.

"We thought he was with you."

"He isn't—and hasn't been."

About this moment we heard his voice down near the lake shore. "Sam Cammel, where is it?" he called.

"Right here, near the tent."

"Oh, I thought you saw her down here," said the excited boy. Barefooted, keeping his light out so as not to frighten an animal, he had gone alone to the lake shore.

Soon he was back with his parents, looking at the creature which still lay quietly on the ground. Bob said later that Hi-Bub forgot to breathe when he saw the moose. "I had to squeeze him like an atomizer or he would never have got any breath," he said.

When the startled youngster was able to talk, he said in a whisper that was two thirds a shout: "Sam Cammel, do you know what? Do you know who that is? Do you?"

"Who is it, Hi-Bub?"

"That is Moo-Moo. It is Moo-Moo, just like I thought she would be. You remember I told you we would find her."

Yes, there was Moo-Moo. Hi-Bub had a right to interpret her coming as the answer to his prayers.

Certainly I was at a loss to give a convincing explanation of the creature's presence and behavior. Years before a hunter told me of being camped in the North Country, when every night a moose calf came and slept at the door of his tent so close he could have stepped on it. At dawn the animal was gone. He was convinced that the creature was separated from its parents, and came to him for protection from the wolves. Likely this was the answer. Fully grown moose put up a fierce defensive fight against wolves or bear, striking with their front feet in most effective manner. But the little ones are not equal to this battle. It is conceivable that an orphaned animal might instinctively seek the society of man where its more common enemies would not come.

Moo-Moo had enough of being on exhibition presently. She rose and calmly walked away. It took an hour for our wave of excitement to pass so that sleep could return. I slept no more, however. There was too much to think about in the strange behavior of our visitor, especially when I heard her return later and lie down in the same spot. I thought I was the only witness to this second visit, until I heard a boyish voice outside say:

"Moo-Moo, thanks!—thanks!—thanks for coming to me!”

XVIII
TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT

THE coming of Moo-Moo, the moose calf, was the exclusive topic of conversation at the breakfast table the next morning. Canada jays, blue jays and chipmunks came as usual and received the customary contributions but our thought was on that moose.

"What can we feed her?" asked Hi-Bub.

"Moo-Moo has plenty of food, Old Top," I replied. "This country is one vast pantry for her."

"But can't we give her something extra-you know, something that would be sort of a treat?" Hi-Bub was so anxious to do favors for Moo-Moo he was about to pop.

"Well, perhaps a little salt placed on that log back of the tents would be all right," I suggested.

"Uh-huh." Hi-Bub started to get the salt. "But how about pancakes? I could bake some for her."

"Young man, naturalist, voyageur," said Giny, coming up and hugging him to her. "You had better ask Moo-Moo to bring us food instead. Do you know our supplies are getting low? Our sugar is gone-gone, but certainly not forgotten. Our flour is more than half used up. There are about three dinners of beans, not much rice and even pancake flour is running out!"

"Aw, we can eat blueberries and bass."

"Fine combination—blueberries and bass," commented Bob. "You let Moo-Moo eat lily pads—that is, if she comes back."

"Moo-Moo will come back. I know she will." Hi-Bub was confident.

"Going to use the moose rattle on her?"

Hi-Bub didn't reply. He had the salt now and I believe if we hadn't restrained him, he would have put our whole supply on a log he selected near the tents.

We tried to track the calf. It was possible to do so only for a short distance. Among the big pines the hoof prints showed up fairly well, leading toward the moose area to the south. Presently the trail led over a rock ridge on which no impression could be made. Beyond this was a big swamp and we had to give up our search.

However, about one o'clock the following night our camp was awakened again. Something was walking about the tents. Flashlights were soon prying into the darkness. There was Moo-Moo lying in exactly the same spot she had occupied the previous visit. Hi-Bub was almost uncontrollable. He wanted to take his sleeping bag and spread it over

the moose for fear she was cold. In tones that would rival Romeo's most torrid outbursts, he said, "Moo-Moo, you are beautiful."

If there is one thing that a moose is not, it is beautiful! He is all out of proportion. Legs are too long, body too short, and he hasn't any more tail than a frog. His nose looks like a scoop shovel upside down and his ears were stolen from a donkey. But to Hi-Bub's enamored sense, Moo-Moo was beautiful. Apparently she liked the flattery, for as he talked, she half closed her eyes, laid her ears back, turned her head toward the lad as if to say, "Am I, really? Please, tell me more."

Moo-Moo was a regular visitor. In fact, she was too regular. I had wanted an intimate experience with a moose, but this was more than I ordered. It was impossible to get a good night's sleep. Hi-Bub simply could not stay quiet while his strange pet was in camp. He wasn't alone in this. Giny was out of her sleeping bag at the first cracking of a twig, and Marge followed quickly. Baby talk fairly flowed toward Moo-Moo.

Beyond these nightly experiences we learned very little about the calf. When the first pale light of dawn appeared in the east, she departed. We could not follow her or her tracks very far. We did not see her join other moose, nor did another come near our camp. Once we saw evidence supporting our theory that she was there for shelter. While we were looking at her in the middle of a very still night, the weird howl of a timber wolf came from a distance. Immediately Moo-Moo was all attention. She did not rise, but her ears moved nervously and she turned her head in the direction of the sound. Hi-Bub would not go to bed that night. I assured him that no wolf would come near our camp, but he sat and shivered at the door of his tent watching over his baby moose until daylight came.

There was another intimate experience with a moose early one morning. We had noted a large bull some distance down the lake shore, apparently bathing. While Marge and Giny went about breakfast preparations, HiBub, Bob and I put out in a canoe to see if a

good picture were possible. We paddled close to land, passing under overhanging foliage so as not to be seen. We rounded a huge rock that stood at the shore line, and came upon our moose not more than fifty feet away. It was a splendid picture. The morning sun struck the animal fully. He was just leaving the water as we arrived, but he stopped and looked toward us, his antler-decked head held high in the air. Then, to our surprise, he started toward us. It was not the nature of a charge, and there was nothing threatening in his attitude. Still, it sent tingles all over us to see him grow larger and larger with each step in our direction. Bob was in the bow of the canoe, Hi-Bub seated in the middle, and I in the stern. Hence, they were closer to the creature than I.

"Anyone want to trade places with me?" asked Bob in a whisper, his eyes fastened on the great animal. "Not I!' gulped Hi-Bub.

I had been taking pictures constantly, though now the animal was so close I couldn't get him in the viewfinder all at one time. Still he kept coming. Something had to be done.

"Sam Cammel," whispered Hi-Bub, not the least frightened, "he's wearing a necktie. Can you see it?"

"Yes, I see it," I returned. "Tell you about that later. Now we have to get out of here." I noted the hair on the creature's back was bristling a little, and I didn't like it. He was realizing these strange things before him were alive. A frightened animal is always a threat.

Suddenly Hi-Bub raised his moose rattle and shook it. I have thought since it was just the right thing to do. A louder noise like a shout might have frightened him too much and caused him to charge. This softer sound made him halt in his tracks, now not over twenty feet away. Hi-Bub was having fun. "Hi, Mugsey," he said, and he shook his rattle again. That was enough for the big bull. With a low grunt he turned and made his way to shore. We heard him breaking branches as he ran through the woods.

"Whew!" exclaimed Bob, wiping his brow. "I don't want to be that close to one of those fellows again."

"Why, Daddy?" asked Hi-Bub undisturbed. "That was old Mugsey. Don't you know he won't hurt you?"

"I know it, son. But I wonder if he knows it, too."

XIX
DISCORD IN THE WILDERNESS SYMPHONY

As we ate breakfast, we talked over our exciting adventure of the morning. I presume nothing was lost in the telling. The bull moose was represented to be closer than he really was, and his hair bristled more than it really did. However, I think the

exaggeration was justified in the name of good storytelling. Fishermen are not the only ones who can stretch things.

