



“Have you hurt yourself, Kiddie?”



## TOM AND TOMKIN.

*(Concluded from page 199.)*

ALL this took time, and in that time the elephant and his riders were getting farther and farther away. For an elephant can walk faster than some other animals can run.

At first Pompey seemed inclined just to stroll along and pick flowers and bits of bushes, but presently Meg's twitches at his ears and the boys' shouts and 'Gee-ups!' seemed rather to excite him and he began to go much faster. If it had not been for the broad collar or belt, all the children would probably have fallen off; as it was, the boys nearly slipped several times, but they managed to keep on somehow, as the elephant went on—bumpity-bump! bumpity-bump!

'They're—coming—after us!' Tom gasped, as he heard the clatter of hoofs in the distance.

'Go on, Pompey; oh, do go on!' Meg cried, twitching harder than ever at the elephant's leathery ear.

'Gee-up! gee-up!' Tom shouted, kicking with his heels, whilst Tomkin used words in Hindustanee, in case that should be Pompey's native language.

The big elephant seemed at last to understand, and presently he was really galloping, in a way which seemed to shake loose all the teeth in the children's heads. On and on they went, until presently they were out of the forest and pounding along a white, dusty road. But now Pompey seemed to get tired; he went slower and slower, until presently he was only walking again.

Behind them the noise of hoofs grew louder, and looking back, Tom saw two of the circus people on black-and-white piebald ponies. And every moment they got nearer and nearer.

'They're catching us up!' Meg sobbed. 'They'll t-take me back!'

'They shan't—I promise they shan't!' Tom said; but the little girl refused to be comforted.

'How can you stop it?' she said. 'They will catch us!'

'Perhaps Pompey won't go back,' Tom suggested.

'Oh, yes, he will; elephants are most dreadfully obedient; he will do just what they tell him. Oh, I'm so frightened!'

'Is it far to your Granny's?' Tomkin asked.

'N-not far now, but they'll c-catch us before we get there,' Meg answered shakily. 'Oh, Pompey's stopping—he's going slower—oh, what shall we do?'

Then suddenly Tomkin thought of a plan. He didn't really want to do it a bit, but he could not see any other way, and there was no time to do any more thinking. He began slithering along towards the elephant's tail. 'I'm just going to get down and stop them,' he said. 'You make Pompey go on, as fast as ever you can, and—o-oh!'

He was obliged to stop talking, because, at that moment, he began sliding down the elephant, and next instant found himself in a heap on the dusty road.

Fortunately Pompey had been going quite slowly, or Tomkin might have been badly hurt. As it was, he lay there feeling bruised and dazed, until he heard the two ponies clatter up and one of the men jumped off and leant over him. 'Have you hurt yourself, kiddie?' he asked.

Tomkin sat up and thought. 'N—no, I don't think so,' he said.

'Serve you right if you had, running off with the elephant like that, you young rascals! Here, Josh, we must get on after 'em.'

'Oh, please don't!' Tomkin scrambled up and clutched at the man's sleeve. 'Let Meg go to her Granny; she doesn't want to come back to the circus!'

'I don't wonder; she never ought to have come; but the Boss'll half kill us if we don't take back that there elephant.'

'You may have Pompey directly,' Tomkin told them eagerly. 'We only took him because Meg couldn't walk. That's what I got off to tell you; we were so afraid Pompey would turn round and go back.'

The men looked at each other and laughed.

'Plucky little beggar, ain't he, Bill?' said Josh. 'Well, what d'you say? The Boss don't really want the little girl, specially now she's hurt her foot. I think he was just keeping her because he thought there might be some reward offered. We can easily say she got away, and he will be satisfied as long as he gets back Pompey safe and sound.'

'Yes, that's right!' the other man agreed.

'Well, you'd better get up in front of me, little one,' Josh said, 'and we'll ride on and see what the rest of the menagerie is doing.'

They soon came in sight of the elephant lumbering along, and Tomkin could see that Meg and Tom were doing their best to make him go faster. He waved his hand and shouted: 'You needn't bother, it's all right!'

