

THE CRICKET

Miss Wilder's stern face underwent no change. She answered seriously:

"You would not like it; you would be very uncomfortable. The children have no pretty clothes, no nice homes with gardens to play in, no kind parents or patient teachers."

"Do they have horses?"

"I suppose so."

"Do they swim?"

"Probably. They have rude boats called dug-outs," continued Miss Wilder, glad of an absorbing subject.

"Do the children go in the boats?"

"No doubt."

"They can't get their clothes spoiled if they don't wear any."

"Obviously. Come, now, Isabelle, put on your dress like a nice girl. The children will be coming to the party, and you won't be dressed."

"I *won't* put on that dress, and I'm *not* going to the party, I tell you; I *hate* them."

Miss Wilder tried force, but in vain. She tried strategy, with no results. Isabelle wriggled out of her grasp and darted out of the room. Miss Wilder called; no reply. She commanded; no answer. Then she closed her lips more firmly and betook herself to the door of Mrs. Bryce's room.

"What is it? I told you not to bother me," an irritated voice called, at her knock.

"I'm sorry, Mrs. Bryce, but Isabelle refuses to be dressed for the party. She says she won't go."