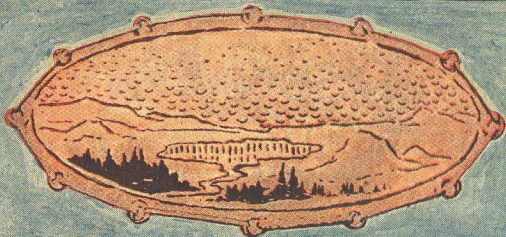


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MONARCH

The **BIG BEAR** of Tallac



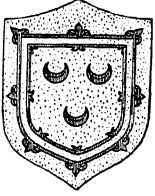
With 100 Drawings

by **Ernest Thompson Seton** 

Author of
Wild Animals I have Known
Trail of the Sandhill Stag
Biography of a Grizzly
Lives of the Hunted.
Two Little Savages. Etc.

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THIS BOOK
IS DEDICATED

TO the memory of the days in Tallac's Pines, where by the fire I heard this epic tale.

Kind memory calls the picture up before me now, clear, living clear: I see them as they sat, the one small and slight, the other tall and brawny, leader and led, rough men of the hills. They told me this tale—in broken bits they gave it, a sentence at a time. They were ready to talk but knew not how. Few their words, and those they used would be empty on paper, mean-

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ingless without the puckered lip, the interhiss, the brutal semi-snarl restrained by human mastery, the snap and jerk of wrist and gleam of steel-gray eye, that really told the tale, of which the spoken word was mere headline. Another, a subtler theme was theirs that night; not in the line but in the interline it ran; and listening to the hunter's ruder tale, I heard as one may hear the night bird singing in the storm; amid the glitter of the mica I caught the glint of gold, for theirs was a parable of hill-born power that fades when it finds the plains. They told of the giant redwood's growth from a tiny seed; of the avalanche that, born a snowflake, heaves and grows on the peaks, to shrink and die on the level lands below. They told of the river at our feet: of its rise, a thread-like rill, afar on Tallac's side, and its



growth—a brook, a stream, a little river, a river, a mighty flood that rolled and ran from hills to plain to meet a final doom so strange that only the wise believe. Yes, I have seen it; it is there to-day—the river, the wonderful river, that unabated flows, but that never reaches the sea.

I give you the story then as it came to me, and yet I do not give it, for theirs is a tongue unknown to script: I give a dim translation; dim, but in all ways respectful, reverencing the indomitable spirit of the mountaineer, worshiping the mighty Beast that nature built a monument of power, and loving and worshiping the clash, the awful strife heroic, at the close, when these two met.