So then Meg and Tom stopped trying to make the elephant hurry and let the two circus ponies come up, one on each side. They had just reached the first houses of the village where Meg's grandmother lived, and they went along the cobbled street in a funny little procession. When they reached the big iron gates of a big red house, they went through them, too, and up to the gravelled space in front of the steps.

Somebody inside heard the crunching and scuffling of the elephant's feet and the horses' hoofs, and she came out on to the steps—a tall, handsome, severe-looking old lady, who did not seem as though she had slept all night.

When she saw the elephant and the ponies, which no one would expect to find in their front gardens, she looked very much surprised; when she saw Meg, she looked as if she were going to cry and laugh both at the same time. 'Oh, Meg, my little Meg!' she exclaimed. 'How very, very glad I am to see you safe!'

Then Meg seemed quite to forget that she had ever been afraid of her grandmother. She slithered right down from Pompey's back into her arms and clung round her neck, crying: 'Oh, Granny, I'm so sorry I ran away. I never, never will again, if you'll only call me Meg, always, like that!'

After Tom and Tomkin had been thanked, and given gingerbread and milk, and after Bill and Josh had received five shillings each, and Pompey a great stick of rhubarb, the two men took the two boys on their ponies and rode with them back to their aunt's house before returning to the circus with Pompey.

There was no one in the garden as they raced up the path, but their aunt met them in the door of the dining-room. 'Breakfast is just ready, my dears!' she said. 'Have you had a nice game in the forest?'

Tom and Tomkin looked at each other. 'Ra-ther!' they both said together.

V. M. METHLEY.



## THE ROMANCE OF THE SPICE TRADE.

## VI.—THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.—CARAWAY AND SPIKENARD.

IN this article I draw my series to a close, and as I do so I want to tell you a little more of the work of the East India Company.

The Company seems to have devoted its chief attention to mainland trade in the East, but there are quaint instructions in existence with regard to trade in spices in the Spice Islands. Sir James Lancaster was in charge of the first expedition which was sent out by the Company, and, when he was leaving the East, he left certain agents to look after the purchase of various merchandise, and he wrote the following instructions for their guidance: 'And when God shall send you to Banda, take a house or houses for your business as you shall think fit for the Company's best profit, and make sale of your commodities, always advancing the price the best you may. In your provision you shall make in nutmegs and maces, have a great care to receive such as be good, for the smallest and rotten nutmegs be worth nothing at home, so that their freight and principal [cost-price] will be lost. Of maces the fairest and best will be soonest sold and to best reckonings. Also be careful to get together all the cloves you can, and use all diligence to procure some sixty or eighty tons at the least and the rest of nutmegs and maces.' You see they evidently exchanged articles for spices, which is the meaning of 'make sale of your commodities,' and they were instructed to make the best terms they could, 'always advancing the price the best you may.'

Later, James I. claimed a large share of the pepper brought home by the Company, and he also tried to insist on its being sold for him at 'top prices.' There were many letters about it, and eventually a settlement was arrived at. Later again, James allowed other adventurers to take out expeditions to the East, and this upset the Company much, you may be sure, for they had had it all their own way up to then. They had made huge profits. Here is an example: A ship brought back such a wonderful cargo of spices that each man who had contributed 100*l.* towards the expense got back 340*l.*! Was not that fine profit? Here are the prices at which spices were bought and sold: Pepper was bought for twopence-halfpenny and sold for one shilling and eightpence a pound; cloves bought for ninepence, sold for five shillings a pound; nutmegs bought for fourpence, sold for three shillings a pound; and mace, costing eightpence a pound, sold for six shillings.

All went well until 1623, when there was a massacre of the Company's agents in the island of Amboyna. This caused the affairs of the Company to be much talked about, and, their great profits getting known, others got together expeditions, and the palmy days for the Company were over.

So as time went on spices lost their high standing among the merchandise of the day, for they became much cheaper. But when you taste the characteristic flavour of cloves in your apple-pie, or you catch the spicy scent of nutmeg from your milk-pudding, or you note the warming effect of pepper in your savoury, try to remember all the romance that lies buried in their history, and try to picture the fair lands where they are still grown in much the same circumstances as of old.

