

the circumstances. For we had no food with us except the trout caught in the afternoon, and no covering for the night save the saddle-cloths of the horses. There was no help for it, however; so the trout were duly roasted and eaten, and each donned his saddle-cloth as bed and bedding combined. But before long it was evident that, choosing his fireplace in the dark, our guide had placed it in rather perilous proximity to a quantity of dried brushwood and fallen timber. And, indeed, before we could do anything to prevent them, the flames spread onward till a venerable pine caught fire, and was soon a sheet of coruscating fireworks. His neighbours followed his example, and in a few minutes it was evident that the forest was on fire. The flames rushed along the branches, mounting higher and higher far up into the lofty crests of the pines, whence showers of sparks flew out and fell in long lines through the profoundly calm air. Tree after tree joined the conflagration, till the reports of the exploding branches, the hiss of the leaping flames, and the crash of the falling fire-brands, with the ghastly glare that now died down almost to darkness and anon shot forth into renewed brightness, made sleep unwelcome even had it been willing to come. Fortunately the fire eventually spent its fury on the trees that stood round the open spot we had selected. It had died down before morning. The presence of so much heat around us did little to modify the cold of the night air, and our thin saddle-cloths were not of much more service. My friend and I huddled as close together as possible, and lay looking up at the quiet stars as they slowly sailed across our little space of sky, yet keeping an eye, too, on the progress of the conflagration, lest by any chance the flames should spread and surround us. The stones underneath us seemed somehow to grow harder and more promi-