The BOY SCOUTS at the PANAMA-PACIFIC EXPOSITION
LIEUT. HOWARD PAYSON
To Walter

From

Mother

1-29-1920.
"They call it the Arch of the Setting Sun," replied the scout leader.—Page 125.
THE BOY SCOUTS
AT THE
PANAMA-PACIFIC EXPOSITION

BY
LIEUT. HOWARD PAYSON


ILLUSTRATED BY
CHARLES L. WRENN

NEW YORK
HURST & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS
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The Boy Scouts at the Panama-Pacific Exposition.

CHAPTER I.

TWO SCOUTS ON A MOTORBOAT.

"Seems to me, Rob, I ought to know that old tub of a motorboat we're overhauling."

"Why, yes, Andy, it's Captain Jerry Martin's Sea Gull. Time was when she had a reputation for speed, but her engine is a back number now."

"Huh! that must have been away in Noah's time, I reckon, Rob. Why, we could make circles around her, if we chose to drive our little Tramp to the limit."

"As we happen to be in no hurry to-day, there's no use making the old skipper feel that his boat is down and out. With vacation opening up before us, I've been trying to settle on some scheme for the scouts of the Eagle Patrol to have a rousing good time this summer."
"Well, I know where I'd be if I had the cold cash to pay my expenses; and, Rob, chances are you feel the same way about it."

"Now, I suppose you're thinking of Tubby Hopkins' great good luck in having his uncle, Dr. Mark Matthews, the famous globe-trotter, carry him off three days ago for an extended trip to the big show out in California?"

"Just what was on my mind, Rob. I don't believe I ever wished so much for anything as a chance to hike away out to the Pacific. Nothing comes my way any more, seems like. Some of us scouts were lucky enough to have our turn down in Mexico that time Tubby's uncle was taken sick, and couldn't get there to meet his old friend, General Villa, so as to dispose of the cattle on his ranch before they were stolen by the raiding Mexican rival armies. How the rest of the boys envied us that glorious trip, Rob!"

"I admit it was a rare streak of good fortune to have things come our way as they did," the boy named Rob remarked, as he gave a slight turn to the wheel of the bustling little motorboat,
aboard which he and Andy were the sole passengers. "We ran up against quite an interesting bunch of experiences, you remember, Andy, that none of us will ever be apt to forget."

"As if that wasn't enough fun for Tubby and Merritt and you," continued the boy called Andy at the wheelsman, "it came about that you all got a chance to go across the water to England and Belgium late last summer on an important mission for Merritt's family, and saw a heap of what was going on in the fighting zone where the Germans are up against the armies of France, Belgium and Great Britain."

"We've shaken hands with ourselves dozens of times since, I give you my word, Andy, on account of that fine streak of luck. Yes, we did encounter a whole lot of remarkable adventures over there, and saw sights we'll never forget. Some of them I wish I could put out of my mind, because they were mighty unpleasant. But that page is turned down, Andy; and now the

* See "The Boy Scouts on Belgian Battlefields," also "The Boy Scouts with the Allies in France."
next thing to consider is what we are going to do this summer to make the time pass happily.”

“Oh! I suppose I shouldn’t complain,” Andy Bowles continued, trying to smile away the discontented frown that had settled across his forehead. “Here, in this good old Long Island town of Hampton, there are lots of ways a pack of lively up-to-date Boy Scouts can have good times during vacation. With the big bay at our doors, and a bully little motorboat like this to go fishing or cruising in, there’s no reason for us not to be hustling most of our spare time.”

“Yes,” Rob Blake went on to add, wishing to soothe the ruffled spirit of his comrade, “and you know what glorious camping trips we can have with a lot of the boys, just as we used to in other summers. There is the full Eagle Patrol, except our fat chum, Tubby, who’s gone to see the sights of the Panama-Pacific Exposition, and Merritt Crawford, who expects to be away for a month and more with his folks.”

“Besides,” continued Andy Bowles, as though the fact gave him more or less solid satisfaction, “all the other patrols are full—eight each
in the Hawk, the Black Fox and the Badger, with a new one forming in the bargain. Boy Scout activities are at flood-tide around Hampton these days."