Now I must finish up all I have to tell you about the

spices themselves. These are just the last of that long list of spices which I gave you in my first article.

First of all, there is caraway (*Carum carvi*), which I am sure you know either on or in cakes. Well, caraway seeds (really 'fruits') are from a plant very like fool's parsley; its differences are so small that I cannot here make you able to recognise them. In fig. 1 you have a general picture of a sprig. The leaves are finely cut, and the flowers are very small and white or pinkish. At A, I give the fruits of one flower much enlarged, and you see they are simply two caraway seeds standing side by side.

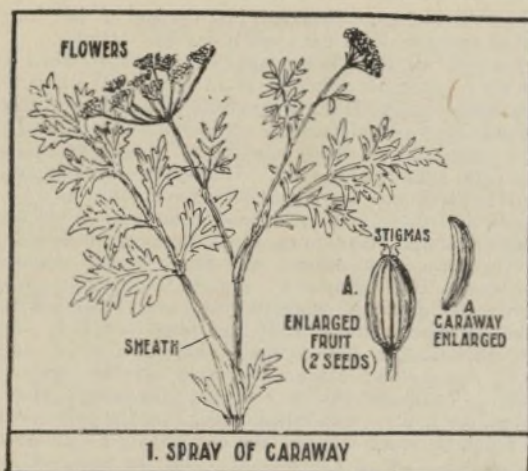
Another spice mentioned was coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*). This plant is a native of Europe, and it is cultivated in Britain, where it grows quite easily. This plant is also a member of the same family as the caraway—that is, *Umbelliferae*—a huge family. I shall not give a sketch because it is so very like the caraway that I could not show you the difference. Here, again, the fruits, or so-called 'seeds,' are the parts used in much the same ways as the caraway. In Professor Henslow's book on *The Uses of Plants* he says: 'It is recommended in a receipt of the fourteenth century for "red pimples."' Neither the caraway nor the coriander grow wild in England, but they are often found in waste places, having 'escaped' from cultivation—that is, the seeds have somehow got carried there and have taken root.

Next there is spikenard, which is spoken of as a spice. You will remember it was mentioned in Scripture in these words: 'Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus.' This ointment was very costly because it was made from a plant grown on the Himalayas, mountains of India which were very distant and difficult for travellers. In fig. 2, I show you a drawing of a plant; it is very curious, for its long main root and the branches which spring from its crown are all covered with quantities of shaggy brown hairs. Green stems spring from the tops of the shaggy branches, which carry long slender leaves, very like those of forget-me-nots. These leaves are very hairy, and have three main veins. The clusters of pinky-mauve flowers are carried in rosettes of tiny leaves. The whole plant is only a few inches high. It is a member of the Valerian family, and the flowers are one-sided, like their relations, but have no spur. A is a leaf and B and C are two views of a flower. My sketches are taken from a drawing at the Natural History Museum, and are produced by permission. I think this plant is one of the quaintest I know; the shaggy hairs are so curious. The ointment was made from the stems, and a stimulant medicine was also made from this plant. Its proper name is *Nardostachys Jatamansi*, and it is sometimes known as Nard.

