



“‘It’s the river in flood! Run, run! oh, run!’”



## CHINNA.

By MRS. HOBART-HAMPDEN,

*Author of 'The Secret Valley,' etc., etc.*

(Continued from page 7.)

A CROSS the bridge Mr. Galbraith would come, and Nancy and Brian stood watching in case he should appear sooner than they expected, while Frederick wandered on a few yards further. Close to the big bridge was another—a temporary wooden structure which had been used for the carriage of materials from bank to bank. It had a special fascination for Frederick as, through the latticed sides, he could look for a long way both up and down the river, and always hoped he would see something very interesting. The river spirit at play perhaps, taken by surprise, and all unconscious that some one was watching it. He ran out on to the wooden bridge now, and looked first down and then up the river-bed. And, all at once, he called excitedly, 'Nancy, oh, Nancy! Come and look. There's something so funny across the river. It's just like a wall. A long yellow wall.'

Neither Nancy nor Brian could hear what Frederick was saying, for the noise the river made at such close quarters was no longer murmurous, but loud and insistent. They could see, however, that he was beckoning eagerly, and they ran to join him, and looked in the direction in which he pointed.

'There is a wall across the river,' said Nancy, after a moment, in a surprised and puzzled fashion. It seemed absurd and impossible that such a thing could be. 'And it almost seems to be moving. But a wall can't move.'

'I think it's a magic wall,' said Frederick. 'I'm sure it is,' he added triumphantly; 'and the river spirit has built it because it's so angry. It won't let any more water come this way. No one but the spirit *could* have built a wall so quickly. Not Daddy, even.'

'It is moving,' Brian interrupted, breathlessly. 'It has passed that tree on the bank already. It's moving awfully fast.' He had pushed his head through a hole in the lattice work that he might see better, but now suddenly he drew back. And he caught hold of Nancy and Frederick and began to pull them shorewards. 'It's a wall of water,' he cried. 'It's a great wave. It's the river in flood, as Daddy said. Run, run, oh, run!'

And they turned to run, panic-stricken, the same thought in the mind of each. Mr. Galbraith had said the big bridge was strong enough to resist a flood, but what of the bridge on which they stood? What if the coming wave swept it bodily away? Towards the shore they raced in speechless fear, Nancy and Brian helping Frederick between them. He was so much shorter than they were that he was almost carried off his feet, but he struggled on manfully.

And, as they ran, all the time the yellow wall came dreadfully nearer. It moved in a swift, relentless fashion very terrible to see. From high bank to high bank of the river it stretched, murky and threatening, edged with creaming foam. Like some huge monster it seemed, about to devour them all.

It was of little use to run, for from the first the children were outmatched. On came the wall of water. Against the bridges it thundered and broke, and then swept sullenly on its course, its scattered fragments united again. And now the river had risen to the level of the wave in threatening tumult; and the

wooden bridge swayed in the fierce, strong current as a tree sways in a storm.

'We *must* get to the bank,' Nancy panted. 'Perhaps another wave will come. The bridge can't possibly stand another.' And, holding hands still, they struggled towards the bank.

To run was no longer possible; to walk even was difficult. And it was not only the swaying of the bridge that made progress so hard, but also the fact that every few seconds the whole structure quivered, as trees which had been uprooted, and other heavy objects borne upon the flood, jarred against the piers on which it rested. Once the children caught sight of the wooden roof of a hut which the great wave must have lifted bodily from its place. And there was a brown goat, still alive and swimming gallantly with the swiftest of the current. They all felt sorry for the goat, and hoped it would succeed in reaching the shore lower down the river.

A few yards towards the bank the children struggled, and then the planks beneath them shook from a yet heavier blow; and next there came a grinding, crashing noise; and suddenly the bridge began to tilt upwards towards the middle. From either end it lifted, tearing at the iron ropes which anchored it to the shore, wrenching fiercely at their fastenings; and slowly it sank again towards the level and burst asunder as it did so; and the two pieces broke into a dozen smaller pieces until there was nothing left that could be called a bridge, but just a tangled mass of wreckage only. And round this the water swirled, and tore it bit from bit, and sent each portion swaying and dancing down the river. And to one such portion clung Nancy, Brian, and Frederick, dazed, bewildered, only able to realise that in thus clinging lay their sole chance of safety.