“One reason for that, I take it,” mused the skipper of the little Tramp, “is the fact that through our activities in the past we have managed to keep our troop in the public eye, more or less. People know what the Eagles have done, and on the whole they favor their boys joining the newer patrols. There’s been a big change in the young fellows of Hampton, I’m told, since this Boy Scout movement first came to town.”

When the young leader of the Eagle Patrol made this modest assertion, he certainly hit the truth squarely on the head. During the last two years the members of the Eagle Patrol had made a name for themselves in Boy Scout annals—as the new reader will find out for himself if he cares to read the earlier books of this fascinating series.

Among other things they had, through a happy chance, become associated with certain
scientific gentlemen connected with the United States Government, who were experimenting with a new and secret model for a big airship patterned somewhat after the famous Zeppelins of the Germans.

On another occasion they had been enabled to assist in saving the design of a wonderful submarine, also intended for the use of the Government, and the secret of which it appeared was coveted by emissaries of a nation supposed to be hostile to the United States, and desirous of learning all about such an important discovery that was apt to play an important part in future ocean warfare.

Some of the scouts later on were given a chance to pay a visit to the wonderful canal that was then being dug across the Isthmus—at Panama; and the record of how they made themselves exceedingly useful while down there will always be a bright page in the history of the Hampton Troop.

Mention has already been made by Andy Bowles, the bugler of the troop, of the trip to Mexico, with its attendant adventures; and also
of the foreign tour undertaken by several of the Eagles on the previous summer, just when hostilities had broken out between the nations of Europe; and Belgium, where they were compelled to visit, was torn from end to end with the mad struggles of warring factions.

Yes, surely the Eagles could rest upon their laurels from this time on, and history would accord them the laurel wreath as the most enterprising patrol known to the Boy Scouts of America.

Still, what boy is ever satisfied with what has happened in the past? The present and the near future is what engages his attention and excites his interest. Even sensible Rob Blake secretly sighed when he contemplated having to put in the whole summer around the home town while Tubby Hopkins was having such a glorious time out there on the Coast; and his other chum, Merritt Crawford, was up in Canada with his folks at a camp.

It was a beautiful and warm day in the early summer. The sun shone from an unclouded sky, but there was enough sea breeze to fan their
heated brows, and to make them think that there could be few things equal to being in a speedy little motorboat, spinning over the surface of that lovely land-locked bay, with the ocean booming on the outer edge of the sandy strip to the south.

They could have quite an extended view from far out in the bay, with the houses scattered along the shore, and the white sails of pleasure craft or fishing and clamming boats dotting the water far and near.

Just ahead of them the old launch that had seen better days was churning up the water with its noisy propeller, though not making remarkable headway at that. As the two scouts gradually drew up on the Sea Gull, they made out that besides the ancient skipper there was just one passenger aboard.

"Why," said Andy Bowles presently, as this person chanced to turn his face toward them by accident, "that must be the old gent I saw drop off the nine-thirty train from New York this morning when I was heading for your house. Yes, and now I think of it, I heard him
ask Dan Trotter at the station where Judge Collins lived, and how he could get to his house at the Point."

"Some friend of the Judge, then," suggested Rob; "and I guess he has a host of them here and abroad; for he's wealthy, and interested in all sorts of scientific matters. They say that at his city house in the winter he entertains, at times, all the big guns from the different colleges of the world."

"Which reminds me, Rob. There was an odd twang in this old fellow's manner of speech that made me think of Sandy Ferguson, the Scotchman who has the bagpipes, you remember, and always insists in marching in all the parades in Hampton."

"Then, perhaps, he's some famous Scotch professor," observed the skipper of the Tramp, "who wants to see the judge so much that he's chased away out here to his summer home on invitation."

"He has a red face, wears big glasses, and is scrawny enough for a Scotchman, anyway," chuckled Andy, "but do you know I always like
to listen to one of the Highland folks talk. It was the 'burr' in his speech that made me stop and listen as far as I did. He's got it down pat, Rob."

"Don't say anything more now, Andy; we're drawing up pretty close, and he might not like it if he thought we were talking about him. That old motor does make lots of noise, but sometimes it misses, and then there's a lapse, you know."

