

Amateur Architects of Tinkletown

ONE day the Grand Duke of Bratwurst said to the people of Tinkletown: "I am surprised that wise folk like you have not seen fit to build a fine town hall where you could meet and say your wise things in state."

"That is a very good idea," said the people. "We will build the finest town hall that ever was, and we will do it all ourselves, instead of letting some foolish architect come in and build something that is wrong."

So the citizens selected the best place in the middle of the town, and as this was occupied by the Burgomaster's house, they immediately brought hammers and crowbars and began to tear the house down. But instead of beginning at the top, they began at the bottom, and before long the house commenced to shake, and they all had to run away.

As the greater part of the walls near the bottom had been torn and broken away, the house was very tottery indeed—so tottery that nobody dared go near it, so after a few days the people sent a messenger to the Grand Duke and told him that they could not go ahead with the great project, because the Burgomaster's house was too shaky to tear down.

The Grand Duke, who was always glad to see the wise things that the folk of Tinkletown were doing, continued, rode to the town, and when he saw what had happened he said: "Why did you not begin at the top of the house?"

"What a genius you are!" said the Burgomaster admiringly. "What would we do without your Royal Highness?"

So all the citizens climbed up on the roof and tore the house down without any further trouble. Then they began to consider what kind of a town hall they should build. The shoemaker thought that it should look like a Greek temple and be all made of white stone, but the schoolmaster said that it ought to be of brownstone and be shaped like a square tower, so that there would be a good view from the



"THEY MADE A DOOR IN THE ROOF."

top. The Burgomaster said that it should be a wooden building and the Town Clerk maintained that there was nothing more beautiful than an old-fashioned cottage with a thatched roof. As they could not agree, they decided that each man should build his part of the town hall just as he thought best, and when they told the Grand Duke about it he

laughed till his fat sides shook and said that they were very wise indeed. So the shoemaker began to build his part like a Greek temple and the schoolmaster made his part like a tower. The butcher built his share like the front of his shop, because he said that that was the most beautiful sight he had ever seen, and the Burgomaster nailed great wooden

Isobel in the Role of Peacemaker

FOR A WEEK after Isobel Strickland decided to keep her seat with Jean Stewart, Martha Chester would not speak to her and avoided her in every possible way. Then, being a little tired of getting along without Isobel, she began slowly to make up.

Isobel let her take her own time. When Martha spoke she replied politely, but she made no advances and did not intend to until Martha recognized and was kind to Jean. But Martha could not bring herself to do this. So the foolish little comedy went on, the spectators enjoying the situations very much.

On the first Friday in every month, the older girls in Miss Damon's room gave an entertainment. Florence Whitney, the leader among the girls, was splendid and Isobel admired her very much. She was tall and straight, with big coils of yellow hair and such a jolly way with her that she was the most popular girl in school.

Florence was always very nice to Isobel, treating her as if she was one of her own particular friends, although in reality there was a large difference in their ages and Florence was to go to college next year.

Florence decided to give a play as part of the entertainment, and she asked Isobel to take part in it. Seeing Jean standing near her, she said: "Won't you take a small part, too? You're a new girl, aren't you? This will give you a chance to get acquainted with all the girls."

Isobel and Jean were perfectly overcome with delight. It was a great honor to be asked to help out and to be in a play, too. When it became known it created a stir. Martha Chester aired her views freely. A new girl put forward that way. She'd like to know why Isobel insisted on dragging that little freak into everything.

Isobel and Jean said nothing, but their pleasure was marred by this attitude on the part of the girls. "That night Isobel's father came to her room to visit a while, and she told him all that had happened. 'Isn't there some way I can make Martha more amiable,'" she asked. "She's so mean to Jean, and just as long as she is, the other girls won't be kind to her."

Her father considered the question for a few moments. He always did this just as he did points in business, and it gave his decisions great weight with Isobel. "Do you really want to know what I think?" he said at last. Isobel nodded eagerly.