Beneath the big bridge, which stood firm, as Mr. Galbraith had prophesied, went the wreckage of the transport bridge, past the garden and the bungalow. On, on, on into the strange wild country beyond. And at such a pace it travelled, that the miles sped by as they sped by the windows of a railway train. And, giddy with the ceaseless swirl and toss, deafened by the noise of the waters in their ears, went the children on their most unlooked-for, most unwelcome, journey.

(Continued on page 23.)

## PROFESSIONAL DINERS.

LIZZIE was a little girl who used sometimes to go and have dinner with a very old great-uncle. One of the old man's peculiarities was that he liked to see his guests eat a great deal. He helped them very bountifully—*too* bountifully, in fact—and yet he was offended if Lizzie left anything on her plate. So the poor child, who did not like any one to be angry with her, struggled through the meal as best she could, and suffered agonies of indigestion afterwards.

But Lizzie found a friend. The old uncle had a big, intelligent, sweet-tempered dog, named Carlo. One day, when Lizzie was dining with her uncle, she coaxed Carlo to her side, and quietly fed him with morsels from her plate. After that, the dog came to her whenever she was dining with his master. He was pleased to be fed; Lizzie was pleased to feed him; and the uncle was pleased to see an empty plate. So there was satisfaction all round.

The other day, Lizzie was reminded of dear old Carlo by something that she read about a curious custom of



some American Indians. It appears that amongst the Sioux of a certain Reservation, it has from time immemorial been considered the correct thing for the host to help his guest to an enormous quantity of food, and for the guest to eat all that is set before him. For a guest to leave anything is held to be an insult to his entertainer. This senseless custom was found inconvenient; but instead of doing away with it, the Indians invented the 'professional eater,' who, like Carlo, sits beside the guest and helps him through.

The host does not mind his guest having a helper. The great thing—as with Lizzie's Uncle James—is that the plate should be empty at the end of the meal.

The professional eaters are not treated as guests; they are merely travelling companions, with a particular duty to perform. One of these diners is said to have devoured seven pounds of beef at one meal!

E. D.

## THE ROMANCE OF THE SPICE TRADE.

### I.—THE OLD MARKETS.

(Concluded from page 5.)

NOW I am going to take you, in imagination, right away over the wide seas to the home of the spices. Before I begin to describe these spices, I want you to have an idea of the land in which they live.

Do you know where are the Spice Islands, the 'Spiceries' as they are called, islands where our spices grow wild, and simply cover the land? The scent of the spices is wafted for miles out to sea, and travellers tell us of the wonderful waves of fragrance reaching them in the open sea when many miles from land.

If you take a map of the East Indies you will find the large island of Sumatra on the west with a whole string of islands at its tail; these were very likely all connected at one time, but the wonderful forces of nature as experienced in these parts have split it up into these hundreds of islands. New Guinea is on the east. The large island of Borneo is situated just on the east of Sumatra. The complicated group of the Philippine Islands is on the north, and below these, between Borneo and New Guinea, are the island homes of the spices, viz., the Moluccas.

In fig. 1, I show you a map of this part, just including a bit of Borneo and New Guinea. Of course I have given here more than the Moluccas, but I wanted you to observe the curious likeness between the island of Celebes and the island of Gilolo, and also to give you an idea of the marvellous way in which the land in these parts is broken up. This is accounted for by the fact of the presence of so many volcanoes. If you look at Sumatra and its tail of islands you will find the little stars marking the continuous band of volcanoes right along. There is no doubt that many of these islands owe their origin to volcanic eruptions—that is, they have been divided from one another by eruptions hundreds and hundreds of years ago! But this is just as likely as not to happen again, or for parts of these islands to disappear during earthquakes, of which they have many.

Most of the islands in this region are extremely beautiful, being clothed with wonderful growths of tropical flowers and fruits, many of which in temperate lands we have never seen. The birds, too, are wonderful beyond description, and so are the shells found by the seashore.

