

Apparently the little boy was deaf.

The questioner raised his voice, "or if you can oblige me with the exact distance to Wombleton," he went on earnestly, "that will do quite as well."

No answer, civil or otherwise, from the youth by the pool. Only a convulsive wiggle intended to cover the undefended position of the school books.

The traveller's smile broadened but he made no further effort toward sociability. Neither did he go away. To the dismayed eyes, watching through the cover of some long grass, he was clearly a person devoid of all fine feeling. Or perhaps he had never been taught not to stay where he wasn't wanted. Mebby he didn't even know that he *wasn't* wanted.

In order to remove all doubt as to the latter point, the small boy's head shot up suddenly out of the covering grass.

"What d'ye want?" he asked forbiddingly.

"Little boy," said the stranger, "I thank you. I want for nothing."

The head collapsed, but quickly came up again.

"Ain't yeh goin' anywhere?" asked a despairing voice.

"I was going, little boy, but I have stopped."

This was so true that the small boy sat up and scowled.

"I judge," went on the other, "that I am now midway between Arden, otherwise, Wimbleton, and Arcady, sometime known as Wombleton. The question is, which way and how? A simple sum in arithmetic will—little boy, do not frown like that! The wind may change. Smile nicely, and I'll tell you something."

Urged by necessity, the badgered one attempted to look pleasant.