"But they're heading straight for the Point where the Collins Castle is located, you notice, Rob, so I guess Cap. Jerry is ferrying him across. I only hope the old tub doesn't take a notion to founder before it gets to the dock a mile away from here."

"Oh! it's stood lots of pounding, and only has to be bailed out frequently on account of leaking like a sieve," Rob said in a low tone. "Jerry has all that down to a fine point, and just once in so often he gets busy and lowers the bilge water with the pump he keeps rigged handy."

"Excuse me from running around in such a
trap,” muttered Andy, who was rather inclined to be “fussy” with regard to everything he handled, and tried to have his possessions kept up to top-notch condition—what he himself called “apple-pie shape.”

“The professor is like most Englishmen, for he loves his pipe,” remarked Rob, as he watched the passenger aboard the old launch filling his little black pipe with tobacco taken from a rubber pouch. “I hope, when he strikes that match, and then throws it away after lighting up, he knows enough about motorboats to see that it goes overboard, and not into the bottom of the craft. Sometimes a leak will spread a film of gasolene over the bilge water, and there’s always more or less danger of an explosion.”

“Yes,” added Andy seriously, “there have been a number on the bay the last three seasons, and two people that I can remember were so badly burned that they died after being rescued.”

Both of the boys watched with more or less interest, and possibly with suspended breath, while the red-faced passenger in Captain Jerry’s
old launch puffed several times at his pipe, then tossed the match aside.

"Oh! it didn't go overboard, for a fact, Rob!" gasped Andy; but there was no time to say another word, for suddenly they saw a flash of flame spring up aboard the old Sea Gull, and in an instant it seemed as though the launch was aflame from stem to stern!
Suddenly they saw a flash of flame spring up aboard the old Sea Gull.—Page 16.
CHAPTER II.

PROMPT WORK, AND A RESCUE.

Fortunately Rob Blake had wonderful presence of mind in a sudden emergency. Some boys would have been so badly shocked by what was happening near at hand, that for the time being, they must have been unable to make any move toward rendering first aid to the afflicted.

No sooner did the leader of the Eagle Patrol see that terrible outburst of fire than he started his little motor on at full speed, heading straight toward the imperiled launch.

"Quick! get hold of that fire extinguisher we carry!" he called out to his companion, who was staring, with open mouth and awe-filled eyes, at the scene of commotion close by.

"But, Rob, will the fluid put out a gasolene fire?" exclaimed Andy, though at the same time hastening to throw back the lid of a locker and snatch out the brass tube which had been lying there for just such a time of sudden need.
“Yes, that’s one of its best uses,” Rob told him hastily. “It seems to form a coating over everything it touches that the fire can’t break through. It kills fire. That’s where it gets its name. Be ready now to make use of it when we come up as close as I dare go.”

“Both of the men are overboard, Rob!” announced Andy excitedly, “and hanging on to the side of the boat. Wow! but isn’t she blazing, though? I can begin to feel the fierce heat even here!”

“Ready to get busy now!” cried the skipper, as he manipulated his engine in such a way as to reverse the propeller, and bring the *Tramp* to a stop close to the blazing launch.

Andy was no coward, and could keep a pretty level head when it came down to doing things; though often he had to be told what to attempt by someone more masterful than himself. As soon as Rob shouted to him to start operations, he worked the fire extinguisher with might and main, and was considerably astonished to discover that just as Rob had said, wherever the magical fluid struck, it seemed to dishearten the
conflagration, for the flames immediately died out.

“Whoop! it’s doing the whole business, that’s right, Rob!” cried the pleased amateur fire-fighter, as he continued to make judicious use of his apparatus. “Why, I tell you nothing can hold out, Rob, against this dandy contraption. Look at it do the work, will you? Oh! it’s sure worth its weight in gold when you need something to save your boat with.”

Indeed, to judge from the magical way in which the threatening fire was extinguished aboard the old launch, Rob Blake had certainly made no mistake when he purchased that little fire-fighting contrivance, even though it did cost him close on ten dollars.