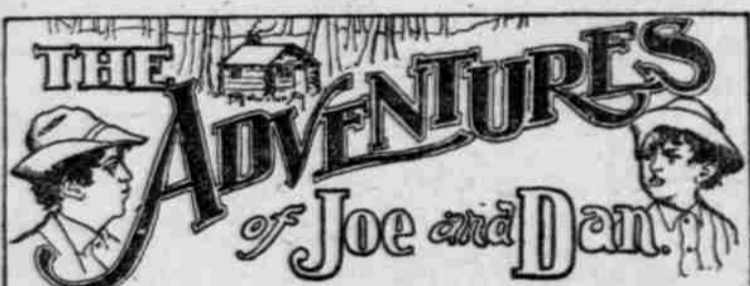
"Well, ask Florence Whitney to give Martha your part." A lump arose in Isobel's throat. Give up the fun—the pleasure of knowing all the other girls, the good times and Jean were going to have together?

"Oh, papa," was all she said. But in the morning she had made up her mind that her father was right. She went to Florence Whitney before school and told her the whole story. "But we want you, Isobel," said Florence. "You're the one for the part."



That night Isobel's father came to her room to visit a while.

"But Martha would do, wouldn't she?" Isobel asked. "Oh, yes, certainly, and I guess your father's right and you're a little brick. I hope Jean knows what a friend you are." The quick tears came to Isobel's eyes. Such praise paid for all the disappointment. And Isobel nodded. Jean's affection and gratitude alone would have paid her.



CHAPTER III

THE attack of the wolves was not delayed long. When seven or eight had gathered they began circling around the hollow tree in which Joe and Dan had taken refuge, and suddenly the leader of the pack rushed straight for the opening.

Dan had his sharp ax upraised to deliver a blow, and when he brought it down the blade was sunk into the wolf's head, and the beast rolled aside dead.

It was hardly a minute before another rushed, and met the same fate. The boys had been told that one wolf would eat another up as soon as killed or wounded, and here they had proof of it.

The wolves that had been struck with the ax were quickly dragged aside by the others and fastened on, and the savagery of the survivors seemed to be blunted by the meal.

They hung about for a time, licking their chops and growling, but all at once the howl of a wolf in the distance sent them scurrying away, to be seen no more.

You may be sure that both boys were too excited to think of sleep during the remainder of the night, and that both were wide awake to every sound in the forest.

An hour after the wolves had disappeared a deer came treading softly over the leaves, but as soon as he got scent of the boys he dashed away.

Later, a bear came blundering along. He sniffed at the bones of the wolves, and came within 10 feet of the hollow tree and growled away to himself, but as the boys kept quiet he finally moved off.

That was the last disturbance of the night. When daylight had fully dawned Joe and Dan stepped forth from their shelter and went down to the creek for a drink. Then they sat down on a log, and Joe said:

"There has been no barking of dogs or crowing of roosters, and I am sure we are far in the woods. The bark of our own dog could be heard two miles on such a still morning as this. When we started to follow the first bee we went to the west. How we got off the track I cannot say, but we must have turned to the south. We know there are no settlers in that direction for many miles. We have got all turned around, but if we do not get scared I think we will come out all right. We have matches to build a fire, but how shall we get something to eat?"

The question was soon answered. As they sat there a strange dog came trotting through the woods and stopped at their feet and made friends with them.

The boys knew every dog for three or four miles around their father's cabin, and they were sure they had never seen this one before. He was part bound, and the only way they could figure it out was that he belonged to some hunters in the woods.

They stood on the log and shouted at the top of their voices, hoping to hear a human voice in answer, but none came. Their shouts started a rabbit from a thicket, and no sooner

CHAPTER III

had Bunny started to run away than the dog was after him like a flash and soon picked him up.

A fire was made, the rabbit skinned and roasted, and although it was not much of a meal, the boys felt the better for it.

"Now, then," said Dan, when the fire had been tramped out. "Let us see what the dog will do for us. Let him start off and we will follow, and I am sure he will lead us to some hunter's hut or settler's cabin."

