



BY VIC RUSSELL

# *The Simple Life in Winter*



WHEN a man retires from the common city noises—the honking of auto horns, the roaring of tightly packed buses, he seeks the unfrequented places where he can find peace of mind, silence, a good book and a comfortable fire.

Our place on top of Cataract Hill in the Missouri Ozarks has all these attractions. Outside our house the nights are silent, the forest floor dazzling white with a fresh snow. The full moon makes everything like daytime. At the foot of the hill, Current River dances along, shivering in the freezing mist which rises from the water.

A log rolls down in the fireplace causing sparks to race up the flue, and the room instantly springs into brightness with shadows prancing around the walls.

Old Snort, the long-eared hound dog, gets to his feet, then satisfied the burning log can't reach him, stretches out again in front of the hearth. He sighs deeply from contentment and goes back to his dreams of coon and fox hunting.

In a few seconds, the only sound in the room is the ticking of the old clock on the wall. Before long a sharp, quick bark of a fox comes from the hillside. Snort raises his

head, ears alert, eyes wide-awake. He listens, his nose working, as if to smell the fox.

"What is it, boy?" we whisper to him. He goes to the large picture window and looks down the slope of the hill.

"Pretty cold out there," we tell him. "Better come back to the fire." Instead he goes to the door and whines. After we let him out, he goes to the edge of the porch and lifts his head to the cold air. Closing the door, I go back to the fire.

There is a great deal more to an open fire besides heat. To have a battered, comfortable chair with arms that seem to reach out a welcome to the tired old body is magnificent. The radio is within arm's reach and it's time for the ten o'clock news.

But the man who lives in a distant world is caustic with his comments. He has no place in our nest of contentment. A twist of the dial and soft, pleasant music floats into the room. We ponder the question: "Does the orchestra realize how far it reaches? Do the musicians know what a pleasure we get from their playing, a thousand miles away? How many other people, in homes, in cars, also are listening?"

If they only knew how fortunate we were — not having to spend hours in routine work as they do. Would they envy us? I'm sure they would.

They are no different than we were a few years ago. They have yet to learn the contentment, the tran-

quility which awaits anyone who chooses the simple life in the middle of nature's wonderland.

HERE we are, far away from strife, discontentment, worry and the seemingly endless bills at the end of the month.

There are so few who live to see the fulfillment of such desires as we have. To many, retirement before sixty is only a dream; something impossible, something beyond attainment. The simple life is the answer.

There is a scratch on the door, Snort has enough of the snow and wants back in by the fire. I let him in and he hurries to the fire, lies down and licks the snow from his paws. Before long the heat soothes him into drowsiness and he stretches full-length before the fire.

It is bedtime. I poke the embers closer to the backlog, put the screen before the fire and wind the clock on the wall. Tomorrow will be a full day, for one of the neighbors is going to butcher a hog and we will help. Tomorrow night we'll have fresh sausage and tenderloin.

Then after supper we'll listen to the radio, read more in a good book and Snort will stretch out in front of the fireplace to dream whatever dogs dream about.

Winter time is a wonderful time on top of a hill beside a river and in the woods. The simple life is wonderful for those who want to retire and take life easy.



# *Carnegie Medals of Honor*

BY LEWIS NORDYKE

IT HAS been fifty years since the late Andrew Carnegie set aside five million dollars for the recognition and financial reward of unsung civilian heroes in the United States and Canada. In that half century, 3,892 men, women and children have been awarded Carnegie Medals. They and their survivors have received financial help amounting to \$7,489,313.15. During this same span of time, the 21-man Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, which handles the fund from headquarters in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, has noted 39,604 other acts of bravery which didn't quite measure up to the standards of extreme risk required for medals.

The Commission must decide between the degrees of heroism required for its three medals — the Gold, the Silver and the Bronze. Actually, the measure is not so much of bravery but rather of *how* a person is brave. The highest award, the Gold Medal, goes only to those who display extreme courage in the face of the gravest danger — when courage is sustained under prolonged

peril. The Silver Medal is awarded heroes who, recognizing the odds against them, put up fights of a less high degree to save lives. The majority of awards are Bronze medals and they are given for purely impulsive deeds — to persons who, without pausing to consider the danger, rush to the assistance of someone needing help.

Except for the metal, the medals are all alike — round pieces three inches across and as thick as a dollar. On one side is the bust of Carnegie and this statement: "Carnegie Hero Fund. Established April 15th, 1904." The other side is a smooth rectangular field for the name of the hero, and around the rim these words: "Greater Love Hath No Man Than This: That a Man Lay Down His Life For His Friends."

Carnegie heroes have ranged in years from nine to the late 70's. The first medal was presented in 1905 to a 17-year-old school boy, Louis A. Baumann, Jr., who rescued a friend from drowning in a creek. Since that time, more medals have been given for heroic acts in water than for any-