

fore me was Armitage Lake. The snow had been falling too thickly when we had reached the lake for me to see what it was like, but that before me tallied pretty well with Joe's description of the former.

"If this was Armitage Lake, where was Joe? To search for him was clearly my first duty. Returning to my camp I secured the remains of my last hare; but though I spent the whole day in tramping up and down not a sign of any living creature was to be seen, nor anything that resembled the track which my Indian and his dogs would have made. Therefore I went back to the camp to spend my fourth night there, determined the next morning to walk down the lake to Fort Armitage and organize a search party.

"In the morning I was off bright and early. The snow-shoeing was very heavy and my food had not been suitable for one with a hard day's tramp before him. So it was late in the afternoon, before I rounded the turn in the lake, just beyond which my idea was that the fort lay. To my utter amazement nothing in the nature of a habitation was in sight. The forest on the lake shore was unbroken and the lake itself abruptly terminated in a river about half a mile further on.

"So great was my disappointment, so overpowering my fatigue that I felt like giving up and lying down upon the snow to die: but after a few minutes of mute despair, my courage reasserted itself. Probably the sight of open water ahead served in a measure to revive my spirits. The outlet of those northern lakes never freezes; and here was a chance to hook a fish or two, and that to a hungry man would be a treat indeed. My fishing line was out in a minute, and without waiting to cut a rod, I threw the flies upon the water. They were seized like a flash by two lusty trout and in as many minutes I had a dozen splendid fish upon the snow. To make a fire, to broil as many trout as I could eat, to eat until I could eat no more, occupied me for the next hour. Then I set about extemporizing a shelter for the night and succeeded pretty well, though the result of my labors was only a poor substitute for the snug like hole in the snow at the other end of the lake.

"The weather continuing cloudy it was not possible to form any idea of the direction likely to take me to the fort; so I resolved to wait a day and spend it in catching and cooking fish and snaring hares. My opinion was that the lake on which I was joined that upon which Fort Armitage was situated, and if this were so, by retracing my steps I would come to the thoroughfare between them. If this were the case two day's tramping at the most ought to take me to my destination.

"For five more weary days I plodded over the snow, sleeping in hastily contrived camps. My feet grew sore

from the chafing of the snow shoe strings. My limbs almost refused to bear me. The little supply of food which I carried became exhausted, though I ate as little as was possible to get along on with. Two or three times despair almost got the upper hand. At length growing weary of exploring lake after lake, I tried to make a straight cut across a ridge of considerable height, hoping that something different from the monotonous line of fir trees might greet my gaze on the other side. Near the top of the ridge a fallen tree lay directly in my path. I had not energy enough to step over it, but sat down upon its trunk from which the wind had swept the snow. In a dreamy way I began to count the days since the

storm, and remember having reached the conclusion that this was Christmas Eve, before, lying on the tree trunk, with my arms clasped around it and my snowshoes dangling from my feet, sleep overcame me.

"My next sensation was that of being violently shaken, and I opened my eyes to find those of Nellie Armitage looking into them.

"Oh, Mr. Markwell," she said, "I'm so glad I've found you."

"So am I was my answer. Neither of the remarks was particularly brilliant; but I have noticed that people are not very brilliant when according to theory they ought to be.

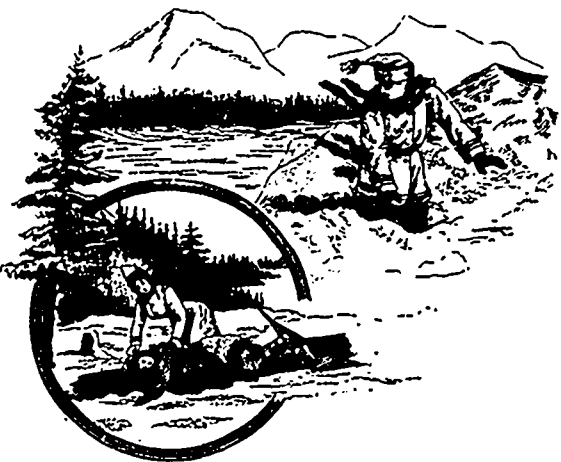
"My rescue had come about simply enough.

"Joe had reached the fort during the second night after we had become separated, and having despatched a messenger for my father, they had organized search parties for me, in which the girls participated, they scouting the woods near the fort, the others going further away. Nellie had made a somewhat longer circuit than usual that day, and had crossed my snow shoe track about noon. She had a dog sledge and three dogs with her, but was herself on snow shoes. My track where she crossed it was not more than a mile from the fort, but I had wandered about so much that she was the whole afternoon in coming up with me. Plucky girl that she was she kept on though alone, except for her dogs, but then she knew every foot of the forest in the neighborhood and could have easily found her way home in the moonlight. The place where she finally came upon me sleeping was not two miles from the fort.

"She urged me to take a seat upon the sledge. Though I refused at first and tried to walk, so fatigued was I, that she prevailed upon me with little difficulty to comply with her wishes, whereupon she set out on a run, the dogs following her. In a few minutes we were down upon the lake, when she stopped, took a whistle from her belt and blew vigorously upon it. Then she resumed her running. It was with difficulty that I kept awake, but soon the lights of the fort gleamed



I WARMED IT OVER THE FIRE.



MY RESCUE HAD COME ABOUT SIMPLY ENOUGH.