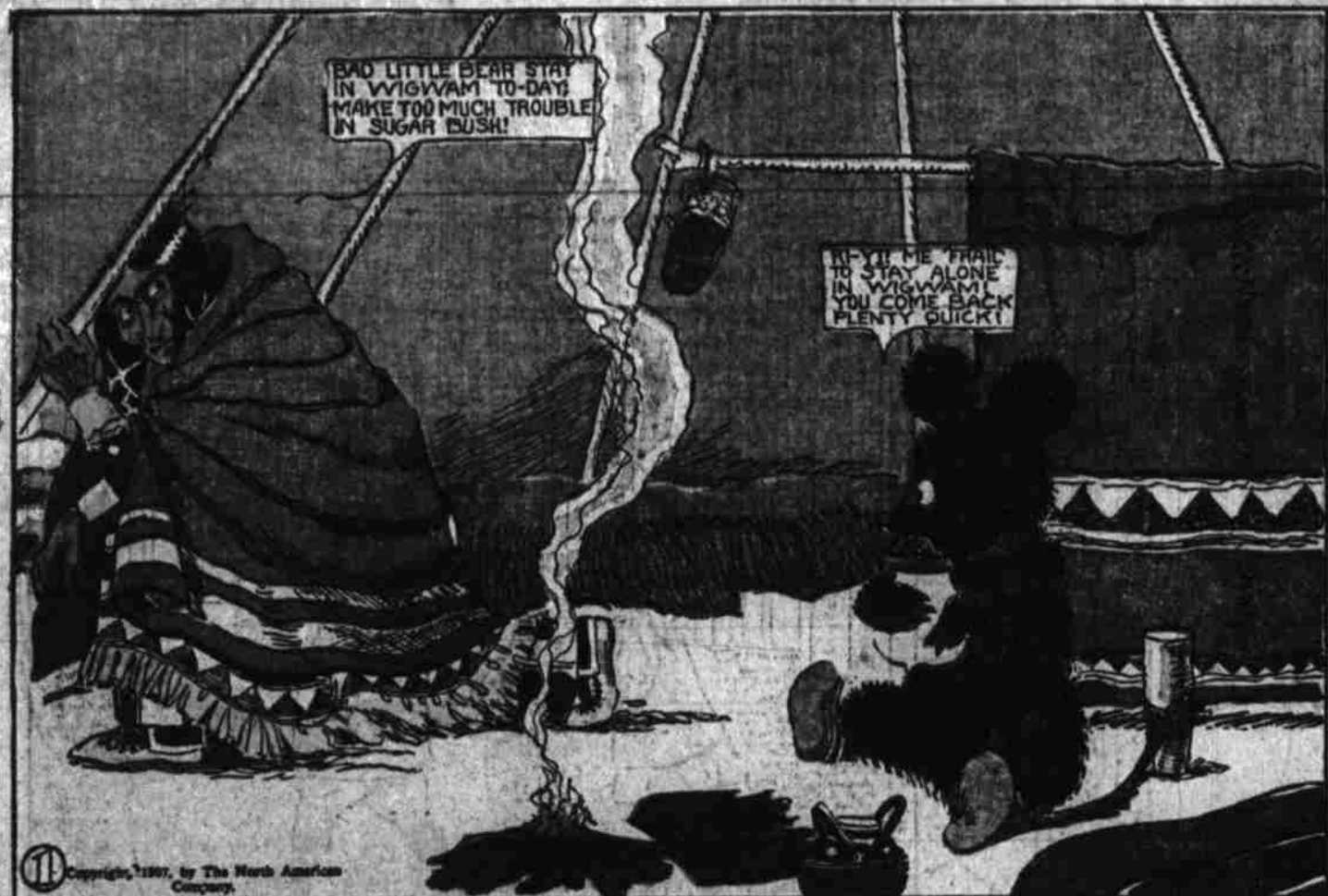




LITTLE GROWLING BIRD WANDERLUG



BAD LITTLE BEAR STAY IN WIGWAM TO-DAY MAKE TOO MUCH TROUBLE IN SUGAR CUSH!

KI-YI ME FRAIL TO SEE YOU ALONE IN WIGWAM YOU COME BACK PLENTY QUICK!

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Last week you were told how Nokomis and the children returned to the Sugar-Camp to collect the sap from the sap-troughs and boil it down until it became maple-syrup and maple-sugar. They got only as far as the "syrup-making" THAT day, because the greedy Little Bear upset the kettle and spilled most of the sweet, sticky stuff on the snow and over himself. Nokomis washed him clean, but when she was ready to go back to finish the sugar-making she decided not to take him along. As a punishment, and to prevent him from getting into any further mischief, she tied him by the leg to a stout stake driven into the ground inside the Wigwam. To keep him from crying and howling, she gave him a little jar of sweet stuff to lick up while she and the children were away at the Sugar-Camp.



NOW NOKOMIS MAKE SEE-SE-BAUK-WUO (MAPLE SUGAR) AND POUR HIM IN PLENTY LITTLE BISH!

HAS IT SUGARED?

WOULDN'T LITTLE BEAR LIKE TO BE HERE, NOW?

