

The Inglenook.

The Twin's Compromise.

"Come down in the garden with us, mamma," said Mab. "We're going to play robber caves under the lilac bushes."

"Yes, do," urged Cunnie. "I'll carry a chair for you."

"I can not this morning, my dears," Mrs. Barton replied. "Nurse is busy, and I want to stay upstairs with baby in case she wakes."

"O!" baby will stay asleep a long while," said Cunnie. "She's just shut up her peepers."

"Yes, but sometimes she opens 'em the very next minute," said Mab. "I'm drefful sorry you can't come mamma."

The children were disappointed, for yesterday mamma, sitting under the big pear-tree with her sewing, had laughed so heartily at the very small spaces they crawled into, that it made the robber game such fun.

"I'll tell you," said their mamma. "We'll compromise on the side-porch. I can see you from there, and also hear baby if she cries. Will that do?"

"It's better than not having you at all, the twins agreed.

"But what's 'compromise'?" asked Cunnie, who liked large words, even if he could not pronounce them properly. "Well it is both parties giving up something of their own plans, and agreeing on a middle course—meeting half way as it were. In this case I give up staying upstairs, and you give up having me with you under the pear-tree, yet, in a measure we all do what we planned."

So, for an hour or more, Mrs. Barton sat on what Mab called "the morning-glory porch," watching the little robbers as they wedged themselves in and out of their lilac-bush caves at the other end of the long path, and listened smilingly to the wonderful things they ran up every now and then to tell her. In all that time the blessed baby never whimpered but once; and that was when she wanted to be turned over, and it only took her mamma a moment to do that. Cunnie said the compromise was a real success.

Of all the delightful places to play on this old farm where the Bartons were spending the summer, near the big pear-tree in the garden was the most delightful. There were so many bushes to play around and hide behind. Then at the foot of the tree there was a large flat stone, that did for a table or a sofa, or a bed for Mab's dolls, or an island in a sea of grass, or nearly anything. Besides the tree forked so near the ground that you had nothing to do but climb the rail-fence that separated the garden from a cornfield, and step right into the tree, where there was a seat plenty large enough for two children. This was a grand place to read fairy stories or any other kind of stories. One morning when Mrs. Barton and Cousin Imogen had gone driving, the twins decided to have a lunch party in their favorite retreat. Kind Mrs. Ross gave them a small tin pail containing cookies, gingerbread, and early apples. Mab invited her dolls, and Cunnie invited Fido by letting him smell the cake.

"We'll have the stone for a table," said Mab, in high glee. "I'll trim it with flowers."

But it appeared Cunnie also had his notions about the arrangement for the lunch.

"O, I say, Mab!" he cried: "don't let's have it on the stone, we've had so many eatings there. Let's go up and sit in the tree. That'll be newer."

Mab's countenance fell. "But Fido and the dolls," she suggested.

"I'll put the dolls in that crotch just above where we sit, and we can throw bits of cake down to Fido. It'll be lots of fun to see him dancing around there begging."

"That spoils the whole thing!" exclaimed Mab, half crying. "The dolls can't sit up there in their clean frocks, and I want to stay down and have a decent table, with flowers and things."

"Bother your frocks and your flowers!" said Cunnie. "I tell you it will be a great deal jollier to sit up in the tree and eat out of the pail."

"I won't squat down on the ground," declared Cunnie, very red in the face. They were both quite angry. Neither would give up, and there came very near being no lunch party. At last Cunnie exclaimed:

"O, see here Mab! Let's have a compromise."

"Where shall we have it?" inquired Mab, beginning to wipe her eyes.

"Why on the fence. That's as nearly half-way between the stone and the seat in the tree as we can get."

"How in the world can we have a lunch on the fence?" cried Mab.

Easy 'nough. I'll put this little board from the top rail to the tree for a table. You can put some flowers on that if you like. Come on! It'll be no end of fun!