"And what do you think, Mom?" Hi-Bub commanded attention. "This moose was wearing a necktie." "A what?"

"A necktie. It was hanging from his throat. Wasn't it, Sam Cammel?"

"Well, you would hardly call it a necktie, Hi-Bub," I explained. "It is what is called a bell—really a dewlap."

"Jeepers, what is that?"

"It is really just a fold of skin hanging down from the throat or jaw," I went on. "Other animals have it in various forms, oxen, cattle, rams, and even people."

"Kind of a double chin?" asked Hi-Bub.

"In a way." I laughed. "It looks so startling on the moose because it is large, and it adds to his ungainly appearance. The one on the bull this morning was about ten inches long, I would judge, which is normal. However, there is a report of them being much longer. The longest known was thirty-eight inches. Both cows and bulls have them. We have seen one every time we saw a moose, but this animal was so close Hi-Bub got a good look at it."

"Well, what good is it? What does it do?" asked the boy.

"No one knows," I replied. "Guess the moose has too much skin, so he does as Hi-Bub suggested—makes himself a necktie."

"Well, you are not the only ones who have had an adventure with a moose this morning," said Giny when we had finished our story. "Marge and I have something to tell, too."

"You have?" I said. "Come on, let's have it."

"Moo-Moo has been back in camp in broad daylight. What do you think of that?"

"Jeepers!" Hi-Bub was so excited he swallowed half a pancake at a gulp.

"Yes," added Marge, "she came back to the salt lick. We walked toward her and stood just a few feet away, talking to her. She wasn't the least concerned about us, just kept on licking salt until she had enough, then she walked into the woods. She was here at least twenty minutes."

"What is more, we saw her over there through the trees just before you returned." Giny took up the story. "We think she didn't go far. She's inclined to be friendly. I know we can make a wonderful pet out of her."

Hi-Bub could restrain himself no longer. Saying something about being excused, while he chewed at a mouthful of pancake, he raced away through the woods. He couldn't think of eating if Moo-Moo were anyplace to be seen. He found the young moose not far distant grazing on a hillside, but approached in such an excited manner that she went trotting away. She was back within sight of the camp before the day was over, however. Apparently she had adopted this grove of red pines as her home. In days that followed she went away in early morning and in early evening, presumably to feed. The rest of the time she was somewhere in our vicinity. Hi-Bub was in seventh heaven, or maybe it was the eighth.

"Could she ride in a canoe, Sam Cammel?" he asked.

"It would take a battleship to carry her, Hi-Bub," I answered. "Why do you ask? Want to take her home when we go?"

"Well, it would be nice."

"She is home, Bub," Bob broke in. "She doesn't want to leave here any more than you do."

Hi-Bub knew his idea was impossible, but you can't blame a fellow for asking.

Several mornings thereafter Moo-Moo reached a new peak of friendliness. I presume what happened later led me to remember the event so vividly. Nature had struck a mood of unusual tranquillity. Not a leaf stirred. The lake was a perfect mirror in which the shore-line loveliness was reflected without the slightest distortion. Every living thing about us caught the mood. Chipmunks had ceased hustling about, and were sunning themselves on chosen logs. Across the lake opposite our camp we saw a blue heron, tired of the effort of fishing, settle down for a good rest standing on one leg. Loons were gossiping with their own echoes. A family of ducks was feeding near our canoe landing. Jays were calling and out of the forest depths came the call of a white-throated sparrow. Moo-Moo was at the salt lick, and Hi-Bub had gone within fifteen feet of her, advancing step at a time, wooing her with flattering and endearing words.

The rest of us were watching Hi-Bub's progress, admiring his patience and persistence.

Giny was saying something about the natural peace and goodness of the world and how an attitude of kindness reveals this to human thought, when our attention was attracted to the snarl of an airplane motor in the distance. Once before we had heard a plane which passed by at great height. This one was quite low and heading our way. The sound of the motors increased momentarily, Very quickly the plane appeared just above the treetops. With a fierce roar that fairly shook the earth, it circled Sanctuary Lake and then settled on the once placid waters!

The wildest confusion resulted. Moo-Moo whirled about and raced away through the woods. The chipmunks squeaked wildly and scampered for hide-outs. The blue heron

awakened from his sleep and flew away. The ducks squawked their disapproval and took to wing. Loons dived out of sight. In an instant the whole scene was completely transformed. Gone were the peace and quiet, the Spirit of the Wilderness. The plane, likely the first ever to visit these sacred waters, came taxiing up the lake, motors sputtering.

On the shore we exchanged pained looks. One moment we had been living in the center of the wilderness, in a peaceful world all our own; the next a messenger from civilization had snatched our solitude from us. Hi-Bub looked as if he wanted to cry. I am glad he didn't start it, for I am sure all of us would have joined in the chorus.

"Hello there," called a voice, as the plane shut off its motors and drifted in front of the camp.

"Hello," we called back, but I fear there wasn't much welcome in our tones.

"Saw your camp from the air," called the stranger. "Thought you had found some good fishing, so we dropped in to try our luck." His "we" referred to a total of four passengers. Soon they were standing on the pontoons, getting ready to cast. "Where is the best place?" one of them asked us as we walked to the water's edge to watch them.

"Anywhere," I replied, with reluctant honesty. "The lake is filled with bass. You can catch the limit wherever you try."

"Limit?" The man laughed. "Does a fellow have to watch the limit here?"

"It pays to be a good sport anywhere," I answered.

"Guess that's right," said one, though I wasn't sure he meant to be one. "Oh, oh, I got one now."

He had one, and so did the other three, very quickly. They hauled bass out of that lake as if they were using a seine.

"Why do they take so many?" asked Hi-Bub. I just shook my head. There never has been an answer to the question. Selfishness has no explanation.

A conversation, broken frequently by the landing of bass, told us more about the party. They had left Ely, Minnesota, less than an hour before in search of new fishing grounds. Seeing our camp from the air, they decided it must be a good place, so in they came.

Less than an hour of travel, and they had covered the distance it took us a week to make! I did not envy them. They sensed no isolation, no remoteness, no wilderness. When their stringers were filled with fish, their picnic would end. A few minutes thereafter, they would be in a city again. They would feel a certain elation, laugh and boast to their friends of the fish they caught, but they would never know the magic silence of the North Country, never experience the triumph of overcoming portages and making camp, never sense the Spirit of the Wilderness. They would have fun, but not

inspiration. Their way of coming scattered the beauty of the land they invaded. They couldn't have the full joy of which this country is capable, for they hadn't worked for it and earned it.

It was strange what that shiny floating object did to our Shangri-La. When it arrived, something left. We struggled against the suggestion, but with little effect. We went about our camp work, but our thoughts never strayed from that plane. In our hearts there was a sickly feeling as if we had lost something of great value. Hi-Bub felt it keenly, and his words were descriptive. "Sam Cammel, it feels like they brought the city right with them."

We tried to be cordial to our unexpected guests. Likely they were fine fellows, and hadn't the slightest notion of what they had done to our happiness. I brewed some tea and took it to them, Hi-Bub and I going out in the canoe. They had sandwiches and were grateful for the hot beverage. Hi-Bub entertained them with accounts of the wildness of the country. Seeing they were quite impressed, he made the wolf and wildcat calls a little louder and more numerous than they really were, the bears and moose a little larger.

"You can have it, sonny," one replied, with a wave of his hand. "I'll take it the easy way. Tonight think of me in a warm, safe, modern hotel, with my radio on. Only an hour away, too."

"You know what a fellow could do?" exclaimed another one. "He could bring in a boat by plane and leave it here. None of them canoes for me. In a good safe boat you could really go after these bass. I know a dozen fellows that would be glad to come here."