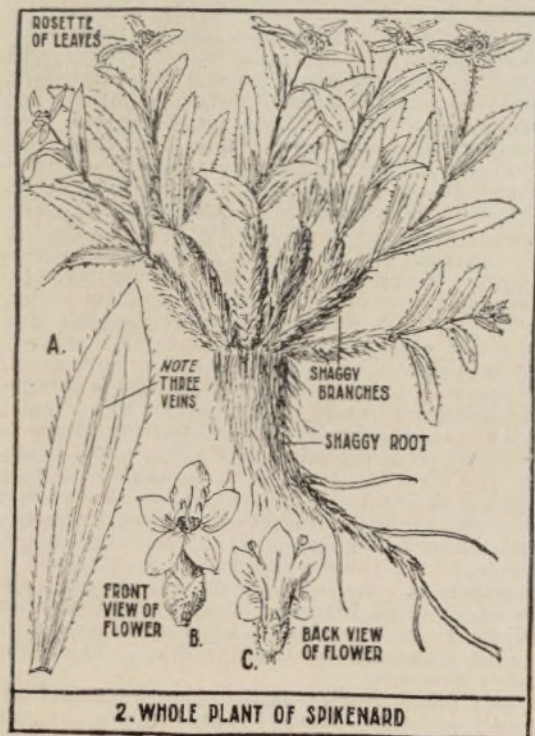
My last illustration is of gall oak (*Quercus infectoria*). This form of oak grows in Asia Minor as a small bush, not as a great tree as we know the oak! The sprig which I show you in fig. 3 might, to the ordinary observer, be from the common oak, but you will notice that the acorns are longer and the cups very round. The leaves are almost ordinary, but are not quite so irregularly cut, nor so deeply cut, and the leaf-stalks are longer. At A, I show a gall, or oak-apple as we often call it. You will note it is not so smooth as ours, which are like brown marbles, I always think! This is the gall of commerce.

This, I think, finishes the list of spices which I originally mentioned. Some of them, I suppose, are quite

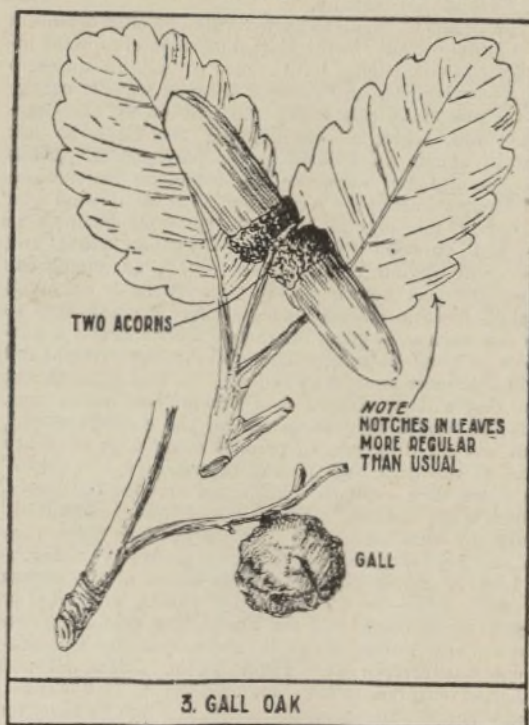




out of date, but things often go out of fashion, and then, years and years after, they crop up again, and are thought to be new discoveries! Several of the spices I have mentioned were quite unknown to me till I looked them up for you, but my mother remembered that they were used when she was young. So it is with flavourings now used: desiccated cocoanut, for instance, was unknown a few years ago, yet to-day it is a common flavouring for cakes and buns. The sultana is another case which occurs to me at the moment; sixty or seventy years ago it was almost unknown, but now it threatens to take the place of the



raisin! Thus, different times, different customs! Perhaps when you are old men and women you will look back and say, 'Ah! when I was young we used to have so-and-so, but now there is some new-fangled thing instead!' But I hope you will not be too obstinate, and declare that the old things were always the best.



Well, although many of the spices have gone out of use, I hope you have found it interesting to hear about them, and that as you meet them in the future you will remember all the romance which has been connected with the trade in the past, and how, though small commodities, they have brought great riches to the country and have been the objects which were sought by many of the world's greatest heroes and explorers.

E. M. BARLOW.

## WANDERERS IN THE WAR.

By A. A. METHLEY.

(Continued from page 198.)

ROGER leaned back in his corner of the carriage, trying to make himself look as small and as inoffensive as possible, but Sam's blood was up, and he was soon engaged in a furious dispute with the stranger, in the course of which he announced that he was American and not English; that America was a free country; and that his father, Sam Wilbur, of New York, knew better than to attempt to interfere with his son's movements.