Rob, seeing that all danger of the fire communicating to the Tramp was now past, slowly started toward the other boat. His intention was to rescue the two elderly men who were in the water. To tell the truth, Rob was very much afraid the passenger may have been seriously burned, and that in his panic he might release his frenzied grip on the gunwale of the boat.
It turned out otherwise, however, for Scotch grit held good, and Rob soon had the satisfaction of helping both men aboard the *Tramp*.

They had received a number of burns, and presented rather a peculiar appearance, since their eyebrows and beards had been badly singed.

"Fire's all out, Rob!" announced Andy, at this juncture.

"Then fix it so that we can tow the *Sea Gull* behind us," the other told him, "and we'll change our course for the Collins Point yonder."

"It is verra kind of ye to go to all that trouble," remarked the elderly man, looking the young skipper of the rescuing boat over from head to toe, "and I wull not be the one to forget the favor, I assure you, my fine laddie."

"I hope you are not seriously burned, sir?" remarked Rob, who saw that there were signs of the other's clothes having been afire before he tumbled overboard, possibly urged to this last resort through the energetic efforts of old Captain Jerry Martin.

"I sincerely hope not myself," replied the
other, as he felt of his body, and then put up a hand to his blackened face. "I believe I've been well singed, and that until I grow a new crop of eyebrows I will look like a scorched rat; which is verra unfortunate, since I am on a most important errand over in your country. But, indeed, I should be ashamed to complain, for it might have been a deal worse."

"And how about you, Captain Jerry?" asked Rob, turning to the subdued looking old skipper of the disabled motorboat, who had once been an oysterman, though of late years rheumatism had compelled him to seek another less strenuous means for making a living on the famous bay.

"Nawthin' to count much, Rob," grunted Captain Jerry, "but I'm afraid I'll jest hev to git a new engine aboard the Sea Gull arter this accident. I knowed she leaked a mite in the connectin' feed pipe, but I never thought anybody would throw a lighted match down thar! I'm glad to be alive still; and I hopes as how the duckin' ain't agoin' to fotch on my rheumatiz agin."
"As I'm altogether to blame for the accident, Captain," said the passenger, "I shall insist on doing my part toward helping you put in that new motor. The chances are I will be marooned at my friend's place now for weeks, until I'm presentable; though what's to be done about getting that valuable shipment out to our exhibit I am unable to say. Perhaps Judge Collins may be able to help me decide. It's a verra odd time to introduce myself, laddies, but I want to know more of ye, and so permit me to say I am Professor Andrew McEwen, from Edinburgh University, Scotland."

"My name is Robert Blake, and my father is connected with the bank at Hampton. My chum here is of the same name as yourself, professor, Andrew; but his last name is Bowles. I think his family came originally from Scotland. We are Boy Scouts, and out for a little cruise just to pass the time away."

"Which was a lucky thing for myself, I am sure," remarked the elderly gentleman, as he squeezed a hand of each of the young fellows. "And if you will land me at Judge Collins' dock,
you will increase the obligations under which you have placed me."

"We are heading straight that way, sir," Rob told him.

Somehow he liked the stranger from the start. He had shrewd, gray eyes that had been wont, no doubt, to twinkle under bushy eyebrows; but with these now missing his thin face had an almost comical appearance. Still, there was a kindly expression to be detected there, as well as the keen look of a savant. And from the way in which Professor McEwen from time to time watched Rob, it was evident that he had also conceived a great fancy to the fine, manly looking boy who seemed to be able to master a crisis so ably.

Presently they drew in at the dock, where Judge Collins was awaiting them. From the fact that the gentleman gripped a pair of marine glasses in his hand, and had an anxious look on his face, Rob jumped to the conclusion that he must have been on the lookout for the coming of the celebrated scientist from abroad, and
might have witnessed the details of the accident and the rescue.

"I dinna doobt but that ye will have some difficulty in recognizing me, Judge Collins," called out the Professor, falling back more than ever into his Scotch dialect in his mingled amusement and chagrin. "My ain brother wouldna know me with this blackamoor face, sans eyebrows, sans beard, and fortunate to have saved my eyesight. I am a fearsome sicht, and feel unco' unpleasant in the bargain. But thanks to these braw laddies we were saved from a watery grave, for which baith feel thankful."

