

TIME TO RISE.

A birdie with a yellow bill
Hopped upon the window sill,
Cocked his shining eye and said:
"Ain't you 'shamed, you sleepy-head?"
—R. L. S.

THE HOUSE OF SILK.

The sun was very hot as Peggy, Frank and Emily came through the front gate and walked across the wide, bare piece of ground called by the grand name of The Avenue. The children were little Australians, and their bare feet did not feel the blistering hotness of the earth. Recent rains had made tiny river beds which ran in different directions through the smooth surface of the clay. These river beds were quite dry now, but the children loved to imagine that they were real rivers like the ones that they learned about in geography lessons. They each claimed a stream bed and gave it the name of the geography book river that it seemed to resemble most.

"This is my river, and it's called the Mississippi," said Peggy, standing with one bare foot on each bank of the chosen stream bed.

"Mine is a much nicer one," said Frank. "It looks just like the Volga River that we had to draw yesterday; and that's what I'm going to call it."

Emily had just returned from a journey to England, and so the only river which seemed of any importance to her was the Thames. She chose the stream bed which she thought most like that river, and was just going to scratch her name by it when suddenly she exclaimed:

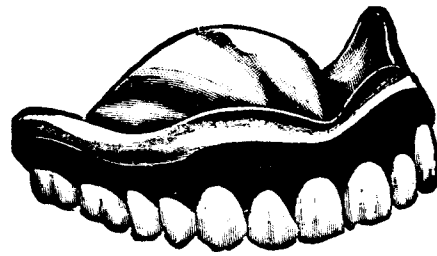
"Why, I wonder what this little door is!"

The other children came closer to see what she was looking at, and this was what they saw.

In the hard clay there was a perfectly round hole about half an inch across, going straight down into the earth. It was all beautifully lined with white silk, or what looked like white silk, so that the white walls gleamed. At the mouth of the hole was a little round, flat piece of clay, exactly the right size to fit into the hole, its edges and underneath side covered with the same white silk that lined the hole. This little door—for it really was a door—was fastened to the wall of the hole on one side by a tiny silken hinge.

"What a pretty little house," Peggy exclaimed, "I wonder who lives in it."

"I know what it is," Frank said in rather superior tones. "It must be a Trap-door Spider. Father told me about them once. Let's wait and see if Mr. Trap-door Spider will come and shut the door."



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