'Shut up, Sam—don't be such a fool.' Roger forgot even his manners and his gratitude in his desire to silence his friend and to make peace; but happily at that moment the train steamed into Folkestone station and it was time to get out.





"Roger saw Sam make a desperate struggle for freedom."

The two boys had left London earlier than was necessary, for they had both been eager to embark on their adventure, and now they spent the spare hour or so before the departure of the boat in a stroll on the Leas and lunch at a hotel, where they caught a glimpse of their late fellow-traveller scolding his newly-arrived wife and daughters. Sam showed signs of wishing to renew the quarrel, but Roger managed to pacify him, as

the American was in a hurry to finish lunch, and had thought of all sorts of things that he wanted to buy.

'We ought to have revolvers,' he said; 'or at any rate, daggers of some sort. It is foolish to be unarmed when there is a war on; and then we have no field-glasses, electric torches, cameras, or provisions.'

They went out later on into the narrow, picturesque streets of the town, but did not meet with much success,



as many of the shops were closed. Sam complained loudly about the absurdity of English Bank-holidays, but in the end they managed to purchase a couple of large clasp-knives—bowie-knives he called them—a large and very expensive torch, and a stock of cakes and fruit for refreshment on the short voyage.

The pier was crowded that August afternoon with people who had gathered to see the boat start, for there were many summer visitors in Folkestone, and although bands were playing and the sky was clear overhead, they seemed to have little zest or inclination for amusement.

Roger was very glad to get safely on board the steamer, for he still had a dread—a presentiment, almost—that something would happen to upset his plans. Having reached the deck he went forward a little way and seated himself behind a large pile of luggage. 'Let's stick here, out of sight, till the boat has started,' he proposed.

But Sam did not share his friend's fears, and had no intention of missing any of the bustle and excitement of departure. 'Why on earth should we hide?' he demanded; 'we're not stowaways, and we have as much right to be on this packet as any one else.' He thrust his hand into his pocket and dragged out the little green book of tickets. 'Here are our tickets, and we have paid for them, and I'd like to see any one try to stop me.' And then he joined a group of men who were talking together, and his high voice, asking innumerable questions, made itself heard from time to time.

Roger watched and listened uneasily, for he and his friend seemed to be the only boys on the ship, and several people had already eyed them with surprise and curiosity. He remembered the speech of the disagreeable man in the train about children not being wanted in France; and wished heartily that Sam would not make himself so conspicuous. In the little world of school life, with its monotonous daily routine and its narrow horizons, the American boy's quaint speech and unexpectedness had been attractive and refreshing; but here, in public, English Roger could have wished for a more commonplace companion, although, of course, Sam was an awfully good sort and had behaved jolly well about the money.

'I expect it will be all right when once we get off,' he said to himself. But while the thought was still in his mind, he caught sight of a man who hurried along the landing-stage, spoke to a sailor, and then made his way across the gangway on to the steamer's deck, where he stood looking round eagerly, as if in search of something—or some one. He came close to the place where Roger had stationed himself, and addressed one of the ship's officers who stood near by, in a low, hurried voice. 'I have come after an American boy who is on this boat,' he said. 'Mr. Sam Wilbur's son. My orders are to take him back to London. Have you seen anything of him, sir?'—and then, before an answer could be given, and while Roger was wondering how he could slip through the crowd and warn his friend, the newcomer caught sight of Sam's glowing red head in the distance.

'Ah, there he is. I will get him, you needn't bother,' he cried, and Roger, coming out now recklessly from behind his barricade of luggage, saw Sam captured, make a desperate struggle for freedom, and finally submit to being led away, with crimson cheeks, tousled hair, and a very bad grace, across the gang-plank and on to the landing-stage beyond.

He could do nothing to help; for any interference, he felt sure, would only lead to his own capture, and then what would happen to Val? Roger clung to the railing, expecting every moment to feel a heavy hand laid on his shoulder, and stared with wide horrified eyes at the scene on shore, where poor Sam was now the centre of an amused and interested crowd.