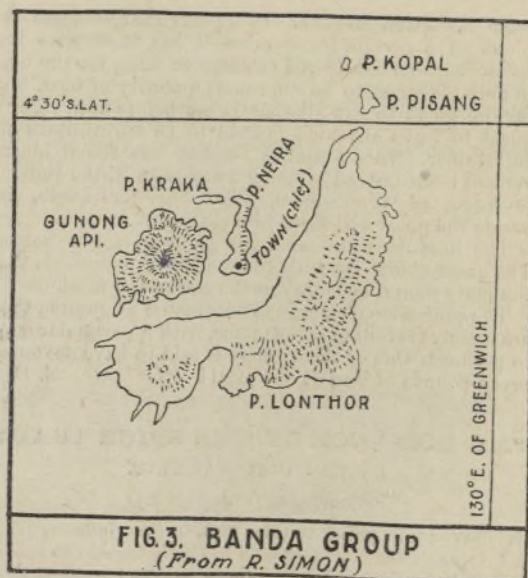
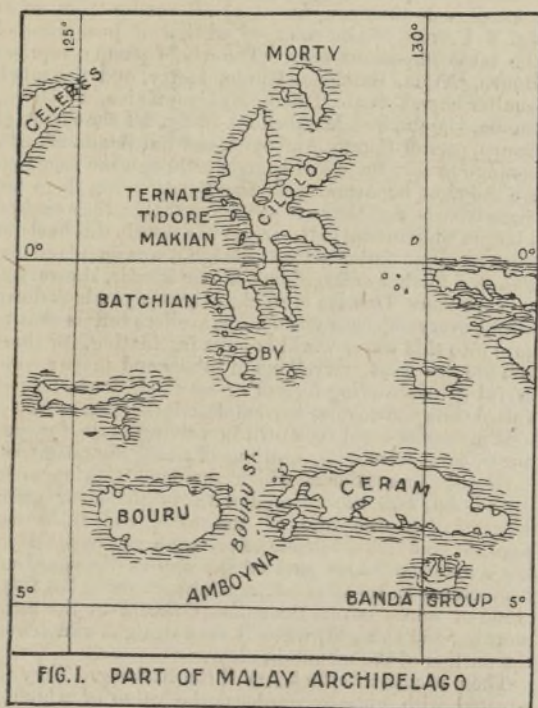
Now, the spice islands are shown on my map on such a small scale that you cannot at all realise them, so in fig. 2 I show you an enlarged edition of just some of the most important ones. The whole group comprises Bouru, Ceram, Batchian, Gilolo, Morty, and the much smaller ones, Ternate, Tidore, Makian, Kaioa, Amboyna, Banda, Goiam, and Matabello. In fig. 2 I show part of Bouru, part of Ceram, Amboyna, and the Banda islands. Strange to say, these last islands, although the smallest, are the most important. In the Banda group there are three islands, and they are so arranged that they enclose a large and beautiful harbour. When within this harbour there seems no outlet—it is as though it was an inland sea. Fig. 3, a further enlargement of our islands, shows you this harbour. This sea is so clear that as you look down into it every object is visible. Travellers tell us that to gaze into this water-world is most fascinating, for there you see fish most marvellous in colour and shape; wonderful gently-waving forests of seaweed, themselves of varied tints and colours beyond description; also marvellous masses of coral rock still in a living state, for, you know, coral is made by millions of living organisms.

Of the three islands which surround this apparent inland sea, two are covered with bright clear green vegetation to the tops of the hills, the third and smallest contains a volcano of perfect cone shape. Here the vegetation ceases part of the way up the cone, and from cracks on its sides smoke is always rising! A large cloud of smoke covers the summit, except in the early morning and at night, when it rises straight and leaves the outline of the mountain clear.