"You could bring in some lumber and build a cabin" was the idea of a third. "Man, you would be sittin' on the world! I haven't seen bass fishin' like this in years. Bet you pull them out by the scores." He addressed the last remark to me.

"Only what we need for food. We never like to destroy or waste anything," I said, as quietly as I could.

"Do you have a little-er-er-mutton occasionally?" suggested the fourth with a wink. "With all these deer around here, there is no need to go hungry. How about it, Ed?" He slapped another on the back. "If we ever have a cabin here, we live on venison, eh?"

Hi-Bub looked at him incredulously. "You mean—kill our deer?" he said.

"Why not, son? A fellow has to eat."

Hi-Bub's reply was a little saucy, but I didn't blame him. "You don't have to eat deer, do you? How are you going to see them if you kill them? Do you have to eat everything? You're too fat anyway."

The men all laughed heartily, poking more jibes at the one who resembled a woodchuck just before hibernation. "He told you off, Jack," one said chuckling.

As they resumed their fishing, we paddled back to camp. Hi-Bub was plainly distressed. "Sam Cammel, will they do it, do you suppose-bring a boat here and build a cabin and shoot everything-will they?"

"Oh, I think not," I said, feigning more assurance than I felt. "Usually men like that talk a lot, but when it comes to doing the job, it is a different matter."

"Well, would they be allowed to come here and build?"

"I don't know," I replied. "Maybe the Canadian Government would lease or sell this land. Anyway, let's not worry about it."

But Hi-Bub was worried. "Then where could we go?" he questioned anxiously. "If they spoil Sanctuary Lake, where could we find that wilderness spirit again?"

I found no way to console him. On shore he stood watching the plane, listening to the shouts of the men as their angling went on. Presently they had all the fish they wanted. It is to their credit that they held to their limit. The motors roared again. Bird calls ceased, chipmunks scampered. Giny and Marge put their hands to their ears. Away went the plane, clearing the treetops nicely, circling and heading for the city.

Hi-Bub sat on a rock looking out over Sanctuary Lake. The quiet had returned, and yet it wasn't the same. Once this place was secret and remote. It was seven days of hard travel from where roads leave off. Now it was only fifty minutes. It all hurt deeply, and I felt sorry for him. The pain was such an indefinable thing. One would have to know the power of youthful yearning for the freedom of primitive areas before he could fully appreciate the loss involved.

It was a difficult day, and at its close there was no campfire, there were no songs. We went to bed early. Moo-Moo did not return that night, nor the next. It was the second morning before that roar was out of her ears and she came slowly and cautiously up to the salt lick again.

XX
WHO COMES THERE?

WHEN Moo-Moo returned, she did her part to shake the gloom out of our camp. Maybe that wasn't the real purpose of her actions, but nevertheless that result was accomplished.

We were at breakfast when we saw her for the first time after the airplane episode. It has always amazed me how bulky animals like the moose, elk, deer or bear can move

about in such obscure ways. No one saw Moo-Moo coming. Suddenly she was standing at the salt lick as if she had popped into existence only that moment.

We were much stirred at her coming. A muffled cheer went up that she had triumphed over the shock the plane had given her. She licked at the salt-soaked fibers of the log with obvious delight. Hi-Bub lost his interest in breakfast. He had to get closer to that moose. "I'm going to see if I can pet her, Mom," he said, leaving the table and walking slowly toward the animal.

Admonishing Hi-Bub to be careful, we all ceased eating and watched. Wisely the lad approached on the opposite side of the log from Moo-Moo. This gave her less to fear and also protected him from the sharp hoofs she might use if she misunderstood his motives. He moved a step at a time, talking continually in reassuring tones. Moo-Moo stood as motionless as a statue. The whole situation fascinated her. Hi-Bub reached the log, ten feet from the animal.

We were all enjoying the game immensely. There was no danger to Hi-Bub, since the log was between them. His approaching steps were minutes apart now. He knew that the slightest hurried move would end this opportunity. We were about as tense as Hi-Bub himself. At last he was directly opposite the calf, who stood still as if hypnotized. Slowly Hi-Bub raised his hand and reached toward her, stretching far over the log. Closer and closer went the anxious hand. Then with the greatest possible gentleness he laid his fingers right on the soft black homely nose!

Moo-Moo just couldn't believe that such a thing would happen to her. Her eyes looked startled, but for half a minute she did not move. Then full realization came that she was being touched ! She gave a low sound something like that of a sheep, jerked her head violently away and went racing through the woods. Hi-Bub came back just one huge smile, rubbing his hands together, and bouncing joyfully with every step.

"Mom! Daddy! I really petted a moose. Did you see it?"

"Saw every bit of it, son," said Bob. "That was mighty fine work."

"Look at that hand," he said, holding it out for inspection. "That hand touched a moose. Mom, I don't ever want to wash my hands again—I don't want to get the Moo-Moo off. Oh, that was great!"

Later that day we saw an interesting act of nature's drama up in the sky. It wasn't another airplane this time, for which we were very grateful, but it did involve a marvelous exhibition of flying. The ospreys that were nesting on the shore opposite our camp were always a fascinating subject for observation. Their sharp, unmusical cries enriched the silence, while their marvelous glider flight is one of nature's most graceful exhibitions. Their cries were unusually persistent that morning, and we took our binoculars with us to the lake shore to see what was the cause of all the excitement. It was not difficult to discover.

High above the usual range of the osprey floated two magnificent, bald eagles. The great birds were drifting idly along as though unconcerned about all the jabbering that went on in the levels below. Masters of the air they are, their great wings holding them aloft as if they had found the way to neutralize gravity. Ospreys and eagles are age-old rivals, however, and the calmness of the flight was an illusion. There was purpose in the minds of the eagles and the ospreys knew it full well. They were telling the world their side of the story.

"Watch them closely, Hi-Bub," I said to the lad as he stood close beside me. "Here, you take the glasses. Turn them on that osprey coming down the lake and tell me what you see."

One osprey had been circling near the nest, probably to protect that from the high-flying enemy, while another was returning from a flight to the north. Hi-Bub had a little trouble getting this one in the glasses, but when he did, he exclaimed, "Look I He's carrying something. It's a fish!"

I was quite sure that was the case. From previous experience I knew the stage was set for an interesting spectacle, oft repeated in the endless competition between these two great birds. I called all to watch them closely.

The eagles began descending in great circles, and the cries of the ospreys became more defiant and fierce. The bird bearing the fish in his talons came on rapidly toward his nest. Although those eagles had no binoculars, they could see every scale on that fish and it looked like a mighty good dinner for them. Soon their battle cries joined those of the osprey. One eagle folded his wings and made a power dive right for the bird with the fish. The osprey never runs away from a fight, and he is perfectly capable of defending himself even against the larger bird. Seeing that he was attacked, the bird forgot everything except the combat. Releasing the fish, he turned upside down in the air, with talons and beak ready for the eagle.

"Magnificent!" exclaimed Giny as we watched the maneuver.

"Yes, but watch closely!" I cautioned. There was no time to say more, for things were happening in split seconds in the air. The fish was falling toward the earth. The attacking eagle continued its charge until within a short distance of the osprey. Just as it seemed they would collide, the eagle spread its huge wings, veered to one side, avoiding contact, shot at great speed on through the air and caught the fish before it reached the ground!

We all released our breath at the same time. It was an amazing demonstration of flying. The ospreys did not think so, however. They cried loud in their indignation, but did not pursue the eagles. Either they felt unequal to the fight, or knew that they could never catch the great creature that was now winging his way into the distance. The experience wasn't new to ospreys, anyway. Through the ages this act has been repeated and repeated, while men of different races stood on the ground and marveled, even as we did. Maybe in our viewpoint it was unfair. I am sure the ospreys wasted no admiration on the maneuvering of the eagle. But they are philosophers, and in stead of bewailing their luck they promptly set out to get some more fish.

