

## THE SCOUT'S MESSAGE

farm under certain sharing terms. Although this plan was more expensive at the outset, it was really cheaper when inexperience was considered. The boys had been well advised that inexperience is expensive, while good tuition is worth paying for, even though the first outlay be considerable; and in this way the chums soon settled down into a life that was as congenial as it promised to be moderately profitable.

At the time when our story begins, the boys were in their second year at Moose Creek, a tributary to the Saskatchewan River. On this special afternoon they were on the track of a certain rare black fox that Ab Carse (the male Scotch-Canadian afore-mentioned) had reported as having been seen in the vicinity during the previous evening.

On reaching a clearing where travellers usually camped—being a fork in the trails branching to Black Crossing and Lone Lake—Jack suddenly reined in his broncho, at the same time uttering the exclamation :

“ Well, I never ! ”

Grammatically, of course, the words have very little meaning that goes for sense. Euphemistically, however, they imply all the astonishment that can be packed into small space.

Sympathetically, Beverley also tightened rein, at the same time turning a questioning look towards his companion.