"You must come up to the house at once and wash up," said the judge feelingly. "Then I shall ease any suffering with some magical pain extractor that I chance to have and can recommend. No, please stay with me a little while, boys, unless you are in a great hurry. I want to hear your side of the story as well. And Captain Jerry, what can I do to make you comfortable? An old sailing mate of yours is in the boathouse at work, and if you will join him
shortly I will send something comforting out to you."

Rob looked at Andy, who nodded his approval of this idea. Andy had never before met with a chance to see the inside of the judge's house on the Point, which, being built of stone, and boasting a few turrets, had come to be called the "Castle" by most of the baymen. Such a golden opportunity might not come along again; and, besides, they certainly were in no hurry, so they could oblige the judge without putting themselves out at all.

Shortly afterward they found themselves in the library. Rob had been here before and even spent some hours examining the myriads of curious things among the collections which Judge Collins kept at his country house, where he spent more than half the year entertaining visitors.

Here the judge made an examination of the burns of the little Scotch scientist. It was found that beyond a few painful red marks, and the loss of the hair that had once been on his face, Professor McEwen was all right.
He seemed to take his mutilation greatly to heart.

"It would ha'e been peetifu' eno' at any time to be transformed into such a scarecrow as this; but think of me on the way out to join some of my fellow workers in the avenues of science, and taking with me the balance of our delayed valuable exhibit. Aweel, aweel, the best paid plans o' mice an' men gang aft aglee. I shall ha'e to hide my diminished head until Nature restores my looks. Ya maun rest assured I shall not let my friends see me in this way; they wouldna doobt but that it was the Missing Link come to light."

"I shall be delighted," said the judge impulsively, "to have you stay with me as long as you can spare the time, Professor. It will gladden my heart more than I can tell you, for the profit is bound to be all on my side."

"But whatever am I to do aboot getting that exhibit out to our concession at the Exposition, now that I shall be utterly unable to attend to it myself? I wish I could solve that problem; my own discomfort I wouldna consider so much.
In fact, I have undertaken this trip expressly to make positive that my errand had been successfully carried out."

"Surely you can send what you are taking there by express, and it will arrive safely?" suggested the judge.

"But I gave my solemn word," expostulated the Scotch professor, who seemed to possess all of the stubborn qualities with which those of his land are said to be afflicted, "not to let the valuable packet go out of my possession for a minute, unless I gave it in charge of an equally responsible messenger. Money would be no object, judge, I assure you, if only you could find me a gude mon; naneither would I trust."

The judge seemed to be pondering. When Andy caught him looking in a serious fashion in the direction of himself and comrade, somehow: he felt a queer thrill pass through his system, though he did not exactly know why it should be so. Then he saw a smile begin to creep over the
face of Judge Collins, as he nodded his head slowly. Whatever had flashed into his mind, it seemed to afford him considerable satisfaction.

"Professor McEwen," he said slowly, but earnestly, "if you are looking for some trustworthy persons to whom you can delegate your mission, and do not mind what expense there may be attached to carrying it out, I believe I can suggest a couple of dependable young chaps who might fill the bill; they are the wide-awake Boy Scouts who were concerned in your rescue this very morning. How would you like to talk over that business with Rob Blake and Andy Bowles, here, Professor?"
CHAPTER III.

WHEN LUCK CAME THEIR WAY.

Andy fairly held his breath in suspense when Judge Collins made that astonishing suggestion to the little Scotch professor. He had always known that the judge was a firm believer in the uplift of the Boy Scout movement, for he had never failed to assist the Hampton Troop by every means possible. That he would go so far as to recommend two of the scouts to his friend as responsible enough parties to be entrusted with such an errand filled Andy with both amazement and delight.

Professor McEwen's eyes twinkled as he surveyed first the boys and then their earnest sponsor.

"I ha'e no doobt but that they are responsible and trustworthy, just as ye say, Judge Collins," he proceeded to remark presently, with lines of perplexity visible across his forehead, "and if it were but an ordinary errand I
wouldna hesitate a single instant aboot entrust- ing it to them. But I ha'e to consider well be- fore makin' up me mind. The property belongs to ither's than mesil', ye ken; and it is of a sci- entific value beyond compare. In fact, it could not well be replaced if lost in transit; money wouldna be any consideration in exchange, which is why I wouldna wish to send it by ex- press."

