

sounded from down the creek—a yapping and snarling and yelping, followed by the noise of many animals crashing through the bush.

"That's the dogs, Rupert!" muttered Ben. "You get back, partner, and look out for yourself. I've let you in for this, and I'm too done up for you ever to get me out."

Rupert realized the magnitude of the misfortune which had befallen them. If they lost their dog team there was no possible hope for either of them in the midst of this interminable wilderness.

"I'm not leaving you here, Ben," he answered, "or the wolves will be back at you in three minutes. Clench your teeth, while I carry you."

Rupert thanked his stars that he was a powerful man. He heaved his partner on to his shoulder, and shuffled back towards their camp. As they neared it the hubbub subsided, and they saw four or five grey ghosts glide away into the shadows.

From the signs in the snow, it was clear that the wolves had rushed their camp and scattered the terrified dogs. One only of them remained by the fire—the wise old leader, who was huddled so near the flames that his coat was singeing. The sled was overturned, and its precious contents littered all over the snow, a large proportion of their stores being spoilt.

Rupert's first thoughts were for his partner. He pulled out their sleeping bag and helped Ben into it, saying that if the frost got into his wounds it would be a serious matter.

"It's a serious matter anyway," Ben replied. "Three hundred miles from anywhere, one dog, precious little grub, and me disabled."

"We'll pull through somehow," replied Rupert, though all things considered, there was no particular reason why he should think so; then he set to work to build a huge fire in a crescent all round them, and as the flame burnt up he was startled suddenly by a wet muzzle being thrust into his face. It was Bessy, who somehow had escaped the wolves, and five minutes later Sarah, a second dog came back, limping and exhausted.

"That's three dogs, anyway," observed Rupert. "We'll get you out yet, partner."

Rupert experienced a busy night of it, attending his partner's wounds, and getting their gear into order. The muscles of Ben's right leg were badly lacerated, and it would be some time ere he could walk, even if he escaped blood-poisoning and all went well.

At least half of their supply of stores had been destroyed by the wolves, and having set things in order Rupert went back to the dead caribou, fought two wolves for the possession of it, and cut away as much of the meat as he could carry.

The return journey to the shanty was a memorable one. Rupert and his three dogs could manage only to drag the sled for a few yards without resting and tramping down a fresh pathway through the snow. Rupert was beginning to feel the pangs of hunger, for he had put himself on short rations, and would touch none of the caribou meat. That was for his invalid partner, and there was little enough of it. "I'll have to feed you up on the fat of the land," he explained ironically, when Ben urged him to take his share.

It took them four days to regain the shanty, and then came the terrible business of cutting away Ben's clothing. Ben's temperature was up, and his arms and legs were hideously gashed and cut. He must have been suffering agonies, but all he remarked was: "I ain't only let myself in, but I've let you in too. That's what troubles me most."

For a time Ben was too ill to notice that his partner was changing daily. Ben was a sick man, and plenty of food was necessary for him or he would have sunk rapidly. Each day Rupert tramped miles in search of game—tramped on an empty stomach, till sickness forced him to return. He alone realized that they were up against it—three hundred miles from anywhere, three weeks' grub, only three dogs, and his partner sick and disabled. No wonder he begrudged himself every mouthful he took from their precious store.

Rupert's hunting excursions were fruitless. He spoke of wolves in plenty,

## An Appreciation

*The occasion of The Western Home Monthly entering its new home brought us the following generous appreciation from a lady who has read the magazine for fifteen years and who is one of the best known Western Canadian writers. It is almost too much to hope that all our readers will join in her anthem of praise, but we take the liberty of publishing it as an ideal, if not yet attained, well worth aspiring to.—Ed.*

"Like most other Western institutions The Western Home Monthly stands, and has always stood, for real, 'live', up-to-the-minute progressiveness. In individual life one must move forward or backward, for to remain stationary means stagnation. This is no whit less true of the business life. Therefore a change is but a phase of growth, and a move forward and upward becomes a landmark along the path of true success. All who have known and loved this splendid magazine, which, from its inception, upwards of fifteen years ago, has grown to be one of the leading Canadian periodicals, and has been the monthly cheer-bringer to many a lone prairie homestead as well as to thousands of homes of the well-to-do, will note with the keenest interest its entrance upon a new and hitherto undreamed-of prosperity. Upon the eve of another year every well-wisher of the magazine will say 'Godspeed'."

"Among the many Western Canadian publications, The Western Home Monthly is easily the best suited to the interests of the Western home. It is a friend whose acquaintance, once made, no one would willingly relinquish. Its healthy tone and distinctly Western 'atmosphere' as well as its strong moral uplift, carry instant appeal. Being the pioneer magazine of the West it has seen and recorded history—our own history—and if for no other reason it stands unique as a Canadian institution."

"The disastrous fire which wiped out the old home of The Western Home Monthly last spring would seem to be but a stimulating and regenerating process in the evolution of the life of the periodical, for, like the phoenix of old, it has risen from its embers to a fuller and yet more splendid existence."

"They who control the destinies of The Western Home Monthly have endeavoured always to place the public welfare ahead of mere commercial success and the happy result is seen in the constantly increasing subscription lists and in the numerous letters of appreciation which come into the office each day from readers whose common cry is: 'We simply couldn't do without it.'"