That afternoon we went blueberry picking. The season was passing, and soon this delicious crop would be gone. This natural food was quite important to us, particularly since our supply of sugar was a thing of the past, and our daily ration of chocolate, small as it was, neared its end.

We had to search for blueberries now. Those growing in sunny places were about gone. In the shade where they ripened more slowly, there were fine big ones. Hi-Bub loved to go blueberry picking, but he wasn't much of a contributor to the kettles. "How about giving us a few of those berries, young fellow?" asked Bob.

Hi-Bub swallowed forcefully, then said, "Trouble is, every time my hand gets full, my mouth flies open and I just have to put something in it."

Bob had no comeback.

We had rivals for the blueberry supply. When we approached the summit of blueberry hill we saw one of them. A huge black bear gave an exclamation of "Whoosh" and ran away, trampling bushes as he went. We could see where these animals had been working. They are not good conservationists. So far as they are concerned, this is the only crop they ever expect to see. Bushes are pulled up, broken, crushed, until there isn't much left of the patch where they have been. They are just as bad among raspberries, and even worse in dealing with young wild cherry trees. I was telling Marge, Giny and Bob about seeing several bears harvesting cherries. They were large animals, still they insisted on climbing the small trees. Inevitably the tree would bend over, unable to stand so much weight. The bear would hang on until the tree actually broke, then he could stand on the ground and eat the sour fruit with ease. That grove of cherry

trees, in a secluded valley back in the Wisconsin woods, looked as if a cyclone had struck it by the time the bears had finished.

Our talk about the bears was interrupted by a call from Hi-Bub. He had climbed on top of a rocky summit from which the entire length of Sanctuary Lake could be seen in one grand panorama.

"Sam Cammel!" There was distress in his voice.

"Yes," I answered.

"Can you come here? Something awful has happened."

I hurried as fast as uneven ground and berry bushes would permit. Bob followed. What awful thing could happen?

"Something's happening to Sanctuary Lake again," said Hi-Bub sorrowfully, as I approached. He pointed to the water far below us. There near the outlet of the lake, so tiny they looked like floating peanut shells, were two canoes. We could see the sunlight flash from the paddles as they stroked, heading down the lake toward our camp.

"Is everybody going to come here?" asked Hi-Bub.

XXI
WAR WHOOP!

WE WATCHED the coming canoes with conflicting emotions. We summoned the rest of our party and worked our way down toward the lake.

"I hope they won't scare Moo-Moo," said Hi-Bub anxiously. "Do you suppose they are hunters and want to shoot everything?"

"Oh, I am sure they are not," I said. "The Canadian law doesn't permit hunting in this area, anyway."

"Well, some people don't seem to care much about laws." Hi-Bub was remembering the remarks of the men on the plane. "I wish—I wish-well, why couldn't they go find another lake of their own?"

"Now, son," Bob corrected him. "Let's not be selfish, not even with Sanctuary Lake. They have as much right here as we have, you know."

"Yes, but___"

"How do you suppose they found it?" Giny was puzzled, as were we all. "There isn't any trail except that animal runway, and no one would think to follow that. Sandy wouldn't tell them how to get here. Do you suppose the men on the plane spread the news?"

I did not enter the conversation as I was having a battle with my own thoughts. Bob's admonition to Hi-Bub was meant for us all. The sacred atmosphere of Sanctuary Lake seemed to be slipping away from me, but I had no right to resent the coming of others.

"I don't believe any of us really do resent others coming," reasoned Giny, "that is, so long as they are good scouts and do not disturb the region."

That really was the point. We could name many whose presence in our lake would be a joy, and we would welcome them. It wasn't people we wanted to keep away, then: it was destruction, the spreading of fear among animals and changing the character of the lake.

"Well—anyway, we know these folks have worked hard to get here. Let's hope they are O.K."

We had reached another rock outcropping from which we could look out on the lake. The canoes were in plain view now, much nearer.

"Good paddlers, anyway," commented Bob, watching the well-synchronized strokes. "They have done that before."

"Uh-huh," grumbled Hi-Bub. "But, just the same, I wish they___"

"Listen," exclaimed Marge. "They are singing."

We cupped our hands to our ears. The canoeists were still far away, but we could catch the strain. They were singing in unison and paddling to the rhythm of their song. Giny caught my arm. "Sam, there are women's voices," she exclaimed excitedly. "Do you hear what they are singing?"

"I think I do, though I can hardly believe my ears.

Listen now."

Faintly but clearly the melody came to us, and there were voices of both men and women. There was no mistaking it-we knew the melody only too well.

"It's the Sanctuary Lake song!" cried Hi-Bub.

"It surely is," agreed Giny enthusiastically. "Sam, do you suppose it could be-"

"Ada, June, Ray-it is they! No one else would sing that."

"June? Do you really think it's June?" exclaimed HiBub with a little happy giggle.

"Who is the fourth one?" asked Giny.

"Mighty fine paddler, but I can't identify him," I said, studying the figures. "Thought he might be Sandy, but he isn't tall enough. Let's see if we can get their attention."

Stepping to the outermost part of the rock, I gave what my friends term my Indian war whoop, famed for its power though not for elegance. "Wahoo-o-o!" The sound went bounding about the lake. "Wahoo-o-o-o!" went a second blast.

The paddling stopped in the canoes far below. An answer came, mild but musical in comparison. Taking a handkerchief from my pocket I began waving it in big semicircles above my head, while the rest of the party joined in calling. The canoeists discovered us, and answered with calls and waves.

Now our descent of the hill took on the nature of a race, Hi-Bub in the lead. He wasn't running just to see those canoes!

We reached our camp site before the canoeists did, and stood at the water's edge to welcome them. They came paddling with all their strength. Ada was in the bow of the first canoe, Ray paddling astern. In the bow of the second was sparkling, pretty June. And who was the fourth member of the party, handling the stern of June's canoe in such masterly manner? Hi-Bub identified him first. He gasped a little, and then burst forth with an exclamation that rivaled my war whoop: "Ancient!" I thought the lad was going to wade right into the water.

Truly it was Ancient, mustache, whiskers and all. "Hello-o-o, Leetle Fella," he called gleefully. Soon the woods were echoing with our greetings, questions and answers. Hi-Bub was hugged by everyone, including June. Ancient distributed his pump-handle handshakes promiscuously.

"We hoped Sandy could come along as our guide." Ray finally had a chance to make some explanations. "He couldn't get away. Ancient was the only one who knew the way. He didn't want to come until Sandy reminded him that the `Leetle Fella' was here-then no one could hold him back. Ancient is a great woodsman!"

Somewhere back of his whiskers Ancient smiled at the compliment. "Dees fella wan strong man." He pointed to the grinning Ray. "I not see wan lak heem long time. He leef canoe wees wan ban'. I seenk, he carry me too, mebbe."

"You're a good man yourself." Ray laughed, slapping Ancient on the back. "You should see this fellow put a portage behind him. He makes us all puff. And can he handle a canoe!

Tent space for our friends was now selected. Ancient took his little tent away back where he could "hold zee woods in zee lap," as he put it. Ada, June and Ray selected a spot where they could look out on the salt lick. Already the story of Moo-Moo had been partly told. June flattered Hi-Bub's masculine egotism by begging him to help her pet the moose. With an air of considerable importance, Hi-Bub agreed.

In Ancient's spacious packsack was a tremendous surprise. There were three loaves of real bread! It was a little old and crushed out of shape, from the packing, but it was

honest-to-goodness bread. In city life we take these everyday things for granted, not knowing how we miss them when they are not available. Just think of it, real bread—and canned butter, too! It seemed impossible that such an outburst of fortune could come to us.

"An' you know what I forget?" asked Ancient.

"What was it?"

"I feex up package I know you want, I put heem on shelf and, voila, I leev heem!" The old man slapped his hands together.

