

THE WHISTLING MOTHER

because soon afterward it would be train time. But I needn't have been. My family certainly is the gamest crowd I ever saw. Even Grandfather, who takes things rather seriously as a rule, told a couple of corking stories, and Grandmother laughed at them in a perfectly natural way, though I couldn't help suspecting her of bluffing. Of course, when it came to that, I knew they were all bluffing. But I tell you, a fellow wants a bluff at a time like that, and he isn't going to misunderstand it, either—not from my sort of people.

The time came at last when I had to go up to my room and get my stuff—and I knew what would happen then. Mother would come, too, and we'd say our real good-bye there. That's only fair to her—and to me, too, for I wouldn't miss it, even