

## THE HEART OF MARJORIE JONES 349

Then there came a resounding thump upstairs, just above them, and fragments of wet plaster fell.

"The roof must be leaking," said Marjorie, beginning to be alarmed.

"Couldn't be the roof," said Penrod. "Besides there ain't any rain outdoors."

As he spoke, a second slender stream of water began to patter upon the floor of the hall outside the door.

"Good gracious!" Marjorie cried, while the ceiling above them shook as with earthquake—or as with boys in numbers jumping, and a great uproar burst forth overhead.

"I believe the house *is* falling down, Penrod!" she quavered.

"Well, they'll blame *me* for it!" he said. "Anywa— we better get out o' here. I guess sumpthing must be the matter."

His guess was accurate, so far as it went. The dance-music had swung into "Home Sweet Home" some time before, the children were preparing to leave, and Master Chitten had been the first boy to ascend to the gentlemen's dressing-room for his cap, overcoat, and shoes, his motive being to avoid by departure any difficulty in case his earlier activi-