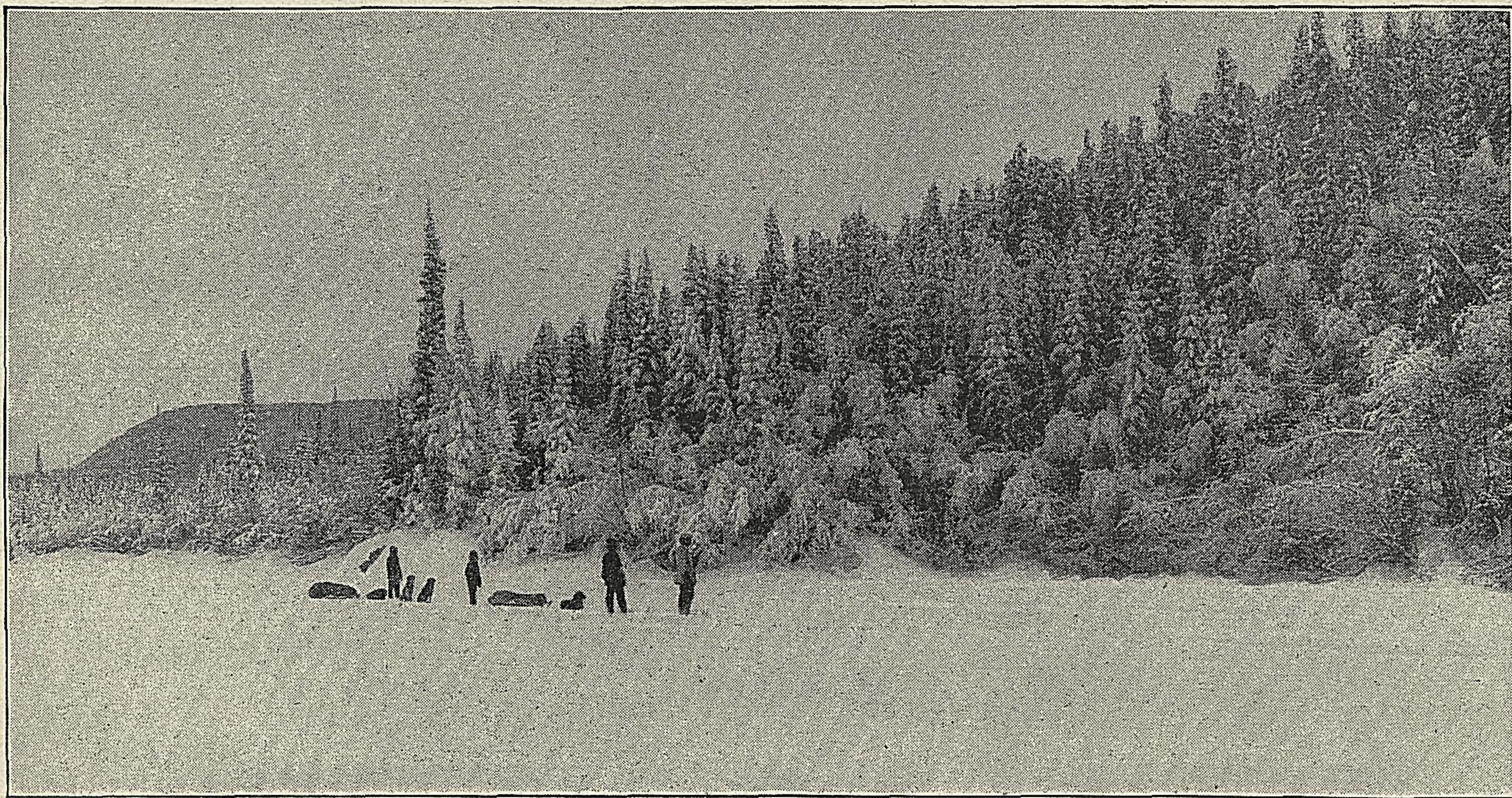




WINTER ON BLACK RIVER.

the mountain. While supper was being prepared I sat resting, scanning the cliffs that rose abruptly from two to three thousand feet above the river. Suddenly I saw something white moving on the summit of the cañon walls. The glasses proved it to be an animal of some sort, evidently a sheep. Presently another object appeared, then another—five in all. I called the men. They came to look, but soon returned to the fire, where the bacon was frying. I was assured, however, that I had had my first glimpse of the wild sheep of the Rockies.

That night we did not pursue the game. But early the next morning, having, after breakfast, only eight pounds of food left, we began the climb into the mountains, and about four in the afternoon pitched our tent in what promised to be good hunting country. That night, however, after searching the neighboring hills for several hours, we returned to the camp empty-handed. At two we were up again, and after a breakfast of tea once more started out.

Just before noon we "jumped" three young rams. I fired two shots at the first two without effect. When the third appeared I missed again. These shots were fired at long range. My next shot sent one of the animals to earth just as it

was wheeling to run. I ran toward it in all possible haste. As I approached, it floundered, first in one direction, then in another, until, finally, nearing in its struggles the edge of the cañon wall, it plunged over. When I reached the spot I saw it at the bottom of the cañon, three hundred feet below. After spending some time in an effort to reach the sheep, by lowering one of the Indians over the cliff, we were finally obliged to abandon the attempt.

We had now passed thirty hours without food, and were, in consequence, exhausted. Moreover, there was but one way of obtaining it. So we started across the mountains to a high ridge about five miles distant, where we thought game might be found. It was a long and arduous climb. We had nearly reached the crest of the ridge, when three large rams ran out from behind some rocks a short distance ahead of us. They disappeared so quickly behind another ridge that I had no time for a shot; but, forgetting for the moment my exhaustion and hunger, away I went in pursuit.

Cleary, one of the Indians, dropped behind; Johnnie, my white boy, made no effort to keep up; so the pursuit lay between Donald, the other Indian, and myself, with Donald in the lead. He carried an old-fashioned double-barrelled