"But what did you leave, Ancient?" I questioned. "Leetle Fella he want heem. I know. I weesh I no forget."

"But what was it?" Giny inquired.

"Eet was wan beeg bunch sugar!"

"Sugar!" we all groaned.

"Oui-and plenty choc-late, plenty choc-late!" Ancient shook his head apologetically. "You mebbe have much?" "Much? Why, Ancient, there isn't one grain of sugar in this camp," I exclaimed. "We lost it all in a storm. We are on a ration of one square of chocolate per person each day to make it last."

"Don't worry," Ray said, assuming an attitude of assurance. "We fixed that all right. We brought along plenty of supplies of every kind—except one."

"Now what did you forget?" asked Bob.

"Sugar!"

Another chorus of groans went up. "The only element of civilization we long for," moaned Marge. "I wonder if I shall ever see sugar again."

"See heem?" broke in Ancient. "You lak you should see heem? Look. See what I breeng." He reached into his pocket and brought forth a dozen pieces of lump sugar. "See heem is all you do," he said, drawing back his hand as the whole group made ready to rush. "Zees I put in pocket for L'Orignac."

"L'Orignac—the moose—he likes sugar?" asked Hi-Bub.

"Lak eet? Leetle Fella, he loave eet. Ho, my pet leetle moose, he follow me, poosh me, ask 'pleez geev me sugar.' I geev heem some, not much—mebbe not good for heem, but he lak." Ancient put his sugar back in his pocket, ignoring the hands that were stretched beseechingly toward him. "Ho, you not need heem. Eet is for L'Orignac!"

Moo-Moo did not come to meet our new guests the first day. Likely there were too many new voices, and too much excitement.

It was a day for fun and celebration in camp. Dinner was a special one, having that which seldom attends a canoe-country meal-dessert. Giny concocted an original brand of peach shortcake. She baked biscuits by making an oven out of two frying pans. The fruit was our dried peaches with a few blueberries put in for good measure. It tasted wonderful! After this came the distribution of chocolate. I noticed that Hi-Bub did not eat his.

"I think I'll save mine for after a while," he said in answer to my question.

"O. K., Hi-Bub," I replied. "This camp is a democracy and we believe in individual freedom, even with so invaluable a thing as a bite of chocolate."

Seldom have I seen people rise to the level of such uncompromised joy as did our group on Sanctuary Lake that night. We gathered about our campfire in the gayest of spirits. It was such a well-ordered evening, with everything working out as if it had been planned and rehearsed. First there was group singing to the accompaniment of the guitar. We sang old songs that were stimulating to memory, and of rich associations. Ancient did not know our music, but enjoyed it nonetheless. Obviously he loved to see and hear people sing. When a tune having much rhythm was given, he beat time with his foot, clapped his hands at the conclusion and uttered sentences in Canadian French, which none of us understood.

When the interest in singing began to lag, Ray suggested that June tell us the latest news of the chimney swifts back at our cabin in Wisconsin. She did so in a sweet, charming and unaffected way. Hi-Bub's eyes never left her, except when he found someone else looking at him. "You still could not have a grate fire," she said. The swifts were occupying the flue. She told how they had deserted the nest, but not the chimney. Halfway up this inner wall they clung to little cracks between the bricks, hanging on through the combined effort of their sharp tail feathers and their strong talons. The mother and father brought them food regularly, and the little ones made an awful fuss. "I feel sorry for those parent birds," said June. "They must have gathered tons of insects, more or less."

"Less, I think," said Hi-Bub.

"Yes, I suppose so," went on June. "But they winter at the Gulf of Mexico, and I should think they ought to be on their way."

Our other feathered friends were staying close to the cabin, June said. Nutty the nuthatch, Blooey the blue jay, Cheer the red-winged blackbird and the chickadees were always at hand.

Ray then requested Ada to tell about our raccoons and woodchucks. The coon tribe was increasing, she said, until the island fairly boiled with them. One evening she counted sixteen at the feeding station. They were becoming more friendly all the time. When the

door of our cabin was left open, half a dozen of them would come right in and wander all around. When June sat on the front steps there were raccoons about her feet and in her lap. Orphan Annie and L'il Abner, the woodchucks, were putting on weight rapidly now, being so fat they could roll as fast as they could walk.

Ray then told that he had been back several times to see the red squirrels, Nuisance, Still-Mo and Pug. They were enjoying their new quarters apparently. He fed them some peanuts just for old times' sake, and left them. Giny and I breathed a sigh of relief. Likely our home would still be there when we returned, after all.

Hi-Bub was then asked to tell about Moo-Moo. He was so vivid in his descriptions everyone was fascinated. He told of the first night the baby moose was discovered in camp, and what a stirring experience it was to see her. In order came the account of making the salt lick, of Moo-Moo's first appearance in daylight, and ultimately his experience of touching her on the nose.

Ancient's face was a study as he listened. His eyes sparkled and he leaned forward to catch every word. He chuckled and slapped his leg in delight as Hi-Bub finished. "Leetle Fella, you mak wan gran' voyageur. You no 'f raid. When you no 'f raid, animal no 'f raid of you. We see zees Moo-Moo tonight, n'est-ce pas?"

"I think so, Ancient—if we are quiet."

"We can't be quiet yet, Hi-Bub," said Ray. "There is one more treat to add to this evening. Ancient brought his violin—his fiddle, he says it is."

"I breeng heem so I teach Leetle Fella canoe songs," said Ancient.

Leaving the circle he went to his tent and returned with his fiddle. He made us understand he wanted to teach us songs that had never been written, melodies and words handed down from one generation to the next only by singing.

That night the world seemed to turn backward a hundred years for us all. Ancient's fiddling would have drawn no praise from a music critic. His instrument was slightly out of tune, his sense of rhythm far from perfect, but his playing was spirited and had within it the charm of folklore tradition and antiquity. Down the still stretches of Sanctuary Lake sounded the strains that had paced the paddle strokes of the voyageurs, lightened their portages and enlivened their camps. Before long we were all singing "A-rolling my Ball," "At the Clear Running Fountain" and other tunes Ancient drew from his inexhaustible memory.

If he had been inspiring to us in the warehouse, he was a thousand-fold more so in the wild environs of Sanctuary Lake. This was his native air. Into such camps he had come in decades past, in company with strong men tired from exhausting labor. They had refreshed themselves with singing more than rest. The next day would bring more labor. They would meet it with singing. There would be storms and difficult rapids. They would

sail through it all singing. The wilderness echoed with their songs through joy, sorrow, difficulty or comparative ease. Now Ancient sang again with the forest as a sounding board.

The silent silhouettes of rugged pine foliage against starlit heavens, the black glass surface of the lake, the ebony carved distant shore, the firelight on tree trunks, the circle of happy, smiling friends and Ancient with his fiddle made a picture to crown all memories.

"Sam Campbell, couldn't you make a picture of this?" asked June softly.

"No, sweet child, the camera is not equal to such a scene," I replied.

"Well-don't let me ever forget it, will you?" She seemed at the point of tears. "I never saw anything more beautiful, and I know I never will."

"Me neither," said Hi-Bub.

"We won't forget it," I assured them. "We will talk about it, dream about it and write about it. I am grateful the camera cannot record it. The finest scenes nature has to offer must be photographed with our hearts and developed in love. Because you love it so means that you couldn't ever lose it."

"Thank you," whispered June.

Ancient was putting his fiddle away. The night was half gone. Reluctantly we put out the campfire. Then speaking in subdued tones we walked to the shore for a view across Sanctuary Lake. I heard Ancient utter his little characteristic grunt repeatedly as he contemplated this solitude. When we turned to leave for our several tents, he put his arms about Hi-Bub and June, leading them ahead of the crowd.

"Le Bon Dieu he loave zee woods var' much," I heard him say. "He mus' loave eet, 'cause he mak eet so beeg."