"But I believe the dog himself is lost," replied Dan. "I never heard that a dog could be lost, but it may be so. Let us keep quiet and say nothing to him, and see what he will do."

The dog lay down at their feet and seemed content for five minutes. Then he got up and whined and looked about him, and when the boys rose up he started off through the woods.

They followed, but not for long. He had not gone more than 40 rods before they saw that he was turning about for the place they started from. This was proof that he was lost, and could not be depended on.

You may read in books that a dog cannot be lost in the forest. Don't you believe it. I have known of half a dozen cases where dogs became utterly confused.

It is true that you may take one 50 miles from home along a highway, and he will follow the road back, but that is because he has landmarks to guide him. A horse will do the same thing, and yet you leave a horse in the midst of a forest, and he is helpless to find his way back to the stable.

"He is no good to help us," said Joe, when the dog had made a failure of it, "and so we will try another way. We will take our hollow tree for a starting point. We will go east for a mile, bludgeoning the trees as we go along. If we do

not find familiar ground we will try the other points of the compass. Whatever else we do, we must not get frightened. You have got your lip up and there are tears in your eyes."

"We've had to stay in the woods another night, and the wolves may come again," whispered Dan.

"And we may be home in time for dinner. Don't be a baby. Even if we are lost we shall come out all right. Cheer up now, and help me find a way out, and while I am busy with the trees you make friends with the dog. Don't want him to bark."

While Dan stood by the hollow tree Joe started off to the east and walked as far as he could without losing sight of his brother. Then with his ax he chopped a large piece of bark off the trunk of a tree. Then Dan advanced to that spot, and Joe went on again. They did not stop until they had gone a mile or more. The ground was still strange to them.

"We are not going right, and must return to the hollow tree and take another direction," said Joe. "Let us first try the dog's way to get back to the hollow tree. It may be that some settler's dog will hear him and bark in answer."

(To be continued.)

The Great Vanity of the Raven

THIS is a tale the Eskimos tell their children in the darkness of the long winter, up on the shores of Behring Sea.

Once a raven was flying along the seashore, when some sea birds saw him and began to gibe at him.

"Oh, raven, raven!" they cried. "Oh, you old eater of garbage! Oh, you carrion-eater!"

The raven was angry, and his feelings were hurt, for he was a very vain bird, and when his vanity was touched he was ready to do almost any foolish thing.

"I'll show them," he said. Flying on, he looked down and saw a marmot hole. The raven swooped down and stood by the hole, waiting, and presently the marmot came back with some food which he had gathered for supper.

The marmot, when he saw the raven standing right in front of his hole, asked him politely to please step aside and let him enter. But the raven said: "No, I will not step aside. They call me a carrion-eater, and I am going to prove that I can eat fresh food as well as anybody. I am going to prove it by eating you."

"Dear me," said the marmot, who was a fat, chubby, little fellow, with a good disposition. "I should hate awfully to be eaten. But if I must be, why, I must. But, good raven, I have heard that you are a very fine dancer. Before I die, I should like to see you dance just once."

This touched the raven in his weak point—his vanity—and he replied: "Well, I believe I am rather good at dancing, and if you really insist, I will just show you a few steps before I eat you. But, dear me, I must have some music. I never dance without music."

"Oh, as for that, I will sing for you," said the marmot, and the little fat fellow began a song which went: "Oh, raven, raven, how well you dance!"

At last they stopped to rest, and the marmot said: "I am delighted with your dancing. Just give me one more sample. As it is to be the last, shut your eyes and dance your best, and I will sing."

So the raven, who really could not dance well at all, shut his eyes and began hopping clumsily, while the marmot sang: "Oh, raven, raven, a graceful dancer you are!" and then: "Oh, raven, what a foolish fellow you are!"

And with that he darted between the raven's legs and went, chick! into his hole.

The raven was so angry that he hopped around as lively as when dancing.