Some late passengers arrived upon the landing-stage and mingled with the throng. Roger noticed one of them, a tall, lanky young man in rough tweeds, and saw that he stopped for a moment to speak to Sam's captor before he boarded the steamer.

And now, at last, the moment of departure had come, and the boat was drawing away from the wharf to the accompaniment of a burst of cheering, and the waving of many white pocket-handkerchiefs. Roger waved his own, hoping that, perhaps, Sam would see it, and know that he was not forgotten; but the American boy and his companion had disappeared, and the crowd who had laughed at his sorry plight were beginning to disperse.

Poor old Sam! so that was the end of his adventure. Roger pitied his friend, but he could not help rejoicing at his own escape; and then, suddenly, there swept over him the realisation of what this last unexpected turn of events meant. Sam Wilbur was gone, left behind hopelessly, and with him was the well-filled purse and the packet of tickets; while he, Roger Mervyn, had started on the voyage to France with only sixpence halfpenny of English money in his pocket.

He flung himself forward, leaning over the rail with his eyes gazing wildly across the widening space of water that divided the ship from the shore; and then a hand touched his shoulder and a voice said, 'Well, young man, and what is your name?'

Roger twisted round, freeing himself with a jerk, and leaned back, away from the speaker, with something of the fierce defiance of a trapped wild animal in his face and attitude. 'What's that got to do with you?' he demanded, and then stopped, for the man who had accosted him was the passenger in the tweed suit who had come on board at the last moment.

(Continued on page 213.)

## CHINNA.

By MRS. HOBART-HAMPDEN,  
*Author of 'The Secret Valley,' etc., etc.*

(Continued from page 195.)

BRIAN was quite breathless with excitement as he finished speaking, and Nancy and Frederick, who had been listening intently, were breathless also. It was a splendid plan, it seemed to them; a plan that held every promise of success, and which possessed one drawback only. It could not be carried out until night came, for, in daylight, it would almost certainly fail. And, meanwhile, Chinna must remain in his captors' hands; and, already, he had been in their power for a considerable time. And, quickly, the children ran to Mrs. Chinna, who was sitting apart, wrapped in gloom, to ask her how long she thought the villagers would wait before they decidedly finally that Chinna had failed to charm the sickness away.

'A day or two perchance,' Mrs. Chinna answered. 'For, since they have believed him very powerful hitherto, they will not act too hastily. But the sickness



will not stop,' she added. She evidently supposed that the children were hoping this would happen. 'It will not stop,' she repeated mournfully. 'The spirits are angry, and therefore they will not help.'

'But we will help,' said Nancy and Brian and Frederick together, and so forcefully that the dull despair of Mrs. Chinna's face was lightened by a gleam of hope. Moreover, the fact that she also was no longer hungry, made it easier for her to feel more cheerful. And the gleam brightened steadily as the children explained their plan to her at length. And, after a while, she actually began to think they might succeed, and a smile came twinkling into her eyes.

'Did not my man say ye were luck-bringers,' she declared shrilly. 'Did he not say ye might bring good fortune even now? O, foolish that I am, I had forgotten. Without doubt ye will save him.'

'To wear the skin of the tiger, that will be good,' she went on, her voice rising higher and higher in joyful little squeals. 'And there is the skin of a barking deer also, and the skin of a snake, shot some time since. Oh, in truth, ye will be a strange and fear-inspiring company.'

## CHAPTER XX.

THE day had already turned to afternoon, and both Mrs. Chinna and the children were agreed it would be best to start for the lake-edge immediately that they might make such preparations as were needful while yet the light lasted. Mrs. Chinna still affirmed that go through the clearing she could not, and would not. But she was willing to skirt it with her eyes turned resolutely in the opposite direction, while the children fetched the tiger-skin and the snake-skin, which she told them they would find beneath the thatch of the hut. The deer-skin also they brought, but, when they held a dress rehearsal beside the lake, it was decided that this last was not suitable for their purpose. It was both too small and too stiff. And Mrs. Chinna thereupon washed Nancy's white dress, and spread it to dry, and maintained that, clad in white and with her white face, Nancy would look quite sufficiently spirit-like.