"Be kind enough to listen while I relate a few facts concerning this same Rob Blake, and a couple of his friends," said the judge, smiling, and shaking his head at Rob when he thought the latter looked as though about to protest.

"I should be unco' pleased to hear all you can tell me," declared the scientist, "for I must con- fess that from the verra beginning these braw lads ha'e made a most favorable impression with me."

And so Rob had to sit there, squirming rather uneasily, while the judge told of the perilous trip he and several chums had made to the troubled republic of Mexico, and how they had cleverly managed to accomplish the delicate mission with
which they had been entrusted by Tubby Hopkins' uncle.

Then he took up the subject of the tour abroad, where they had been for days and weeks in the battle zone of the contending armies, managing with consummate skill to avoid complications, and eventually succeeding in attaining the object which had been the cause of their undertaking this perilous mission.

All this while the little Scotch professor sucked away at his pipe as though he found great consolation in burning the weed that originally came from Virginia in the time of Sir Walter Raleigh, and was therefore a strictly American product. Now and then he would let his shrewd eyes roam from the face of the enthusiastic judge to the burning one of Rob Blake, and at such times Andy always noticed that he would nod slightly, as though better pleased than ever.

Andy, by the way, was enduring all manner of torture on account of the suspense; he had had a glorious prospect opened up before him, if only the curtain would not suddenly fall and shut it out.
"That is not nearly all that these gallant boys have done," declared the narrator, after a time. "I could sit here for an hour and tell you innumerable instances where Rob, and some of his chums into the bargain, did things that would be counted big under ordinary conditions. Why, it has come to that pass in Hampton nowadays that when anything beyond the ordinary is attempted they have to get the scouts interested in it first, and then people begin to believe it must have some merit."

"What you tell me is indeed wonderful," declared the professor. "After that recommendation I am strongly disposed to offer them the carrying out of my mission if they could see their way clear to accept the task."

"It would give them a chance to spend some weeks at the Exposition without incurring any expense, is that the idea, Professor McEwen?" asked the judge, who looked as happy as though he had discovered some wonderful bug which had been eagerly sought after for years and years by all scientists and collectors.

"Yes, a month, if they cared to stay that
long,” replied the other, who seemed to have been fully convinced, and ready to throw the load of responsibility from his own shoulders to those of Rob and his chum. “The particulars can be gone over a little later, either tonight, if they care to see me again, or to-morrow. There is no great need o’ haste, though what I am carrying out to California is being eagerly expected by my colleagues there.”

“Let me congratulate you, boys, on your good fortune,” said the kindly judge, as though he wished to settle the matter in such a fashion that there could be no drawing back on the part of the gentleman. He then shook hands first with Rob and then with Andy Bowles.

Rob was looking a little pale from excitement, but there was also a happy glow in his eyes. As for Andy, he could not prevent a wide grin from spreading over his features. His father owned a livery stable in Hampton, but was not considered at all well-to-do, so that the boy had never been able to do more than dream of taking expensive trips. That one down into Mexico had come like a gleam of golden sun-
shine, for Tubby Hopkins' old uncle had footed all the bills.

"Do I understand you to make this proposition to us, Professor McEwen?" Rob asked bluntly, not wishing to be laboring under any delusion.

"Aweel, aweel, I dinna ken how I could do better; and I feel that I am indebted to ye baith for my life. After hearing what bonny lads ye are, from my friend Judge Collins here, whose opinion carries great weight wi' me, I am mair than pleased to offer to stand all the cost of a trip to California and back; as well as the expense which you will necessarily be under while seeing the great Exposition in San Francisco. Do ye think ye can ha'e the permission of the auld folks to take so lang a journey?"

"There will be no trouble on that score, Professor," urged the judge. "These lads have so amply demonstrated their sterling ability to look out for themselves that I really believe Rob's parents would not object if he wanted to go to hunt for the South Pole, or explore the unknown
regions of tropical Brazil. And so we shall call it settled, I presume, Professor?"

"I ha'e made the offer, and shall tak' it hard if they turn it down," said the peculiar little man of science, whose name, Rob afterward learned, was known throughout the whole length and breadth of the world wherever men of intellect gathered to discuss their theories and discoveries.