The marmot poked his little nose out of the hole just far enough so that the raven could see it, but not get at it, and cried: "Oh, raven, what a vain and foolish fellow you are. Beware of vanity, raven, beware of vanity! And hereafter don't be so sensitive as to worry about what every squaking sea-bird says. Oh, raven, look how fat I am. Don't you wish you could eat me?"

And the marmot dodged into his hole again while the raven went away, cawing with rage, for good advice is often wasted upon vain people.

The Word Joe Missed

When an scholar reached the head of the spelling class, in Joe's room, he remained there during the lesson—if he could, and then went down to the foot to work his way up again. The one who remained at the head the most days during the term got a prize.

They were all small boys. Joe was not yet 10, and he was next to the oldest in the room. Sam Eddy was 11, but Sam was not particularly bright, and, besides, he had to work six months during the year.

Slow as he was in most things, Sam was a good speller. It was the one study he liked. As the end of the term approached he and Joe stood equal in points, but he had the advantage of being nearer to the head of the class. On the last day, however, Joe went to the head and left Sam second. This apparently ended the contest, for words would go down but once more, and, of course, Joe was not likely to miss.

Joe wanted the prize, for his father had promised him a book if he won it; but he wanted Sam to have it, too. He stood a chance of winning on something else, but Sam did not. Why couldn't there have been two prizes, so each could have had one?

Even while looking straight ahead he was conscious of that anxious, disturbed face beside him. And he was thinking of it when next his turn came to spell.

There were several visitors at the school, and Joe's mother was among them. When they started homeward, she joined him.

"What made you miss that word, Joe Brown?" she asked severely. "You know how to spell brich."

"But I miss it, mother," looking down at his feet.

Something in his voice made her glance at him sharply.

"Did you miss that word on purpose?" "I—Sam needed the prize more'n me."

Bobby the Hunter

Bobby was wild with excitement. He was going into the woods, a real serious enough camping out, with pine boughs for beds, and things cooked over a campfire, and hunting and fishing.

For one thing, he wouldn't fire at marks any longer. He would get real game, and catch real fish, and when Uncle Jim told some of his bear yarns,

mother," he pleaded. "And—and I didn't let it. I just looked foolish, and the teacher passed it on."

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Submarine Battle With a Stingaree

Craving the northern coast of Hayti one day in an English trading brig, I suddenly saw a hideous, misshapen creature floating deep below our keel. It looked like a winged monster, with a cowed head and a long, pointed tail, and in size it appeared to be at least 10 feet wide and about twice as long.

At once it rose to the surface and began to play in the swell. Then we realized that it was even bigger than it had seemed. The brig forged slowly along until she was almost on top of the creature, when suddenly a harpoon shot out from the bows and the next moment the monster was wallowing and leaping in pain, with the long iron sticking out of his back.

The man who had thrown the harpoon was second mate of the brig, and a native of Fortune Island, and his face was full of hate as he tried to haul in the rope.

Gradually the monster came in, until the man could reach it with a long lance that had a blade as sharp as a razor, and with this he stabbed it furiously until he killed it.

It was a stingaree—the most dangerous of the great flat fish known as rays. The stingaree is feared throughout the tropics because of the immense, keen, barbed thorn that carries in its long tip a deadly poison.

This thorn is as poisonous as the fangs of a snake, and as the stingaree can lash his long tail around with incredible swiftness and certainty of aim, few men have approached a living specimen even when it is hauled up on land.

After I had examined the stingaree that the mate had killed and carved out its thorn, which was fully 12 inches long, the man went to me and said:

"Whenever I see one of them brutes I simply have to butcher him. I hate 'em like poison, and with good reason, for a stingaree killed my brother and nearly did for me in the Windward Passage ten years ago."

"We had located the wreck of a coasting schooner in a coral key some miles from Fortune Island, and for several days we had been diving down into it and bringing up all sorts of stuff, mostly canned goods and similar cargo, but some few hundred dollars' worth of jewelry, too."

