

ST. ANNE OF THE MOUNTAINS

doors now stand invitingly open, and from whose every window gleam welcoming lights.

Next the crackling of a lively fire is heard, and soon, from kitchen precincts, steal the most appetizing odors. Nor have we long to wait till we are summoned to that genial centre—the dining-room table. A centre where glows the brightest of all the lights and where forest nosegays nod their fragrant welcomes.

And the feast?

It consists of smoking hot coffee, and smoking hot trout; of potatoes still singing the frying-pan scherzo; of hot buttered toast, of hot pancakes, of tasty galettes. Indeed it represents a genuine triumph on the part of our guides; and a more satisfied or more light-hearted company than ours it would be hard to find.

But suddenly something happens. An occurrence commonplace and frequent enough in the commonplace world where we have hitherto lived, but of unusual significance in this place of remoteness and solitude; and especially impressive in the hours of darkness.

A guide from the outer staff knocks at the door and announces that some unknown persons are approaching.