'Speak to the village people in a very lordly fashion,' Mrs. Chinna counselled. 'Order them most haughtily to let my man go. And point to these'—and she pointed to Brian and Frederick—'and say, "Behold my servants who do my bidding."'

And, as Nancy looked at Brian and Frederick, she could not but hope that the villagers would be thoroughly frightened. The snake-skin had once covered a huge rock python, and now enwrapped Frederick closely, the flat head resting on his forehead; and Brian, in the tiger-skin, was a most imposing sight. But, as it was less supple than the snake-skin, and his own clothes were rather apt to show in a disconcerting fashion, Brian decided to dress himself as he was dressed on the day of the tiger hunt, as he would thus match better with the tints of the skin. It did not take long to fetch the cloth from the hut. And, meanwhile, Mrs. Chinna made a very thorough examination of the ground by the lake-edge, in the hope of gleaning from it some further clue. It seemed to please her greatly that a large body of men had assisted at Chinna's capture. She evidently regarded this as a tribute to his powers.

'So strong is he, they dared not attack him save many together,' she proudly boasted. 'And they were afraid to venture to the clearing. Here they lay in

ambush.' And there was so much scorn of this timidity in her voice that the children were much encouraged. And, indeed, it seemed likely that people, who had been so cowardly, could easily be vanquished; and that, if the villagers already believed so firmly in Chinna's powers, they would have the less difficulty in crediting that he had summoned strange spirits to his assistance.

The marks of the struggle extended for some way beyond the circle along the margin of the lake. And, presently, they came upon another relic of Chinna, his little bow, broken in two. And, further on, it was clear he had escaped and run for half-a-dozen yards before he had been recaptured, and dragged on to a large raft which had made a wide passage between the green floating reeds. All this the children discovered, partly with Mrs. Chinna's help, and partly unaided. Chinna's own little raft they found untouched luckily, so well hidden had it been beneath a network of branches.

And now the sun was near to setting, and there was just time to cross the lake, and to reach the neighbourhood of the village before the darkness came. It was anxious work venturing into the open water beyond the island, and, while Brian and Mrs. Chinna paddled, Nancy and Frederick watched the opposite shore closely, but without any result. The villagers evidently thought that in capturing Chinna, they had captured the only person that mattered. And, as the little raft neared the landing-stage in safety, this fact suggested a new idea to Brian.

'I'm sure I could get right in among the villagers,' he said, 'without their suspecting anything. Not in the tiger-skin of course, but just dressed as I am now. They thought I was too light-coloured to belong to Chinna, but I'm not a bit too fair for a village boy. And there were heaps and heaps of boys in that village. One extra wouldn't matter. And I might find out from what the people said where they had put Chinna, and what they meant to do with him. It would make it ever so much easier to rescue him in the end.'

There was much to recommend this scheme, they all agreed, so much it was worth attempting. So, when Brian had guided Mrs. Chinna, and Nancy, and Frederick almost to the outskirts of the village, he left them securely hidden in a patch of undergrowth, and ran on alone until he came within sight of the pool. It was no longer deserted, as when he last had seen it; but the cows and buffaloes of the village were drinking and wallowing at the margin of the water, while, at the far end, around the platform beneath the peepul-tree, was gathered a large crowd from which came a clamour of voices, loudly raised. Towards this crowd Brian slowly made his way, growing bolder each moment, as it seemed clear that every one was too busy to pay any special attention to one small boy. And the growing darkness was all in his favour. And so confident did he feel, by the time he reached the outskirts of the crowd, that he pushed and squeezed his way through, as a village boy might have done, until he was quite close to the platform, and could see that, upon it, were seated the elders of the village. A group of grey-bearded, anxious men they were, gathered in solemn debate, while around them surged an excited mass of people, shouting now one thing, now another. But again and again, clear and unmistakable, broke forth the cry—

'Put the wizard to the torture. Let him die if he will not yield.'

(Continued on page 210.)





"Brian in the tiger-skin was a most imposing sight."