

CHAPTER II.

A NEW HOPE.

AFTER thinking these matters all over again, Rodney picked up his coat and stick and again resumed his journey.

He had walked but a few rods when a boyish whoop burst from his lips at the sight of the tents of the regular troops, on the side of the river opposite the town, which had before been shut off from his view by a strip of timber.

As he approached past the old fort, he noticed that it was occupied.

A group of smaller boys were crowding about the entrance to the stockade and staring at the men inside.

"Who are they?" Rodney inquired of the spell-bound youngsters.

"Scouts!" was the whispered answer, from half a dozen of the awed half-breed children.

Not until then had he realized that he was in the presence of war. The fighting at Duck Lake had seemed very far off in the cold newspaper type. It made his blood leap to watch the scouts cleaning their "Snyders" and revolvers; and he found himself wishing that he might enlist with them.

But as he turned away from this fascinating sight