

not much evidence of
personal observation but the
material is handled with some
degree of imagination

II +

1937

Douglas Hamilton Mr. Beaver
Class C.

2. nd Prize Splash. Mr. Beaver was on his way home. Swiftly through the water he swam, only the smooth silkiness of his head showing. He certainly was in a hurry, because he knew Mrs. Beaver was waiting impatiently for him to appear. But what is this on the bank? A human being? Mr. Beaver dives and swims faster. He forgets all about Mrs. Beaver and his lunch, and thinks only of his relations, they must be warned. When he nears the opposite bank he rises to the surface, and with a terrific force slaps his wide, flat tail on the water. Mr. Beaver has done his duty, his fellow "beaver-men" have been warned of the danger and are now either under water in their homes or swimming in the middle of the stream.

Mr. Beaver arrives home to find Mrs. Beaver in a great state of agitation. She breathes a huge sigh of relief at his appearance, then she immediately sets off to scold him. Mr. Beaver isn't greatly worried about what Mrs. Beaver has to say, but starts right in to eat his dinner of lovely, young, juicy green sticks. Mrs. Beaver, however, is determined to have her say, she will not live another week in this house. Why can't she have a new one, there are lots of sticks and trees about and plenty of mud. Isn't Mr. Beaver starting his holiday to-day? This arguing is getting on Mr. Beaver's nerves, so as to be able to get some peace, he consents to build a new home,

for Mrs. Beaver, next day.

When sparkling Mr. Sun smiled on the world next morning, he was surprised to see a sleek brown body slide out of the water of a winding blue riverlet and commence to gnaw at a young sappling. Mr. Beaver is true to his word, he intends to build a house. His big front teeth sink deep into the juicy trunk of the tree. Slice after slice he peels off, until the tree wavers. Then he springs for the water, slapping his tale as a warning, and dives under. Down falls the tree and up comes Mr. Beaver. He immediately starts trimming and cutting it in pieces. He cuts down many trees in this way until he thinks he has enough for the proposed house. Then with the aid of a friend, he collects from the bank enough mud to make a foundation. He takes it down to the site of his new home and combining it with some sticks, makes a firm foundation. Mr. Beaver's work is started, he brings down sticks and mud, sticks and mud, until he has built a steady, dome-shaped house. The doorway is a small tunnel, at the bottom of the house, it is just big enough for one to enter at a time. — This is indeed a strange home, but it is very safe, because there is only a little bit showing above the water. — Mr. Beaver is very tired, and he wipes his forehead, thanks his friend, and swims slowly back to his old home, there to eat one more meal and then to sleep one more night.

Winter is approaching, and the task of collecting provisions, for that bleak time of the year, falls to Mr. Beaver. Out he goes, day after day, and collects many small sticks and leaves. These he stores in a special chamber he has built. Now the winds, the rains, and the snows may come, but Mr. and Mrs. Beaver are snug in their nest at the bottom of the singing stream.

About two months later, Mr. Beaver awakened from a long, refreshing sleep. Everything that was stored in the house has been eaten, so out he goes for more. He manages to break a hole in the ice, and climbs through. The snow is still on the ground, and Mr. Beaver has to blink because it sparkles so. As he was walking around in search of food, he saw a small tree in quite a sheltered spot. His mouth began to water as he went towards it. He was so hungry now, that he cut down that tree and chopped it into small pieces in record time. These pieces he slid onto the ice to his hole and then crawled them under, where he awakened his wife so she could enjoy the feast too.

It was spring when they next woke up. Mr. Beaver swam to the top of the water and found there was no ice. The birds were singing in the trees and jolly, old red Mr. Sun smiled down on him kindly.

Then he swam ashore and climbed up on the bank to have a look around. What he next saw surprised him very much, for at the end of the pond where the dam was, he saw a great hole and the water was pouring through. Mr. Beaver immediately went to wake up his friends and enlist their aid in the mending of the hole.

Male & female beavers all hurried to the scene, all willing to help. Three of the older males swam to the bank and commenced to cut down a big cotton-wood tree. Quickly the work progressed, tree after tree they felled until they had enough to mend the gaping hole. The females collected mud and packed it around the trees to hold them together. By the time they were finished it was dark, and they all went to their homes to get some much needed sleep. They were well satisfied at their day's work and soon all was quiet over the singing stream.

Next day was the first of May, & the Beavers were mending their homes where the ice had ruined them. About a week later a man came to the edge of the pool and set a trap for the beavers. Late that night there was a piercing scream. It woke Mr. Beaver up and he quietly swam to the top of the water. Then he saw his neighbour caught in the trap. Mr. Beaver hurried over to help him and he soon had

his friend out of the trap, and helped him home to his anxious wife.

One week later Mr. and Mrs. Beaver had two little children. While Mr. Beaver hunted for food Mrs. Beaver stayed at home to look after the little babies. A few days later, early in the morning, before Mr. Sun was up, four sleek, brown heads could be seen moving in the water towards the farther bank of the pond. Yes, you have guessed correctly, it was none other than Mr. and Mrs. Beaver and their two children.

Douglas Hamilton.

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Canada
Bureau of Geographical Names
Department of the Interior
Ottawa
April 14, 1900
Mr. C. G. Hamilton