"It is a sobering thought to reflect that one's influence may reach from the heart of a busy metropolis like Winnipeg out to the very remotest corners of our great land. The best is none too good to offer the readers of The Western Home Monthly. So, now, upon the threshold of a new year it is good to know that we are to receive 'the best' each month all through the year, as in the past—the best in history, science, fiction, and in all of the various departments which go to make up an all-round family magazine. One of the finest features of the Monthly is the page captioned 'The Philosopher.' Condensed news from all over the globe is given us under the heading 'What the World is Saying.' The twin departments—'The Young Man and His Problem' and 'The Young Woman and Her Problem' are ably handled by leading writers—Rev. Dr. J. L. Gordon and Mrs. P. R. Hamilton. Miss E. Cora Hind, a highly successful journalist and business woman, writes each month for women readers in 'The Woman's Quiet Hour.' There is no phase of Western life with which Miss Hind is not familiar, and her articles are eagerly read by thousands of prairie wives and mothers."

"Mr. Bonnycastle Dale's interesting and often humorous accounts of life along Pacific Coast waters are regular items of the Monthly's bill of fare, and Dr. Leonard K. Hirschberg's medical talks have been a veritable boon to students of hygiene and to all who have at heart the physical welfare of our rising generation. Mr. Max McD. Tait, in his gripping tales of early days in the Alberta foothills, carries us back to the era of the buffalo and the redskin, and gives us many sidelights upon the lawless life of the 'seventies and 'eighties when conflicts between the Royal North-West Mounted Police and whiskey smugglers were matters of everyday occurrence."

"This is the day of the short story. As never before, there is a crying demand for this type of fiction—the crisply written, graphic, thoroughly 'live' tale with a plot and a 'punch'. The Western Home Monthly has among its regular story contributors such writers as: H. Mortimer Batten, Francis Dickie, W. R. Gilbert, E. L. Chicanot, Aubrey Fullerton, M. L. Hayward, Hugh S. Eayrs, Margaret Bemister, Miriam Elston and Charles Dorian. The Monthly owes to a preference for stories which reflect Western life in its truest aspect, and of these it can promise a full complement for the coming year."

"Last, but by no means least, is the Editorial page. Behind all this excellence is the man who has made it possible—the Editor. To him, therefore, as a splendidly able general, one who brings to the conduct of his affairs the larger vision and the broad and optimistic outlook, together with the keen patriotic fervor of the true Westerner, we render respectful homage and look to him for further inspiring leadership."

"May The Western Home Monthly, as it enters into its commodious new home on Bannatyne Avenue, and opens another chapter of its life, continue to be the welcome guest in the thousands of homes of its old established friends, as well as opening up new channels of friendship all over this broad land of ours. May it, like the New Year:

'Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.'

'Ring out old shapes of foul disease;  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.'

'Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be!'

—E. G. B.

but no game other than that which the wolves were to be heard pursuing. "If the wolves can find game it must be somewhere," he told himself. "In my opinion we're somewhere just on the edge of a great game belt, and when Ben can be left I'm going to make a long trip away to the west."

A week later the two men shook hands grimly. It was neck or nothing. Ben had declared himself able to attend his own requirements, so Rupert was going out—out on the greatest hunting trip of his life, for upon its success rested the lives of both of them. His snowshoes were on his feet, his rifle over his shoulder, and the leading malamute at his heels. On his back he carried a light stampede pack containing a little grub, which he had sworn not to touch until compelled. And so the two shook hands, knowing that they might never meet again, and with a cheery "so long," Rupert closed the door of the shanty.

A week dragged by. For Ben it was a week of silence and pain. Never had a year seemed so long, and as the dark gloomy days dragged by, Ben began to think things over. It was his foolhardiness which had let them in for this, and if they both perished miserably in the bush, he was to blame. Rupert's life would be on his hands. He limped across to their stores in the corner, and laid everything out on the floor of the hut. There was not very much more than would make a good square meal for one hearty man.

That night, as he lay awake, Ben pondered the position from another standpoint. Before his mental vision rose a picture of his partner tottering back to the shanty fire—six days from now. "Ben," he would mutter between white lips, "there ain't no game in this eternal wilderness. I've failed. For heaven's pity give me some grub."

Then he pictured himself limping over to the rice bag and shaking out a few grains, turning up the sugar tin for a mere spoonful of sugar, and rummaging in the bag for the last of the onions. And Rupert would look at him and say: "Is that all, Ben?" And he would be compelled to answer in the affirmative, compelled to own that he himself had consumed the rest, he who was solely responsible for their terrible plight.

"No! No!" cried Ben aloud, sitting up in the darkness. "When my partner comes back he'll find a meal awaiting him, even if it's a month to-morrow."

It was, indeed, almost a month later when Ben, white faced and tottering, scooped the last of the flour into the palms of his hands, added the remains of the sugar and some baking powder, threw in a dozen currants, and proceeded to bake a cake. It was a fair sized cake, and it smelt glorious. He laid the precious thing with tender hands in the baking tin, covered it over with a cloth,

### SMALL DOCTOR'S BILLS

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