

After crossing a bridge over a river they entered the town. They addressed several people, but these shook their heads and pointed forward.

"What do they mean, Jack?"

"I am sure I don't know, unless they mean there is somebody farther on who speaks English." Presently they came to a large house. Several people were passing in and out. Jack spoke to one of these, but he shook his head and pointed indoors. "This must be the right place, Arthur."

They went into a large room, where two or three natives were sitting writing. They looked up in surprise at the two travel-stained English lads.

"Can any of you speak English?" Jack asked. One of them at once left his desk and came forward.

"I can speak English. What do you want?"

"Thank goodness!" Jack exclaimed fervently.

"We are two officers belonging to an English ship that was wrecked in the storm two days ago. We believe all the rest have been drowned. We have made our way on foot across the country, and you are the first person we have met who can speak English."

At the word "officer" the clerk had assumed a more respectful attitude. "The collector-sahib went away yesterday to see what could be done