These islands are the home of the Nutmeg. They are covered with nutmeg gardens, the value of which is enormous! In my next article I will describe to you this tree, and tell you of its preparation for market. But before doing so I think it is desirable to give you some idea of this land in which it grows. We, who live in northern climes, cannot picture the state of life in these distant islands. At home we look upon the earth beneath our feet as a firm and sure footing, and it represents to us a state of steadiness and strength. We say at times that a thing is 'as firm as the ground on which we stand!' Well, picture to yourselves the lives of the people who dwell in these islands! They are never sure when, without warning, they may not be swallowed up by an earthquake, for great chasms have been known to appear, burying whole districts, all gone to an unknown grave in a few seconds of time. Houses are shaken to the ground and great ships lifted bodily from the sea and cast up into the streets of the towns!

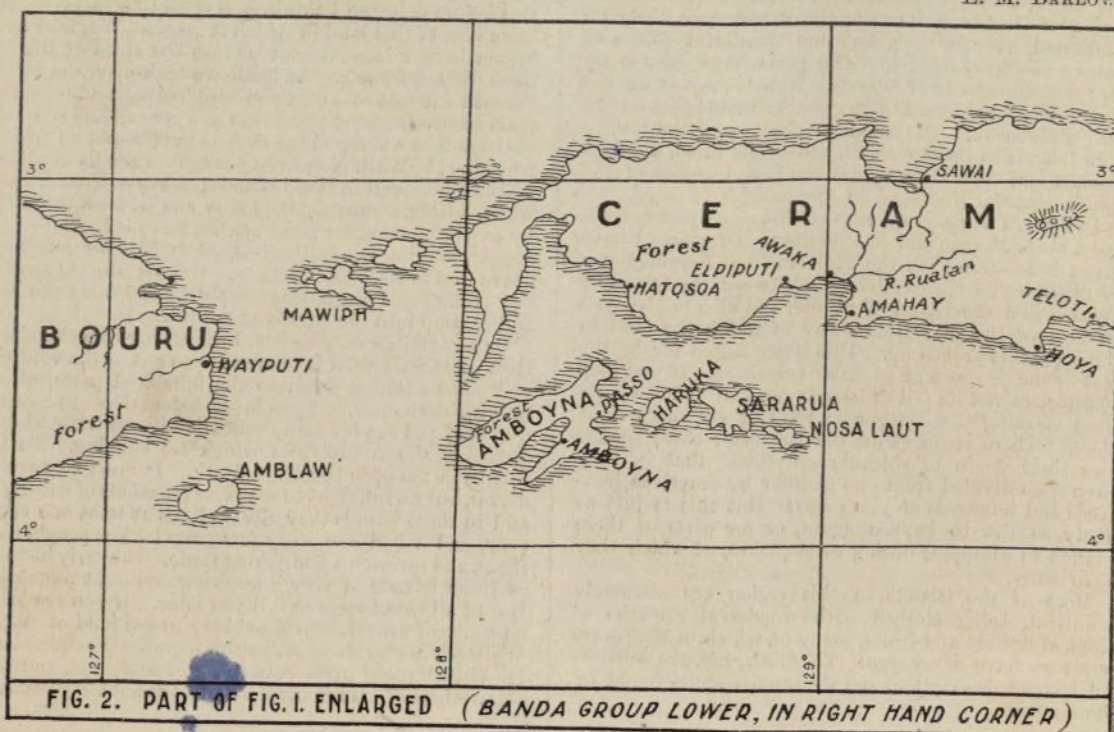
Or a rumbling may be heard something like thunder; then great streams of lava are thrown out of the volcano and come running down to the inhabited parts, often burying the houses, and people too, before they can escape. The land and sea for many miles is strewn with white-hot ashes, the fumes from which are choking. To be caught in the open is certain death. It must be a wonderful, but awful, sight to see these eruptions of nature—and in these islands they always have at least one each year, and a bad one every few years! Yet people live there, and carry on a flourishing trade. The early history of these islands is very interesting and most romantic. But of all this I hope to tell you later. If you are keen on books of travel, you should try to get hold of A. R. Wallace's *Malay Archipelago* (this includes the Spiceries). He visited these parts between 1857 and 1861, and his descriptions of his life there are most fascinating reading.





for any one. He went there to collect birds, butterflies, &c., and he writes accounts of all his doings. Much of our knowledge of the islands is based upon his books, and I feel you would be entertained with all he has to tell. I personally felt I wanted to be off to the Malay Archipelago for my next holidays! But, alas! one can only read, and long, and live in the imagination.