"On the fourth or fifth day my brother went down, and I was watching him grope around in the timbers. He was clearly visible from where I stood, for the water was only about 20 feet deep, and as clear as the tropical waters over coral keys usually are. All at once a great shape came between him and me, and the next moment it swept downward toward him and began to lash at him. It was a stingaree, and it was twice as big as the one that I killed just now."

"It realized at once what had happened. My brother had dived down on top of its nest—for these brutes make rude nests for their young. Instantly I grabbed a long knife and dived down, too. I got under the stingaree, tried to stab it, but the monster was as quick as lightning and lashed out at me so wickedly that I barely managed to escape the last sweep of its tail."

"In the meantime, my brother had been under water nearly two minutes, and he simply had to come up for air, so he watched his chance and while I kept the beast at bay he let himself shoot to the surface. He was almost clear when the stingaree swept its tail around and caught him straight across the waist."

"In a moment the water was darkened with blood, like a red cloud, and I saw my brother's body dimly as it sank down into the corals. By this time it was nip and tuck with me myself. I struck out along the bottom, cleared a space, and then went for the surface like a flash. Scarcely had I filled my lungs with air—and it tasted sweeter than anything I'd ever tasted before—the beast came walping at me, snapping its tail from side to side, and throwing itself around in the sea to get within range of me."

"I dived again and managed to evade it. Then I struck down to where an brother's body lay. The blood was still pouring from his waist, and it was a terrible thing to see down there under water, for the stingaree began to take a gash at least two feet long and half as deep

How Uncle John Saved the Pippins

THERE was a noise out in the garden—a very small noise, but it made Uncle John look up from his evening paper and strain his ears to listen.

"Those thieving boys are at my apple trees again. There won't be a pippin left for ourselves."

Ann's Mary wiped her spectacles and looked out into the darkness.

"You told Thomas to keep an eye on them, didn't you?" she said.

"Thomas doesn't earn his salt. He didn't keep the boys from nearly stripping the tree next the fence last night. I guess I'll take a turn around and look after things myself."

"Take your cane with you," said Ann's Mary. "You might need something to defend yourself."

"If I get my eye on those rascals, I'll mend something to whack them with," answered Uncle John; and with the cane in hand he stole softly through the unlighted side door, and out into the orchard path.

The noise had ceased, but pretty soon there was a snap like a breaking twig, and Uncle John stood by the hedge, in the direction of the sound. Keeping well in the shadow, he halted by the end of the row of apple trees.

"There surely was some one moving. Uncle John crouched down near his pippin tree and peered under the low branches. Dimly he could make out a shadow, not three trees away.

"He got his cane in readiness and worked along under the hedge without making a leaf rustle. The figure dodged behind the tree trunk and Uncle John stopped. The figure came nearer, slowly and stealthily, and in a moment halted by the trunk of the pippin tree.

"He hasn't seen me yet," chuckled Uncle John slyly. "I'll catch him in the very act."

"The figure laid hands on the tree and vaulted into the low crock.

"Whack!" came Uncle John's cane on the back of the thief.

"I'll teach you to steal my apples, you villain!" he roared, as the thief rolled off the tree onto the ground. "Whack! Whack!"

"Don't hit! Mr. Barton, please! It's me! Thomas!"

"Uncle John dropped his stick. "Thomas! What are you doing there?"

But I got clear again, this time by a narrow margin that the thorn on the tail actually ripped through my hair.

"I dived once more, and, coming up under it, I drove my knife in as far as it would go just over the huge flat lips of the thing, hoping thus to reach its brain. I was helped in this attack by the fact that, while the mouth of the stingaree is on the under side of his head, the eyes are on the top, so he could not see me.

"Twice I piled my knife, apparently without effect. Then, suddenly, in twisting my weapon, I felt it grate against the backbone, and I saw it viciously. The stingaree gave a convulsive leap, and was dead.

"I got my poor brother's body up and swam ashore with it. That day I swore to kill every stingaree that I saw, and I've never failed yet."



IT WAS HARDLY A MINUTE BEFORE ANOTHER RUSHED AND MET THE SQUIRE.



"THOMAS! WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE?"