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upon and reach the branches. We did not succeed much better, though, than in the afternoon, for we were beginning to be very tired, and our arms had scarcely any more spring in them. However, we said we would go on trying until bed-time, and then, if we could not make our house, we would let it alone.

Lucy was standing on one of the little wooden stools, tying a piece of string round a branch of the elm-tree, and I was close by with my feet in the water, holding the knife and the rake, when happening to turn round, I saw a gentleman on the other side of the bank, watching us. I felt very much ashamed, for I had no shoes and stockings on, and Lucy had none either, and our hair had tumbled down over our shoulders, and our pinafores were very wet and dirty. We were red enough before, but I should think we turned redder still when we found that a strange gentleman was watching us.

‘What are you doing, little girls?’ he said, very kindly and pleasantly.

I hung down my head without speaking a word. Even when I was dressed quite neatly and properly, I never liked to talk with people I did not know. Lucy told him we were making a house, and it was