E. M. BARLOW.





## A YEAR IN A GARDEN.

I.—JANUARY.

ALL through the winter, on every half-holiday, the children at the Red House had worked very hard in their garden. They had been making plans for next



Fig. 1.—Gorse or Furze in Bloom.

summer, building a tool-shed, which they called 'a garden-room,' digging for pupæ at the roots of trees in the lane, making nest-boxes and feeding-tables for the



Fig. 3.—The Starling.



Fig. 2.—The Wood-pigeon.

wild birds, and queerly-shaped little wooden houses for the caterpillars they would find in the spring and summer, and all this work had kept them very busy and very happy.

When the first day of the New Year came, they took a special walk all over their own plot of ground. Very slowly they walked between the rows of gooseberry-bushes they had planted in the autumn, carefully looking for swelling buds and any other signs of coming spring. Out on the common they had already found plenty of signs: the golden flowers of the furze-bushes were ready to glow in the first warm rays of the sun; a blackbird had been singing since dawn, and the sparrows were wildly chattering and quarrelling. There were plenty of signs also in the kitchen garden, where a flock of wood-pigeons were busily trying to see how many fresh little turnip-tops they could eat. As the children examined their gooseberry-bushes they got one more



splendid sign that spring was very near. A starling in the oak-tree suddenly began to whistle. The whistle was so clear and sharp that Babe jumped, turning her head quickly to see who had whistled to them.

But Billy only laughed; he was eleven, and knew the notes of all the birds that came to the garden. 'It is a starling!' he said. 'Look! There are quite a lot in that old oak-tree at the gate!'

The two last half-holidays of the month were rainy days, and the children spent them in the tool-shed, making seed-boxes. These seed-boxes were fitted with loose glass lids, which Billy cut to the right size with his glass-cutter. Babe then carefully covered the sharp edges with strips of passe-partout, so that there should be no danger in handling them. The next thing to do was to prepare the soil for the seeds. All seeds like light, sandy soil in which to begin their little lives. So after the children had finely sifted some ordinary garden soil that contained neither slugs nor stones, they mixed with it plenty of sharp sand. At the bottom of the boxes they bored little holes for drainage, and over these holes they placed bits of broken flower-pots, that gardeners call 'corks.' Then they filled up the boxes with the soil to within two inches of the rim. There was just one more thing to do: the soil was very dry, and it was necessary to moisten it before putting in any very small seeds. So each box was carefully lowered into a tub of rain water, and left till the bubbles had stopped rising. When the water had drained away, and the soil was quite firm again, the boxes were ready for the seeds.

#### CLOUD SHEEP.

THE clouds are fairy sheep, my dear,  
That roam the summer sky,  
But when the merry wind comes forth,  
The little cloud sheep fly.

When comes the dusky night, my dear,  
No little cloud sheep play;  
Our Lady Moon, the shepherdess,  
Has hid them quite away.

When day returns once more, my dear,  
The stars do fall asleep,  
And from their fairy fold once more  
Come out the little sheep.  
Come out the little sheep, my dear,  
Come out the little sheep.

H. S.

#### THE BOY, THE TREE, AND THE WIND.

TRUNK and limbs and tangled top-knot—  
That's a tree;  
Trunk and limbs and tangled top-knot—  
That's just me!

Rushing wildly, shrieking, whistling,  
Slamming doors;  
Spoiling gardens, strewing papers  
Over floors—

That the wind—a wicked imp—  
What things he'll do!  
That's the wind and (let me whisper)

That's me too! LILIAN HOLMES.

#### THE KITTENS IN THE WOOD.

I HATE England and I hate Nurse, and most of all I hate Jack. He's a horrid, teasing boy, and it's very unfair the way Father and Mother pet him, and let him go down to dinner with them, and everything! And Grandfather is much nicer to him than he is to me, and always takes his part! I don't call it fair, and—and I think big brothers are *beastly*! (Which word, by the way, he had learnt from the detested Jack.)

