

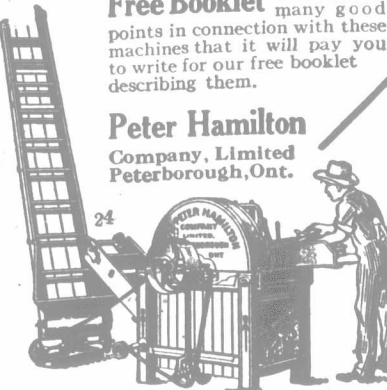
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CRAMPSEY & KELLY
Dovercourt Road Toronto

The Beaver Circle

Our Junior Beavers.

So many letters from our junior Beavers are on hand that this week's space is all for them. First we shall have a story and then some of the letters, although many still must be held over.

The Grocer Rat.

BY JO L. G. MCMAHON

A rat found a piece of gingerbread; so he put it on a teeny, weeny counter, which he built himself, and sat down behind, on a rattan chair, under an umbrella, to wait.

"Now," said he, "I'm a grocer. I dare say that before long I shall become very rich." And smiling at the thought, he began to rock slowly back and forth with his paws folded across his stomach.

"Let me see," he continued, "I intend to sell this piece of gingerbread for two cents. If ten people buy it, that will be twenty cents. Just a minute—that won't do—they wouldn't. If I want to get twenty cents, I'll have to sell it for twenty cents to twenty—oh, dear, oh, dear—I'll never figure it out. Now, let me get this right—" And he counted on his fingers, "one, two, three," right up to ten, "one, two, three, four," right up to ten, over and over again until he got so confused and drowsy he fell fast asleep.

He had not been dozing long when he was startled by a "thump, thump" on the counter. There stood a rabbit with a silly little smile.

"Good morning, grocer," said the rabbit.

"Good morning, rabbit," said the rat.

"I believe," said the rabbit, standing on one foot and wiggling his nose, "I believe I'll have some lettuce."

"Would you like some gingerbread?" asked the rat.

"No, lettuce," replied the rabbit.

"Oh—lettuce," said the rat, "but I haven't any!"

"Well, good-by then," said the rabbit, and he left.

The rat sat down in his rocker and he thought and thought and thought. Suddenly he jumped to his feet, exclaiming: "Of course! I must get some lettuce! I can't seem to sell gingerbread."

So he took the gingerbread to a farmer, to whom he said:

"Farmer, will you give me a head of lettuce for this gingerbread?"

"Surely," said the farmer, and he did so.

"Thank you," said the rat, and he trotted off home.

He was busily arranging his little counter once more when a song-sparrow came down the lane, whistling a beautiful song, a summer song all about "the winter's gone away" and "I'm happy all the day" and "grass and warm breezes" and "brooks full of water" and everything, and he had just reached the very high, sweet part about, "Oh, I love everything ever so much," when he caught sight of the rat and his little store.

"Good morning, grocer," said the sparrow.

"Good morning, sparrow," said the rat.

"I'll take some wheat," said the sparrow.

"Would you like some lettuce?" asked the rat.

"No, wheat," replied the sparrow.

"Oh, do have some lettuce," begged the rat.

"But I want wheat," insisted the sparrow.

"But I haven't any," said the rat.

"Well, good-by then," said the sparrow, and away he went whistling.

Now, that's strange," thought the rat, "lettuce doesn't seem to be the thing to sell after all. I really feel that I must get some wheat—yes, sir, get some wheat."

So he ran down along the stream until he reached the mill and said to the miller: "Will you please give me a little wheat for this nice head of lettuce?"

"It is a fine head of lettuce," said the miller, slowly turning it round and round.

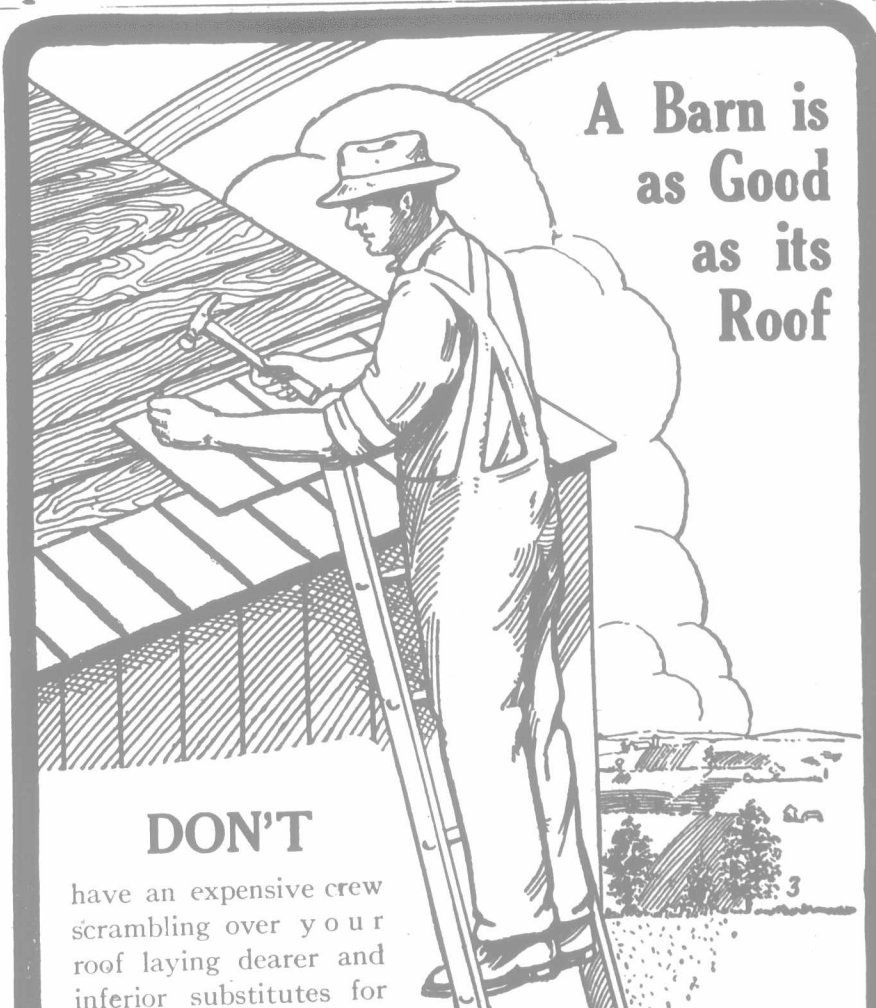
"I know, but will you give me some wheat for it?" asked the rat after a short pause.

"Oh—yes—why to be sure," said the miller, and he gave the rat a double handful.

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