"So far as we are concerned," said Rob, after receiving an entreaty look from the excited Andy, "we are disposed to accept right on the spot, subject to the reservation that our parents may have the final deciding of the matter. We will run over here by moonlight to-night, Professor, and if everything is satisfactory, we will talk matters over with you, and make all arrangements."

"That suits me nicely, laddie," declared the visitor pleasantly; "and I shall ha'e to think mysel' unco' lucky to have found competent and trustworthy messengers so soon after the necessity arose. I shall look for ye then this same evening; and I hope that there may be no barrier
thrown in the way of your acceptance of my offer. The mair I see of ye the better satisfied I feel that I will ha’e no regrets after entrusting my mission in your hands.”

Soon afterward the two scouts said good-by to the professor, and started down to the dock. Even in his distress of body and mind, the thoughtful scientist had not forgotten Captain Jerry; and the boys were entrusted with a message to him to the effect that ten pounds awaited his acceptance when he was ready to install that new three-horse-power engine in his launch.

The old bayman was glad of the chance to have his wrecked boat towed back home; and when Rob delivered the message of the professor, the look of concern on his weatherbeaten face vanished as the mist does with the coming of the sun.

All the way across the broad bay the two scouts were jabbering to each other in connection with the astonishing streak of good fortune that had just come their way.

“Seems to me I must be dreaming!” Andy de-
clared for the fourth time. "Please give me a pinch, Rob, to let me make sure I'm awake."

"Oh! you'll get used to it by degrees," the other told him, though he felt somewhat uncertain himself at times, and had to convince himself that it had all actually happened, and was not the result of a fevered imagination.

"Talk to me about luck," continued Andy rapturously, "there never could happen again such a wonderful combination of things. First, that the feed-pipe aboard the Sea Gull should be leaking a trifle; second, that Professor McEwen was aboard the same; then he tossed that lighted match the wrong way, so instead of going overboard it fell down and slipped between the bars of the wooden grating into the oil-covered bilge water, and last of all that we chanced to be close by at the critical moment, ready fixed with a fire extinguisher to put out the blaze, and capable of hauling the ship-wrecked mariners aboard."

"Everything of that kind is always a combination of minor happenings that seem to dovetail in with each other," Rob explained. "In this
case it worked perfectly. All other boats were so far away that there's no telling what might not have happened."

"We're getting close in now, and, Rob, there's somebody waving to us from the dock. Why, it looks like our inventor chum and fellow scout, Hiram Nelson, the queerest fellow in the Eagle Patrol. He must want us to stop and take him out for a ride on the bay. You didn't promise him anything like that, did you, Rob?"

"Why, no, not that I remember," replied the other slowly; "but now that you mention him acting as though he wanted to see us so badly, I remember that Hiram has been talking to me several times lately about some wonderful secret he was carrying around with him. He said he hoped to be in a position soon to open up and take me into his confidence; and that he might have a proposition to make that would give me a great, though a pleasant shock."

"You don't say?" chuckled the happy Andy. "Well, seems to me the shoe is on the other foot just now, and that we've got something to tell Hiram that will take his breath away for a min-
ute. Look at him dancing around, Rob! I suppose now he's gone and invented some sort of contraption that never can be made to work, and he wants to tell you he's saved up enough hard cash to get a patent on the same. But chances are it'll be money wasted, because, so far as I know, nothing Hiram has done so far has proved much of a success."

"I'm a little afraid it's as you say," added Rob, in a low tone, for they were now fast nearing the dock where the other boy waited for them, his face wreathed in such broad smiles that they could easily see his news was of a pleasant nature. "Three times Hiram has tried to go up in that aëroplane of his and failed. I hope he's switched his genius off on some safer track than this sky traveling. But we'll soon know, for here we are at the dock."

Andy stood by with the boathook to fend off, and old Captain Jerry got in readiness to take charge of his launch and pole it along the border of the bay to the mouth of the creek, up which he had his mooring place.

When Rob had made the motorboat fast to a
cleat on the dock, he joined his chum, and the two of them advanced toward the spot where Hiram awaited their coming, his face still betraying the great excitement under which he seemed to be laboring.