Mab agreed, though it was plain that she did not like the plan altogether. They put the dolls to sleep in Cunnie's wheel-barrow, and climbed up on the fence. The party proceeded, but was not as jolly as Cunnie had thought it would be, the top rail not being very steady; neither was the table, and the apples would roll off. They had to compromise again by putting only the cake on the table, leaving the apples in the pail on the ground. The flowers blew away, and Fido, at the foot of the tree, wore a very injured expression because he was shut out from a party he had been invited to attend. Then the top rail was not a very comfortable seat. Presently Mab said:

"This compromise is awful tilty, Cunnie."

"Tain't very comfortable, that's a fact," Cunnie admitted.

He was on the point of again proposing that they should go up in the tree, where they would have a firm, comfortable seat, and a wide view over the fields. He looked at his sister, as she with one hand held on to a branch of the tree to keep from falling and with the other brushed the flies away and fed herself. He could see that she looked regretfully at the dolls, and pityingly at Fido. He knew she would rather be down on the grass, that she would much prefer that to either the fence or the tree. He thought about it through another cookie, and when he had swallowed the last mouthful, or perhaps a little before, he said:

"Mab, let's go down and finish on the stone."

"All right!" replied Mab, promptly.

In about three minutes they had a newspaper spread over the stone for a table cloth, the remainder of the lunch and a handful of clover-blossoms arranged upon it, the hastily-awakened dolls propped up at one side, and Fido, quivering with delight at the other. From the head of the table Mab beamed radiantly upon her family. She made Cunnie take the mellowest apples and the largest piece of gingerbread. She offered everything on the table to the dolls, and gave Fido nearly all he barked for—which, of course, was his way of asking. It was a very merry, happy little feast.

In the evening, when they were telling their mamma all about it, Mab asked:

"Mamma, if Cunnie giving up the tree-seat for the fence was a compromise, what was it when he came all the way down to the big stone to please me?"

"That was compromising 'down to the ground," said Cousin Imogen, gayly.

"I should call it regular, straight-out, good-little-boy giving up," said mamma, lovingly taking the boy's small brown fists in her soft hands.

"Anyway, it was drefful kind," was Mab's opinion.

A Wild Duck's Battle With a Hawk.

A green-winged teal is the heroine of Ernest Seton-Thompson's new story in *The Ladies' Home Journal* for July. After her brood was hatched she started to take them across a pond. "This was a mistake," Mr. Seton-Thompson writes. "For it exposed them to enemies. A great marsh hawk saw them, and he came swooping along sure of getting one in each claw. 'Run for the rushes!' called out the Mother Greenwing, and run they all did, pattering over the surface as fast as their tired little legs could go. 'Run! run!' cried the mother, but the hawk was close at hand now. In spite of all their running he would be on to them in another second. They were too young to dive; there seemed no escape when just as he pounced the bright little mother gave a great splash with all her strength, and, using both feet and wings, dashed the water all over the hawk. He was astonished. He sprang back into the air to shake himself dry. The mother urged the little ones to 'Keep on!' and keep on they did. But down came the hawk again; again to be repelled with a shower of spray. Three times did he pounce, and three times did she drench him. Now all the downlings were safe in the friendly rushes, the angry hawk made a lunge at the mother, but she could dive, and, giving a good-by splash, she easily disappeared."

"It is done now!" said an old Scotch woman to Dr. Chalmers when he came down from the platform after a most eloquent speech at a great meeting. "No! no!" said the doctor. "It's all said; the doing is to begin now."

JOHN BROWN, of Haddington, said to a young minister who complained of the smallness of his congregation. "It is as large a one as you will want to give account for in the day of judgment." A suggestive thought for all of us who are given to complaining of the smallness of our opportunity for service.

ARE we living habitually in such neatness to the Lord Jesus that the gentlest intimation of His wish comes to us with the force of a command, and with the consciousness that that in some way or other it is possible to obey, and that we shall be carried through in any service to which He calls us?