

BUILDING THE DAM Even a hammer makes a good pillow if one is tired enough, and the freight-car family slept until the nine-o'clock church bells began to ring faintly in the valley. It was a runaway hen. "A runaway hen!" One was a hollow tree literally filled with walnuts, gathered presumably by a thrifty squirrel the previous fall. Luckily the largest logs were not far away; but as it was, it was a matter of great labor for the builders to drag them to the scene of operations. Occasionally Henry was called upon to assist with a heavy stone, but for the most part Benny puffed out his cheeks and heaved the stones himself. For with bristling back and a loud bark, Watch suddenly began to rout out something in the leaves, and that something began to cackle and half run and half fly from the intruders. There were at least a dozen churches, and their far-away bells sounded sweetly harmonious in so many different keys. They resolutely plugged the ends with more stones, more underbrush, and more logs. Each time a leak was discovered, someone dropped a stone over it. Even Benny caught the fever of conquering the mischievous water which slipped from their grasp like quicksilver. The girls lighted the fire and heated up the remainder of the stew and cut the bread. Watch shook himself violently at intervals, spattering water drops in all directions. Henry and Benny, fresh and radiant, with plastered hair and clean dry stockings and blouses, apparently liked to swim and eat, too. Jess' chestnut hair was long and silky and nicely braided, but she never murmured as it came off too. "We'll all be wading so much in the brook, anyway." "I have a little tape measure in my workbag," ventured his sister Violet. "We will have to haul some big logs across this narrow part and stuff them from this end with stones and underbrush. It ought to be three feet deep before we get through." The two older children dragged all the logs, while Violet and Benny attended to the stones, with the help of the cart. She took off Benny's little crinkled blouse and one pair of bloomers, and started to hang them on the line. Violet held great sprays of fine underbrush in place until each log was laid. It rose steadily up the barricade of logs. And on the other side it formed a second waterfall--not high and narrow and graceful like the natural fall above, but very low and wide. Luckily for the children, their supply of provisions was the largest of any day since their flight. The butter, hard and cold in the refrigerator, was taken out, and four portions cut from it. The two doughnuts made four half rings for dessert. "I think stew is much better the second day," observed Benny, eating hungrily. There remained two more adventures for the eventful day. They were tangled, too, and Jess cut them off evenly by a string, with Violet's little scissors. The children succeeded in catching the dog and reducing him to order, although it was clear he liked very much to chase hens. When the butter had reached the exact shade of brown, Jess poured in the eggs and stirred them carefully, holding her skirts away from the fire. "We shall have to be satisfied tomorrow to live on bread and milk," she observed, scraping up the last delicious morsel. "It's big enough already," remarked Henry at last, "but it hasn't enough water in it." He measured its depth with a stick. "We'll have to guess at inches," he said. "Is there anything you haven't got in your workbag?" The water was just ten inches deep in the deepest part. They measured the little boy and found him to be forty-two inches tall. "Splash 'em right in, old fellow," he directed. There was wisdom in this suggestion, so Jess accepted it gratefully, and even added Henry's blouse to the laundry. Then at last the time arrived when they were to lay the logs on. "Let's wedge the first one between these two trees," said Jess, with a happy thought. "Then if each end of the log is on the upper side of the trees, the harder the water pounds the tighter the dam gets." "Leaks," said Henry briefly, as the

water began to rush around both ends and pour over the top of the log."We'll make the logs so thick it can't get through. We'll lay three logs across, with three logs on top of them, and three more on top of that."It widened beautifully.And then the water began to overflow the logs.It spilled over the top with a delightful curve.protested Jess.