"I guess then if He loves it, He won't let anything spoil it, will He, Ancient?" asked Hi-Bub.

"Spoil eet? Ah, Leetle Fella, noseeng spoil zee woods. Man he try, but zee woods she come back. Zee woods she is wees us always."

XXII
WHEN THE WILDERNESS SINGS

WE WERE awakened the following morning by the crackling sound of fire. It was still very early and the rays of the sun, weakened by a curtain of forest mist, had just begun to lay a pattern of foliage shadows on our tent. Early morning hours have a chill to them in the North Country, and the voice of the fire gave a warm invitation. I poked my head

out of the tent flaps to see what was going on. There was Ancient busy about the fire making preparations for breakfast. A moment later Ray's head looked out of his tent door, then Bob peered out from his canvas cabin. "Hi there, Ancient," I called. "Don't you believe in sleep?"

"Sleep, anh—" He looked around. "Sometam sleep she rob you. I lak hear zee dawn seeng. Beside, Moo-Moo she come. She wan pretty moose gairl. Eef I sleep, I no see her. We hort her feeling and she no come more."

"Moo-Moo was here?" I exclaimed. Right then Hi-Bub's head came popping out.

"Where?" he asked.

"She no wait for you, lazybone," said Ancient, putting more wood on the fire. "She lick salt, zen she go 'way."

"Could you pet her, Ancient?" came June's voice from the depths of her tent.

"No-I not try. Mebbe when she come next tam.

Allez—all you shake you foots. Come, we have surprise for breakfes'. What you theenk-some eggs."

"Eggs!" came the cry from all the tents. We had forgotten such things existed.

"Oui, oui, oui," laughed Ancient, delighted at our surprise. "I carry heem in bucket, wees sawdust. Eggs for only wan breakfas', so come queek."

The odors of the cooking were drifting into our tents. We lost no time in dressing and racing down to the lake shore to wash in the cold water. Oh, those eggs! How grand they were, served with real toast!

"Anh-you lak heem." Ancient was pleased at how well his surprise had gone over. "You ver' hoongree for heem-eet ees good. Leetle Fella, deed you evair go two day wees noseeng to eat?"

Hi-Bub never had.

"Anh, zen you nevair enjoy a dinnair. I have. When you find food, you eat zee plate she come on. How 'bout anozzer egg, Leetle Fella—and you, Sweet Wan?" He had found June's plate empty.

That morning we saw a demonstration of Ancient's ability with moose. Moo-Moo returned to become the center of attention. Suddenly she was discovered at the salt lick, having approached in that marvelous, mysterious way of hers. Each member of our group stopped what he was doing and stood watching the fascinating young creature. Hi-Bub, feeling that he had first claim on MooMoo, started toward her, but Ancient restrained him. "Wait, Leetle Fella," he said. "I see eef she have sweet toot." We found it was a "sweet tooth" he had in mind.

This scene was another precious memory in the making. The quiet and patience of nature seemed personified in Ancient as he advanced toward Moo-Moo. She watched him with curiosity but not alarm. Ancient was making an odd, soft sound in his throat. Later he told us it was the call the cow moose makes to her calf. Moo-Moo was much impressed with it. She turned from her salt lick and took a step in his direction. Her eyes widened, her ears came forward and her nostrils questioned the atmosphere. Obviously she was puzzled. This might be the voice of a moose mother, but certainly this was the funniest-looking one she had ever seen.

Ancient approached the salt lick from the opposite side of the log. Still the soft sounds continued, and Moo-Moo turned her head toward him. Now, in slow motion, he reached forward and placed one lump of sugar on the log, then he stepped back. Moo-Moo regarded the new, white tiny object with interest. Slowly she reached her huge nose down, sniffed at it, and then it disappeared into her cavernous mouth. Apparently she had a "sweet toot."

Ancient placed a second cube of sugar on the log. Moo Moo took that. The third one he offered from his open hand at the same place on the log where the other two had been put. The calf hesitated at this, but reassured by the mother-moose sounds, she finally reached down and took the offering, much to the delight of all.

Ancient gave her no more sugar that morning. The supply was limited and she had to be rationed just as we did.

Before Moo-Moo walked away into the woods for her midday nap, Ancient had patted her nose and scratched back of her ears. For fully twenty minutes Moo-Moo had

permitted him to stand within arm's length of her. Hi-Bub's excitement was justified at the performance, as were the exclamations of the rest of us.

This whole volume might have been written of the five days Ancient spent in our camp. His knowledge of the forest was matched by his enthusiasm for it. He never tired of investigation, study and observation. June expressed it well when she said, "You know, Sam, it seems that we are visitors here—but Ancient is the forest." He was as natural to the wilderness as the trees, and the sacred spirit of the place was enriched by his presence.

Ancient loved our Moose Meadows as did we all. Our first visit there, even though the whole group went, brought some unusual experiences. We saw a young bull moose two hundred yards from us, head lowered while he fiercely slashed at the brush with his antlers. "Anh," grunted Ancient. "Zee velvet on hees horn she come off. See how he rub heem against tree." This action meant that the horns on this animal were fully grown. Right where they join the head, a ridge of bone had developed, shutting off the blood vessels which had nourished the growth of the antlers. Now he would rub the covering skin or "velvet" off, leaving only a bone horn. Looking through binoculars we could see shreds of this velvet hanging about the head of the creature. It was a sight that was new to everyone except Ancient.

At another hour far back in the Moose Meadow area Ancient quietly plucked at my sleeve directing my attention to a little ridge and saying, "Look, eet ees wan beeg dog." We looked up to see a huge timber wolf trotting along. I was so excited I nearly jumped out of my shoes. It is a rare thing indeed to see these animals. Often we hear them and we find their big tracks, but to see one in full daylight was startling. Everyone wanted the binoculars at the same time. While we were looking, Ancient shocked us by giving a perfect wolf howl. It was so well done that the animal we were watching stopped short and looked our way. Apparently we were not what he expected to see, for he leaped ahead and disappeared into some brush.

Ancient could read animal tracks as clearly as another might read a book. We led him to the area where moose had made a circle with their great hoof prints. He agreed that it was "danceeng groun'." "I nevair see zem dance," he replied to my question. "I only find dees place plenty tam. Old guides say zey see heem dance—mebbe, I dunno." Then we came to a place where the ground was literally plowed up by moose hoofs. Brush had been uprooted, and small trees broken off. "Would the bulls be fighting so early, Ancient?" I asked, my own conclusion being that we had come on record of a mating season battle.

"Non!" Ancient shook his head. "Two more moons, zen zey fight for lady loave. Look!" Cautioning us not to erase the interesting story by our own footprints, he pointed out the tracks of a bear mingling with those of moose. It was a tangled mass of hieroglyphics

Ancient had to unravel, but he did it so expertly that we had a complete story. Two bull moose had been corning from the direction of the dancing ground, one being considerably larger than the other. Right here they had been surprised by a bear.

"Mebbe bear not hunt," said Ancient. "Mebbe all tree surprise. But zey fight. And how brave zey fight. See here zee bear raise on hin' legs. Zee beeg moose charge. Anh, L'Orignac, he not 'fraid noseeng. He jump, he strike. See here, leetle moose he go down, bear tracks near heem. Beeg moose charge." There was a print left in the mud by the body of a moose, and large tracks showing the charge of the other. Now the bear had rolled over, probably from the impact of the larger moose. Bruin had enough of the encounter then. His tracks led away into the forest. The two moose had left the battle ground together. Ancient was so dramatic in his description of the struggle that we felt as if we had been looking upon the spectacle.

"Oh! Oh!" Hi-Bub blurted breathlessly and then he added quickly, "But I think no one got hurt, don't you Ancient?"