YEH! SUGAR COME NOW AT LAST!

The children helped Nokomis collect a great deal of sap that day, and filled up the Big Kettle as fast as the sap boiled down into maple-syrup. After a while, she told them not to add any more, but to let it boil away until it was thick enough to turn into sugar when poured into the little pans and dishes she had brought along as "sugar-moulds." Meanwhile, she split a strip of clean white wood and cut a slit through the flat sides. This she dipped into the Big Kettle, and when she drew it out it was dripping with the thick, brown syrup. Then she blew her breath on it to cool it, watching it very carefully all the time. If the liquid ran through the slit in the wood and did not harden across it, that showed that it was still in the syrup stage, and should be boiled longer. But—



IS THIS THE SAME KIND OF MAPLE-SUGAR THE WHITE CHILDREN BUY IN THE STORES?

HEAP BETTER THAN PALEFACE SUGAR! THIS ALL FROM MAPLE-TREE!

THIS COOL PRETTY SOON THEN BE NICE AND HARD!

CAW! THAT'S HOT!

If it remained stretched across the hole in the strip of wood, like a thin skin, or film, and was easily broken, like candy, when it cooled, then Nokomis would know that it was ready to "sugar off." She thought this a surer test than by pouring some on the snow, like the Paleface sugar-makers usually do. When she tried it she found that it was just turning into sugar. Then she prepared to "clarify," or clear it, from dirt and other impurities—such as bits of bark and twigs, and ashes and sparks from the fire. The whites of eggs are very good for this, and sometimes baking-soda is used, but Nokomis had neither of these. But she had some "Koo-koooh Wee-yau," or fat Salt Pork, left in the lunch basket, so she threw some of that in instead. It brought all the impurities to the top, and, after Nokomis had skimmed off the scum, she set the kettle on the ground and began to ladle out the stuff into the moulds.



WON'T LITTLE BEAR BE SURPRISED WHEN HE SEES ALL THE CAKES OF MAPLE-SUGAR WE'VE GOT?

KAYGETI-YES!—MIEBBE HE WANT TO EAT IT ALL! PLENTY QUICK!

SUGAR-MAKING ALL DONE! NOW WE GO BACK TO WIGWAM!

I WYONDER WHY LITTLE BEAR IS DOING NOW?

Little Growing Bird had a big wooden spoon and tried his hand at pouring sugar, while Yellow Hair held the mould. Aundak, the Crow, was busy, as usual, hopping around and giving advice, but he forgot to watch where he put his feet. The first thing HE knew he had stepped into a pan of the hot sugar and scorching his foot! OH, MY! HOW HE DID SQUAWK! (Little Bear would have laughed at Aundak THAT time if he had been there.) After a little while the sugar cooled and became hard enough to pack on the sleigh and take home to the Wigwam. This finished the sugar-making. So they began collecting all the things they had brought to the camp and loaded them on the sleigh and the toboggan. They had made enough maple-sugar to last them until the next sugar-making time came around—a whole year.



I WYONDER IF MIKOOON THE LITTLE BEAR HAS GOT INTO ANY MISCHIEF WHILE WE'VE BEEN AWAY?

KAVY!—NO! HE TIED FAST TO BIG STICK! NO GET ANY PLACE!

HURR ME GLAD SUGAR-MAKING ALL OVER NOW!

SUGAR-MAKING IS MIGHTY HARD WORK. I'M ALL TUCKERED OUT!

When everything was packed and loaded on the sleigh and the toboggan, they started on their homeward journey. Nokomis led the way, drawing the heavy things on the sleigh, while the children pulled the toboggan, which had only the birch-bark troughs and the lunch basket on it. Aundak (that impudent old Crow) pretended he had been working so hard that he was all tired out. He really hadn't done ANYTHING but hop around and talk—and burn his foot—but he wanted an excuse to get a free ride home on the toboggan. Now, Yellow Hair, who was very tender hearted, worried about Little Bear, left alone all day in the Wigwam. But Growing Bird said he'd be safe enough, because he was tied to the big stake! (But you never COULD tell what would happen to Little Bear!)



WAUGH! HE HEAP SAVAGE INJUNT! GOT BIG TOMAHAWK!

OR SAVE ME LITTLE GROWLING BIRD!

WAUGH! WANGOO-NAIN?—WHAT! WHAT'S THE MATTER?

KI-YI-YI-YI! HE—WILD BEAST TRY TO GET IN WIGWAM!

WHAT'S YOUR HURRY?

They were all pretty tired and ready for their supper when they reached home. But before they could unpack the loads they heard a queer, grunting sound that seemed to come from behind the Wigwam! Then an awful racket began inside the tent—a squealing and scratching and scuffling! Suddenly, Little Bear, like a small black hurricane, burst through the door-flap of the tent and shot outside! He had pulled up the stout stake in the strength of his excitement, and it came bouncing and rattling along after him, scaring him more and more. When he saw that Nokomis was there, he squealed for help, crying out that A GREAT BIG WILD BEAST HAD TRIED TO GET IN AT HIM! Now, there isn't room enough here to tell what it was that frightened Mukoons, the Little Black Bear, so terribly, but NEXT week you shall hear the whole story!