After this outburst, Robbie threw himself on the floor and kicked. Had he done that in the Indian bungalow, his ayah would at once have given him anything he wanted; but in this case he was alone, having been banished to the nursery by that odious English nurse, simply because he had thrown a croquet ball at Jack. . . . If Jack didn't want a croquet ball thrown at him, he shouldn't have gone and won the game! And if Nurse didn't want to be kicked—and after all he had often kicked Ayah—she shouldn't have made him come indoors. . . . It was all Father's fault for saying he and Mother could quite well leave the boys with Nurse while they and Grandfather went away. And it was their fault, too, for writing and saying they were not coming home with Grandfather this afternoon—it had made him *feel* like being naughty. And now Nurse was going to tell Grandfather, who was sure to be very angry and unfair.

So Robbie went on, as he lay kicking on the nursery floor. He considered himself very ill-used and misunderstood, whereas he was simply a thoroughly spoiled little boy, who had made himself as disagreeable as possible ever since his arrival in England from India a few weeks before. And there was really no excuse for it. Jack, who had been in England for many years, spending his holidays with Grandfather and the rest of his time at school, had looked forward tremendously to having a small brother to play with; and though he had found the fretful, selfish little boy a great disappointment, he was wonderfully forbearing with him. And Nurse, though a very firm person with no idea of letting Robbie rule her as he had ruled his ayah, made every possible allowance for his rudeness and disobedience. But when Robbie lost his temper over a game, and, by way of revenge, cut Jack's forehead open with a well-aimed ball, she felt that no allowance could be made, and locked the offender up in the nursery till his grandfather should return.

An hour later Robbie came out of the study, sobbing angrily, and feeling that if he had hated Grandfather before, he hated him still more now. As he stumbled blindly upstairs he met Nurse, who had just come from Jack's room. (That young gentleman, having turned strangely dizzy while his head was being bandaged, had been sent, under protest, to bed.)

'Come, dear,' said Nurse, putting an arm round the disconsolate little figure, 'it's all over now, and Master Jack's not the one to bear malice. He's asking if you'd take the kittens in to play with him, and I don't think it would hurt.'

'I just won't, then! They're my kittens—he gave them to me!'

'All the more reason you should take them in to him now!' replied Nurse. 'Why, you ought to be glad to do anything for him! Run along this minute and get them, without any more nonsense.'

Robbie turned and went downstairs, for he had learnt



to respect that note in Nurse's voice. But in his present mood it seemed outrageous that he should be expected to let Jack play with his kittens. . . . If only he could tell Nurse they were not to be found!

Then Robbie had an idea, and, hastening his hitherto unwilling footsteps, he ran out to the garden, and, after a cautious look round, stole off with an old basket to a little gate at the bottom of the kitchen-garden. Leaving it there, he crept back to the kitchen, which to his relief he found empty, except for the two kittens. Picking them up, he hurried off to where he had left his basket, into which receptacle he tipped them. The kittens, however, disapproved of this treatment, and at once jumped out and ran up a tree close by.

'All right,' said Robbie, 'I'll come back for you,' and, taking up the basket, he passed through the gate and down a shady path leading to the wood beyond. He reappeared as the kittens were on the point of descending, and hurried off down the path again, a kitten under each arm, till he came to the basket, which he had placed upside down at the foot of a tree. Somehow or other he managed to stuff them underneath it, and then he turned away and hurried back to the Rectory. There Nurse met him, and was annoyed and rather surprised to hear that he could not see the kittens anywhere.

'You haven't looked very hard, I expect,' she said; 'but come to tea now, and we will search afterwards.'

But after tea, Jack, who felt better, said he would rather do jig-saws with Robbie, and the two became so absorbed that they were astonished when Nurse folded up her sewing and said pleasantly, 'Now, Master Robbie, you must come to bed.'

Robbie looked up in dismay, suddenly remembering the unfortunate kittens he had left in the wood. 'I—I'll just go and say good-night to Grandfather,' he said.

'He's gone to see a sick man in the parish, dear,' said Nurse; 'so just pop those bits in the box and come along.'

