

## THE LAKE OF LONG SLEEP

there, lumbering along sullenly as if reluctant to retreat before any peril, journeyed a huge rhinoceros, stopping from time to time for a few hurried mouthfuls of the rich plains grass. But as yet there was not a mammoth in sight—whereat Grôm wondered, as he thought they would have been among the first to dare the crossing of the river. Had they kept on up the other shore, hesitating to trust their colossal bulks to the current, or had they turned at bay, at last, in uncontrollable indignation, and gone down before the countless hordes of their ignoble assailants?

The absence of the mammoths, which he dreaded more than all the other beasts because of the fierce intelligence that gleamed in their eyes, decided Grôm. He would lead his people along to the right, skirting the swamp and marching parallel to the flight of the beasts, calculating thus to have the jungle always for a refuge, though not for a dwelling, until they should come to a region of hills and caves too difficult for the migrating beasts to traverse.

For several days this plan answered to a marvel. The fugitives nearest to the swamp-edge were mostly deer of various species, which swerved away nervously from the line of march, but at the same time afforded such good hunting that the travellers revelled in abundance and rapidly recovered their spirits. Once, when a great wave of maddened buffalo surged over upon them, the whole tribe fled back into the jungle, clambering in to the trees, and stabbing down, with angry