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steps to the nice soft green grass. I did not feel obliged to stay with her so constantly as I had done through the winter, and I really had a great deal to see to: they were laying the new barn floor, and one of us had to be there all the time to catch the rats that kept running out; Jet and Snowball and I took turns. By the time the new floor was done I think we must, between us, have caught four or five tens.

Then they were ploughing up an old pasture-field down by the creek-bridge, and of course it brought to light a great many mole-tracks and field-mouse nests; so that as soon as the barn was finished I went there. I don't know why it was, but although Snowball would often help me to catch moles, Jet never would: he will not to this day. When summer came, and they were hay-making once more, my Helen could walk down the lane as far as the old woman's house, and she would stop there to rest, and always talked to Betty; and Betty has often said to me that she did not wonder I went back that morning to such a mistress as Helen. The only wonder to her was that I could ever leave anybody so lovely—yes, although everybody else in the house had been against me. I wonder at it myself more and more.

I had a little adventure with Charlie that summer, for which they all praised me so much that perhaps I had better tell it. He was very fond of wading in the brook, which was pretty deep in some places, but Master had showed him just where he might safely go. One day we were down there—Bess and he and I—soon after