"Leetle Fella," said Ancient, recognizing the kindness of the lad. "I seenk zees fellas plenty tough. Zey not hort too bad."

With his ability to imitate, Ancient sometimes created amusing situations. One afternoon some crows were flying over for the evening meal. He imitated the crow call so perfectly the birds circled and returned, lighting in the trees right above him. "Ho, ho, you ole black rascal, I fool you, n'est-ce pas?" he cried in delight. The crows, recognizing their mistake, frantically flew away, uttering most raucous cries. "Anh!" grunted Ancient, continuing his work. "How you talk! I would not say sooch theengs, eef I could."

Another time he gave two loons quite a problem. He and Hi-Bub were fishing from the canoe, when the loons came sailing into the lake looking like winged arrows. When they were settled on the water, Ancient gave the loon call. It is difficult to do and few people ever get it right, but Ancient did it perfectly. Puzzled and talking in their own language, the loons came swimming toward the canoe. Hi-Bub and Ancient were still, except for his continual calling. The birds came within five feet of the canoe. They craned their necks and tried their best to understand. When they discovered it was a hoax, they dived and did not come up until they were fifty yards from the canoe. Like the crows, they were highly indignant. Flying so low their wings struck the water at every beat, they raced down the lake, crying loudly. Hi-Bub tried to imitate their call then, and he sounded like a yodeler with a frog in his throat.

In camp, Moo-Moo was becoming more friendly hourly. June had given her a cube of the precious sugar, and rubbed the animal's nose while the creature was intrigued with the taste. Hi-Bub also had fed his pet a lump of the sugar, and succeeded in petting the animal's shoulder. But the most thrilling sight of all was when Ancient came walking up from his tent with Moo-Moo following but a few steps behind him.

"But what are we going to do with her when we leave?" worried Hi-Bub, for that time was approaching. "She will come here and not find us. Will she be lonesome?"

"Ho, ho l" laughed Ancient. "Come 'nother moon, Moo-Moo look for boy frien'. She not worry 'bout you."

Hi-Bub wasn't entirely convinced, however, and neither was June.

The pace Ancient set at the camp was a strenuous one. We were up at dawn on animal hunts, up late nights at our campfire gatherings and sometimes up during the night to investigate mysteries of the forest. We were beginning to tire, and particularly was this true of June and Hi-Bub. They wanted to be a part of everything that was done, and their strength was not equal to their enthusiasm. This situation was the background of a trying experience during the fourth day of their visit.

It was near dinnertime, and all of us were busy cooking and setting the table. Hi-Bub was particularly interested in the fire that blazed under suspended kettles, for under Ancient's direction he had started it without a match. It was a tedious process, but he did it and now was quite proud of his work. The moment came when we were all called to the table. The old familiar "Come and get it" echoed about camp. Then for the first time we noticed that June was not among us. We called, but there was no answer. Who had seen her? The only bit of information came from Hi-Bub, who said that June had started to follow Moo-Moo, when the moose had walked away from camp. More calling met with no response. The sun was low, and if June were out in the forest it would not be long until she would have trouble finding her way.

Dinner was forgotten, and we spread out in a hurried search of the woods back of the camp. Hi-Bub was much concerned. He went on the run in the direction that Moo-Moo usually traveled. Ancient followed him.

We searched and called for half an hour with no results. Now we were becoming quite concerned. It looked like a real search was going to be necessary, so Bob and I returned to camp for flashlights. When Bob walked up to his tent, he let out a sharp exclamation, "June, for heaven's sake, have you been here all the time?" A sleepy voice replied, "Why, yes, Daddy. Oh, I was so sleepy. Where are all the others?"

"Out in the woods looking for you!" exclaimed Bob.

"Oh, Sam, here she is. Been fast asleep all the time."

"Thank goodness," I said, as I walked toward their tent. "We thought you were lost, child. Didn't you hear us call?"

"No, I didn't hear a thing until Daddy came into the tent," she replied, walking out all full of yawns. "I am terribly sorry if I caused trouble."

"No trouble at all, just a little excitement to stir us up," I assured her. "We will have them all back to dinner in a hurry."

A few minutes of calling and our party began returning through the gathering gloom of the forest. There was much talking and laughing at the incident, and it was difficult to know who was most embarrassed, we that we had not thought to look in the tent, or June that she had been the cause of it all.

"Now-where is Hi-Bub?" asked June.

"Haven't I heard that before somewhere?" asked Bob, putting his hands to his head. Some way the situation did not feel humorous.

"He went toward the swamp," I explained. "He said June was following Moo-Moo. Ancient was following him. We had better get out there with our lights."

Bob, Ray and I headed into the woods again. The experience had taken a serious turn, and I was having a struggle to keep fear from entering my thoughts. We walked rapidly over the level ground and up over the rock hill that lay between us and the swamp area.

Our search was not a long one. In answer to our calls came out of the brush ahead of us the howl of a wolf, followed quickly by the cry of a loon, then the caw of a crow. Into the rays of our flashlight walked Ancient, carrying Hi-Bub on his back. They were wet and daubed with mud, but both smiling. "Zees light, she ees welcome," said Ancient, as we hastened to him. "Woods she wan dark place."

"Oh, but we are glad to see you," I exclaimed. "Is Hi-Bub all right?"

"Leetle Fella? Anh-noseeng happen to good man like heem." Ancient stood his burden on the ground. "Wan ankela, she is hort a leetle, but she is O.K. plenty soon, n'est-ce pas, Leetle Fella?"

"Sure it will," Hi-Bub said. "Ancient was afraid I would hurt it worse, so he carried me-but I'm all right.

Did you find June?" He was assured that June was all right.

"All this mud on you," put in Ray. "Where have you been, in a moose wallow?"

"Sam Cammel," Hi-Bub said, much excited. "It was the funniest mud. I fell in, and I couldn't get up. I kept going down."

"Quicksand!" I exclaimed, looking at Ancient. "Oui!"

"Then Ancient came," Hi-Bub went on. "Was I glad to see him! He brought logs and laid them in the mud and sand, then he crawled out and got me."

Bob and Ray exchanged looks of understanding. This was no light experience, but one packed with danger. Hi-Bub did not yet understand what he had been through.

"Zees ees no tam for talk," shouted Ancient, to change the mood. "How about some dinnair? Hi-Bub cannot leeve on mud pies. Allez!"

"But what happened to June?" questioned Hi-Bub. Bob and I had made a seat with our hands and we were carrying him along.

"She was in camp all the time," Ray explained. "Sound asleep in her tent. Just dead tired, I guess."

"Asleep?" Hi-Bub was incredulous. Then he added in a tone of disgust, "She would be!"

There was much rejoicing when we reached camp. Hi-Bub was the hero of the occasion. I never saw a boy get more mothering in three minutes than he did, and he loved it. Even June took part and when she said, "HiBub, you are wonderful. I'm so sorry for what I did," he heard only the first part of the sentence. His ankle was hurt only slightly and he was walking with just a little limp. It was a happy dinner, and as the facts of the experience were fully learned, all hearts were filled with gratitude. Later our campfire songs had extra spirit to them. On Giny's suggestion we closed the eventful evening with a prayer.

As we were going to our tents, I singled out Ancient. "I know well what happened tonight, Ancient. You saved Hi-Bub's life." He tried to silence me with a wave of his hand, but I continued. "We all appreciate what you have done. You like that boy a lot, don't you?"

"Anh, Leetle Fella ees one gran' boy," he said, with a smile that hid back of his whiskers. "One tam long, long way back, I have other leetle fella lak heem."

"Your son?" I asked.

"Oui. I call heem L'Orignac. He loave zee woods. Animals all loave heem. We canoe together, hunt, camp.

He one gran' boy. Zen——"

Ancient hesitated.

"What happened?" I asked, sympathetically.

"L'Orignac go on Gran' Portage," he said, and he waved his hand toward the heavens.