'May I just go down about the kittens?' said Robbie, anxiously. 'Please, Nurse.'

'Very well. I'll be turning on your bath-water. But be quick.'

And Nurse bustled away, while Robbie tore downstairs and out of doors. . . . His poor little kittens, cooped up all that time. . . . He would never hide them again, and he wished he hadn't, anyhow. . . . Jack had been so good to him that evening. . . . He would ask Nurse if Jack might have one to sleep with him. . . . Ah! there was the basket—how shabby it was. He had no idea so much of its edge had worn away—it looked almost as if the kittens could have crawled out.

'But they can't have,' said Robbie aloud. 'They wouldn't really be able. Oh! I'm sure they are all right, and—and I'll let Jack have both of them to-night!'

But when he turned the basket over, there were no kittens underneath.

Poor Robbie looked round and called in vain. Then very sadly he picked up the basket and went indoors. He wished very much that he had never hidden the kittens. It was an 'unsporting' thing to do—like minding when he lost in a game. . . . He wished he could be more 'sporting,' as Grandfather said Jack was. . . . Perhaps if Mother had been home he might have told her how it was that the kittens had disappeared, but he did not feel that he could tell anybody else. . . .

He felt rather like crying, but he had a dim idea that it was 'unsporting' to cry about a thing which was his own fault, so he went quietly up to Nurse, and was unusually good over going to bed.

The next day Jack was practically well, and joined in a vigorous search for the lost kittens, though he had little hope, for Nurse and Cook had looked everywhere the night before. Nobody could explain their disappearance, for the little animals had never been known to stray beyond the garden, and besides, Cook had left them shut up in the kitchen. It seemed almost impossible that they could have got into the wood, but the two boys spent the morning there, and asked in the village, all without success.

Robbie was very subdued over it all, and every one agreed that he was very good about it. They were very kind to him, and, except for his unhappiness about his pets, Robbie almost enjoyed the days which followed, though he could not help wondering whether Jack would be so jolly to him if he knew what had really happened. Jack, for his part, only realised what much better company his small brother was becoming, and began to look about for two new kittens to take the place of the lost ones.

And so it happened that one afternoon when Robbie, full of importance, was standing up to Grandfather's bowling, the carrier's cart drew up at the gate, and Jack, who was fielding, rushed to meet the carrier and returned with a covered basket in his arms. 'Here, Rob,' he said, 'I tried everywhere to get you another pair of kittens, and at last the carrier told me he knew of two going at Dene Hollow—that village beyond the wood, you know—and here they are!'

Robbie turned very red and then rather white. This was dreadful! He felt that he must explain now—and to Grandfather of all people, whom he feared more than anybody, and who had been so awfully nice lately, but who would probably despise him again now! It was dreadful to have to do it, just as things were getting so jolly; but after all it was his own fault, and he might as well get it over! So Robbie rammed his hands into his knickerbocker pockets in close imitation of Jack, and looking up at the rector blurted out: 'I don't deserve them. The others were lost because I hid them in the wood, so that Jack shouldn't play with them. I put them under a basket, but I suppose they got out and were lost in the wood.'

'That was the way of it, was it?' said Grandfather, gently. 'Well, it's a great thing to have made a clean breast of it, old man. And, do you know, I think Jack would be disappointed if you didn't accept the kittens—wouldn't you, Jack?'

'Rather!' replied Jack. 'Come on, Rob, here's my knife, but be careful how you cut the string. I haven't seen the kittens, but the carrier said they were tabbies.'

So Robbie, greatly cheered, knelt down and cautiously cut the string. Then he raised the lid—and out sprang the two lost kittens!

'Well, of all!' was all Jack could say; while Grandfather remarked, 'This is very extraordinary; either the kittens were found in the wood, and were taken to Dene Hollow, or else they actually strayed as far as that. We must find out later. Anyhow, all's well that ends well, eh, Robbie?'

And Robbie, as he went off with Jack to get some milk for the wanderers, warmly agreed.

N. M. LA TOUCHE.





"Picking the kittens up, he hurried off."