

party busied themselves repairing rents in their clothing, washing their underwear and bathing in the stream.

"Grub-pile!" shouted the cook, and a hungry crowd swarmed around the steaming kettles, filling their tin plates with pieces of fried bacon, dipping out coffee into tin cups and stowing hot biscuits in their pockets.

The unlooked-for occurrences of the day had driven all thoughts of hunger from Jack; but when he gazed upon the noisy crowd a short distance away he felt solitary and hungry and wished he was one of the company. Presently he observed Macdonald coming to his camp, preceded by a tow-headed youth bearing a large piece of bark on which were a number of dishes emitting a most appetizing odor. The porter set down the rustic server before Jack's tent and rejoined his companions. Jack welcomed Macdonald with a grip of his hand that made the young engineer wince.

"You are thrice welcome," he said, "for I felt lonely even within speaking distance of so many people. Your thoughtfulness and kindness banishes every atom of reserve remaining in me."

"I, also, was lonely among my boys, and resolved to tempt a welcome by bribing you through your stomach," said Macdonald.

"A very effective means for tickling me into good humor on all occasions," Jack remarked with a smile.

Before attacking the dinner, Jack produced a leather portmanteau filled with a variety of delicacies, a cold roast of venison and a tin box containing small cakes