"His mother?" I asked.

"She was Indian," said Ancient. "She mak Gran' Portage after heem."

We were silent for a moment. Laughter came from the tents where the others were preparing for their sleeping bags. "I not sad," broke in Ancient suddenly. "Le Bon Dieu He is square. Sometam I understand. Bon nuit!

See zat Leetle Fella he is warm. Wake up wees song, beeg day tomorrow."

I watched the grand old character as he walked with unfaltering step toward his tent, and then I went to mine with a prayer of gratitude on my lips.

XXIII
NOTES AND NOTIONS

IT WAS snowing that winter day at the Sanctuary. The flakes were that lovely, large white kind that do not fall but rather settle down to the earth. As Giny and I looked through them from the windows of our cabin, the whole world seemed polka-dotted. Then through the trees came a wave of those pert little chickadees, each one about the size of a snowflake. I went out to them and both they and the snow settled on my head and shoulders. "Better be nice to them," Giny called through the window. "Remember, if it weren't for those birds likely we wouldn't be here." My sincere gratitude was expressed through the medium of a handful of crumbs, which they consumed in a hurry.

Our cabin was warm, cozy, inviting. The furnace was living up to all expectations. We had been sitting in front of a grate fire watching its dancing flames. Yes, we could have a grate fire! The chimney swifts were somewhere in the far south, though it was mid-September before they departed. In fact, we felt as if we owned our home once more. Still-Mo, Pug and Nuisance had never returned from their city in the forest. The raccoons and woodchucks entered hibernation and held to it. Yes, our house was our own-until springtime would come to start things happening again.

Giny was thumbing through the loose-leaf book in which we made notes during the Canadian adventure. Those memories were more precious to us every day, and we did not want one of them to get away from us. "Remember how silly we were the night

before the folks left?" asked Giny laughing. "The book just says `We danced to Ancient's fiddle music'-but that doesn't half tell it."

"Who could forget it?" I asked. "Hi-Bub forgot that his ankle was supposed to be sprained, and he hopped around like a sparrow."

Ancient had insisted upon the dance. Real canoemen always danced the night before a journey began. He showed us the right steps, which consisted mostly of a series of kicks and a lot of jumping up and down. Then he fiddled the proper melodies. There was a rhythm to his playing that almost set the trees to swaying. Our fire blazed high that night, to match our spirits. Moo-Moo had come up near camp, and we saw her dark form near the limit of the campfire glow. When she saw what was going on, she left in a hurry, however, possibly thinking we were going on the warpath.

Giny turned another page of the notebook. "You have entered here that Ancient would permit no one to be sad at departure," she said. "He made them sing, remember?" The moment of our friend's leaving was not only a pleasant picture, it was a lesson-a sermon. It would have been mighty easy for everyone to be heavyhearted.

Ancient would have none of this, however. "Seeng! Seengl" he cried. Did we think Le Bon Dieu had gone bankrupt? There were just as grand things before them as they were leaving behind.

They paddled away in merry mood, stroking to the rhythm of Ancient's canoe song. Giny, Marge, Bob, Hi'Bub and I hastened through the woods to the hill from which we had first seen the canoes approaching. We bid them Godspeed with most powerful "Wahoo-o-o-os," and heard their answering calls.

"Man is master of his moods," Giny said, as we saw them disappearing. "Within ourselves is the ability to change unhappiness into happiness."

It was a week later when we broke camp and began the journey home. Many pages of the notebook were filled with accounts of new experiences with moose, deer, bear-experiences similar to those we had before, and yet there was always an element of newness.

"And here it speaks of the way Moo-Moo behaved during the last several days," said Giny, pausing at a page.

"I have written `She seems to know we are leaving. Continually she is around the camp. She follows Hi-Bub the way she did Ancient. All lumps of sugar have long since been given her. She seems only to want the companionship."'

"And will you ever forget that morning when we were leaving?" Giny put down her notebook and laughed. As we were loading the canoes, the inevitable query came up,

"Where is Hi-Bub?" Our shouts brought an immediate answer. He was back in the woods looking for the moose, just wanted one more sight of her. Moo-Moo apparently did not like to say good-by, for she was nowhere around. Hi-Bub stopped at the salt lick for a moment, and then came on. I stepped back into the campground to look about and make sure nothing was forgotten. I noticed a peculiar small object on the salt-lick log, and went over to investigate. There was a little pile of chocolate squares. For the last few days Hi-Bub had been saving his "for later" as he said. Now it was revealed. He had been planning a good-by present for Moo-Moo.

"Bless his heart," said Giny, now nearing the end of the book. "Was there ever a kinder, more manly youngster than he?"

Our return trip had been rough, but without incident. Sandy greeted us at the warehouse. Ancient was there too. While he and Hi-Bub went into a huddle, now both being veteran voyageurs, the rest of us visited with Sandy. I told him of the visit of the airplane, and what a scar it had left on the wilderness atmosphere. "I remember you told us the airplane was a worse threat than roads or commercial interests had been," I said. "But I didn't realize how true it was until that plane arrived."

"It is a serious threat," declared Sandy, "but I can give you a ray of hope." He told about the renewed efforts of nature-loving public-spirited citizens. A plan was launched in both Canada and the United States to create in this country an International Peace Forest, commemorating the years of peace between the two nations. Sixteen thousand square miles of the canoe wilderness reaching into both countries would be involved. The central region of this great track (where Sanctuary Lake is located) would be proclaimed a wilderness area. Laws would be enacted to keep it as nearly as possible the way it was when the voyageurs were there. No roads would enter this region. No resorts would be permitted there. No cabins could be built. More important still, airplanes would not be permitted to land.

"You wrote the notes that night," said Giny, fingering the page. "Let me read your thoughts on it. You say, 'Some men, like those of the plane, may think at first this deprives them of something. A few selfish ones will grumble because they cannot indulge this fishing and hunting without restraint. But anyone who has seen the effect of unscarred wilderness on the character of growing youth will support it wholeheartedly. The character that has made America great was formed under the influence of liberty. Our ideas of liberty come from the freedom inherent in nature. It isn't just the out-of-doors that so influences our thought; it is the primitive atmosphere, the Spirit of the Wilderness.

“We dare not let it slip through our fingers. There must be a place where Hi-Bub and many others like him can go and find that frontier hardiness and purity which alone will satisfy the yearning in their hearts. America will lose something irreplaceable and

precious if she lets this last wilderness go; she will preserve in the hearts of her youth something vital to her own existence if she saves it. The presence of this wilderness area on the continent will not only benefit those who visit it, as we do; it will inspire and encourage all who even hear of it to know that the world is not wholly impoverished of the heritage of virginal beauty.' "

Giny closed her book, for this was the last entry. In days that followed, Hi-Bub and his family had moved to the city. They were busy and happy, a recent letter from him had told us. He liked his school, and the Scout troop he had joined. They lived near a forest preserve, and he had found many interesting birds and animals. A postscript read: "Just had a Christmas card from Ancient."

That evening June, Ada and Ray would be out to the cabin. No doubt we would sing as many of Ancient's songs as we could remember, and we would relive the scenes of our canoe trip.

"Now what comes next?" asked Giny, who loves plans. "Are there any new worlds to conquer?"

"Well, I have been thinking of that lake we heard of in the Canadian Rockies," I replied. "You will recall the report that there are mountain lions there. I have always wanted to get acquainted with those big cats. It takes a pack trip to get there, so maybe we will find the wilderness waiting for us."

"Sounds good to me," agreed Giny. "I like kitties of any size, even when they have stripes down their backs. Would you-er-try to take Hi-Bub along?"

"Hi-Bub!" I exclaimed meditatively. "I suppose he would have every mountain lion in the region acting like a house cat. He would make pals of every Indian Chief and Canadian Mounty. In fact, I don't see how I could get along without him!"