

frequently be seen wielding an axe in a manner that would put George Washington and his cherry tree to shame, and I might say that no one enjoys the results of their labours more than the same fair ladies.

Suitable names were given most of the trails besides their numbers, such as Crowfoot Trail, Sam's Trail, Almac Trail, Big Pine Trail, etc., also many landmarks and places of interest such as Banana Skin Bend, Shoestring Chute, Hell's Gate, Back Stairs, Snowflake Valley, and many others. These serve to identify definite points along a trail and throughout the district, and are more easily remembered by name than number.

Many thrilling runs have been cleared to test the ability of the most expert skier, where every variety of turn may be encountered and every phase of the skier's technique tested. The ambition of every beginner is ultimately to be able to negotiate any or all of these difficult runs. Many of these runs give the necessary practice for the ski-runner to develop his style for the requirements of the new Salom Racing which has recently been included in our own Canadian Championships.

At the close of the season last year work was resumed through the spring months and early fall so that when the ski-ing season commences we will have approximately one hundred per cent increase in the number and variety of trails. A feeling of good fellowship exists between the Ski Club and the farmers who own the property over which we ski. This has been accomplished by the Ski Club assuring the farmer that their property will be protected from damage, and this responsibility was passed on to the members, with the result that up to the present time it has not been necessary for us to reimburse them for any damage whatsoever. This arrangement has worked out to the mutual advantage of all concerned. Only in this way can the Club be assured of running rights over good ski-ing country and further expansion along similar lines for years to come.

LOADS OF FUN ON SNOW AND SKI

NOTE:—Corey Ford of New York, who is well known from his humorous writings, and Percy Crosby the cartoonist, artist, and originator of "Skippy," spent a weekend with us at The Laurentian Lodge in Shawbridge, picking out a 30 below zero spell for their great adventure. On his return he wrote this amusing article for the "New Yorker" and Percy Crosby very kindly sent me the sketch of Skippy's first venture on skis.—*Editor.*

"THE skiers' paradise," the rear flap of the Canadian National timetable dubbed it, "with its steep dazzling hills for the expert, and its gentle easy slopes for the timid tyro." (I didn't like that "timid tyro" attitude. It sounded a little patronizing.) "Shawbridge," it continued to gloat, "with its cold bracing air, mysterious blue shadows and infinite hills that seem to touch the very sky." (I suppose you *do* get that impression when you look down from one.) "Return at night," the timetable fairly chortled, "with rosy cheeks, sparkling eyes, and a feeling of fitness and exuberance with which to tackle the task on the morrow."

It was that last line that got us. We wanted to face the task on the morrow with a feeling of fitness and exuberance. We wanted a couple of sparkling eyes, and some rosy cheeks. We wanted cold bracing air, mysterious blue shadows and infinite hills; and so we decided to go to Canada for a weekend ski-ing trip. That was where we made our big mistake. It would have been cheaper just to have stayed home and fallen downstairs.

The clerk in the sporting-goods store said we needed heavy socks. Anybody who was going ski-ing in Canada needed heavy socks; and heavy gloves;

and heavy pants; and a couple of heavy shirts. And heavy underclothes, of course. Plenty of heavy stuff, that was the secret of a good ski-ing trip. We finally staggered over to Grand Central that night with four suitcases filled with our ski-ing costume, in addition to a couple of heavy shirts which we had to wear because they wouldn't fit in the bags, our ski-boots knotted around our necks by the laces, a pair of thirteen-foot skis under one arm and a pair of ski-poles under the other, all of which caused considerable good-natured chaffing in Forty-second Street before we finally disappeared into the sanctuary of the sleeper. Well, let them snigger. Sour grapes, that was all. Sheer envy. Tomorrow they would still be bending over their desks in stuffy offices, while we were speeding down a couple of these infinite hills that seem to touch the very sky . . .

Just enough time in Montreal to buy us each a ski-ing cap (a blue affair with a long vizor, like a coal miner gone collegiate) and a couple of bottles of Scotch and a little cognac, just as a precaution to tide us over Sunday in case it got cold ski-ing. And just enough time left to stop in Krausman's for one



glass of ale before the train left. Wouldn't be Montreal without a glass of ale at old Krausman's, ha, ha. Some different from Danny's, huh? Have we got time for another?

"Boy!" I said, setting down the glass. "I can hardly wait to get out in that cold bracing air, and strap on the old skis—"

"Right up to the top of the mountain with us," said Percy. (As a matter of fact, his name is really Percy Crosby and I see no reason for calling him Bill or Ed just for this article.) "None of those sissie slopes for mine."

"I bet those chaps back home are envying us now," I laughed. "Have we got time for just one more?"

Chrys Douglas, our host, looked at his watch anxiously. Train left in ten minutes. So we grabbed time for just one or two more; and arrived breathless at Tunnel Station with our skis under our arms, just in time to see the rear platform disappearing up the track, and no train till the following noon.

A whole day to wait till we could get on skis! We weathered the blow like men, and with a sigh of resignation we went back to Krausman's for just one more.

That was Thursday; and Saturday afternoon, sure enough, we arrived in Shawbridge, skis and baggage and a slight throbbing headache behind the left temple. Pile out, everybody! Get a lungful of this cold bracing air. I bet the bunch in New Yo . . . haugh . . . haugh . . . Into the sleigh, up the hill to the clubhouse, pile your bags in the room, and on with your duds. Out on the porch, Chrys rubbed his hands gleefully. Just time for an hour's ski-ing before supper!

I looked at Perc. He looked at me. To think of being on skis at last! To think of climbing the mountain this very evening! It was almost too much. In fact, on second thought, it *was* too much.

