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very hard work indeed, because the branches would not keep down in their places.

‘Oh! if that is all,’ said the gentleman, ‘I can soon set it right. I will come over and help you. But why do you work so hard? I have been watching you a long time, and you look quite tired. You ought to rest a little while.’

‘Oh!’ said Lucy, ‘we can’t rest, we haven’t time to rest. To-morrow is aunt Mary’s birthday, and we want to have our house finished for her to have a feast in it.’

‘Aunt Mary’s birthday, is it?’ said the gentleman, looking more kind and pleasant than ever; ‘then I am sure I will help you, for I like aunt Mary very much, and we will make the house as pretty as ever we can for her.’

And with that he jumped over the brook, and began to draw down the branches and tie them quite fast. He did as much in a quarter of an hour as we had been doing all the afternoon and evening. When he had made a nice thick roof for us, he cut off the broken ends and all the loose bits of string with his knife, and then he gathered a great handful of bracken and made a besom of