"Chrys," I explained as tactfully as possible, "thinking it over, we've decided it might be best if we spent the rest of today just more or less getting acquainted . . ."

Chrys looked at us suspiciously. ". . . you know, watching how it's done," I rushed, "getting used to this cold bracing air . . ."

He kneeled and buckled on his skis in silence.

". . . when we learn to ski," I continued, "we want to embark with the proper spirit upon what is without doubt the greatest sport in the . . ."

Chrys shoved forward and coasted down the hill from the clubhouse alone.

". . . because it is the greatest sport in the world," I maintained to Perc later, as we sprawled before the fire. "Just think of those saps bending over their desks in stuffy offices, instead of breathing this cold bracing air . . ."

"Solutely," nodded Perc, and filled another glass.

"It certainly will be good to get on those skis tomorrow," I added heartily.

"Lutely," nodded Perc. "Shall we open this second brandy?"

It turned cold that night. We didn't notice it at first, because we spent most of the evening before the fire with some fellow-skiers from McGill University, arguing about Anglo-American relations. It was a very pleasant argument, and it ended with a handsome parade through the clubhouse, an impromptu speech by Perc on international amity, patriotic songs of both nations, and a rather ugly fist-fight in the front hall; and when we finally turned in about four o'clock, Chrys was asleep. So we threw all the windows wide open and crawled under the blankets, and as a result the thermometer dropped to thirty-six degrees below by morning, and Chrystie froze his ear in bed. He was very nice about it, however; and when he returned after a morning's ski-ing and woke us up for lunch, he was as full of enthusiasm as ever.

"What's the thermometer now?" Perc inquired.

"Seventeen below," Chrys said. "In the sun," he added cheerfully.

So that afternoon, while Chrys was out ski-ing again, Perc and I sat around the fire and looked forward to the splendid ski-ing we would have tomorrow. Tomorrow we would show them some *real* ski-ing around here. Say, a cross-country trip to St. Sauveur, around by the lakes, and home again for supper. Or perhaps a few thrilling descents of the big mountain opposite, and the rest of the day brushing up on our telemarks and christies. It would be easy enough to learn.

"Just keep one foot a little in front of the other," I said. "That's the whole secret about ski-ing. And a little more soda in mine, if you please."

"You should keep the skis parallel, of course," Perc agreed. "It's funny they don't serve you ice here. I think it tastes flat without ice."

"And balance on your toes," I added. "Lean forward and rest your weight on your toes."

"By the way," said Perc, "you don't happen to have a little ice in your pocket, by any chance?"

"Bend your knees," I said, "and balance with your shoulders . . ."

"I wonder what they'd say," Perc mused, "if I went out and got some snow."

A slight disturbance in the outside hall roused our attention.

"Sorry to trouble you." A face appeared in the doorway, smiling through a large patch of adhesive tape. "But do either of you chaps happen to have some arnica handy?"

"Hurt yourself?" we asked weakly.

"Oh, no," he laughed. "I did *this* last week—ran into a pine-tree, that was all—no, this is for my friend here. He just ran a ski-pole through his cheek."

"I s-saw some arnica in the bathroom," said Perc.

"Oh, *that* was all used up this morning," smiled the face. "Some chap got tangled up with the barbed wire on the big hill . . ."

Perc poured himself another glass of brandy.

The next morning Chrys stuck his head in the doorway of the bedroom for a moment. "Bill and I are going cross-country to St. Sauveur," he explained briefly, "and we won't be back before supper. You'll find your skis right out in the hall, as usual," pointedly, "in case you want to put them on for a moment to take some pictures of each other."

He reappeared a second later in the window. "I've ordered you another case of ale," he added coldly.

They put us on the New York train Tuesday night; and we both vowed to Chrys as we left that it was the best weekend we had ever enjoyed. There is no sport like ski-ing, Perc and I agreed. There's no sport that gives you such rosy cheeks, sparkling eyes, and a feeling of fitness and exuberance with which to face the task on the morrow.

COREY FORD.

"THE RED BIRDS"

THE year 1928 marked the graduation from McGill University of a number of ski enthusiasts who had represented their Alma Mater during the previous three or four years in most of the important winter meets held in the Eastern United States and Canada. Their spirit of comradeship and desire to continue their activities in winter sports, and ski-ing in particular, led to the formation of this new organization.

Membership is open to past students of McGill and their friends. Application for affiliation with the Canadian Amateur Ski Association will be made at the next annual meeting of that body. The club house is situated in the heart of the best ski-ing ground in the Laurentians, just at the foot of the famous St. Sauveur hill. The house has been suitably decorated and is fully equipped to accommodate good sized week-end parties. It is intended to erect new and larger premises with increased membership.

The Club was fortunate this year in being awarded the Championship Meet of the Intercollegiate Winter Sports Union, which is to be held on Monday and Tuesday, February 18 and 19. The cross-country ski and snowshoe races, slalom and downhill ski races will be held at St. Sauveur, with the ski jumping, speed and fancy skating events scheduled for the following day in Montreal. Competitions of various natures are to be arranged at regular intervals throughout the winter and in this way it is hoped to bring the members closer together and thus make the majority actively interested in the affairs of the Club. A "News Letter" will be inaugurated with the object of keeping the doings of the Club before the entire membership.

The first year of "The Red Birds" has been completed and it is with great satisfaction that those responsible for its formation look to the future. The Club is a small one, but with proper management there is no doubt but that it will grow rapidly. The membership is one hundred per cent active and it is aimed to keep it so.

WILLIAM B. THOMPSON, *President.*