

The Bruins – 2 A Visit to China

BECAUSE it was farther away than anywhere else, it was decided that the Bruins should go first to China, and what a trip it was, to be sure.

The family travelled by cart, by car, by train, by bus, by steamer, by aeroplane and finally by a rumbling ox-cart to the very heart of old China.



" It's WONDERFUL ! " breathed Bertie, as he gazed at the scenery. " But whatever IS that wall over, there ? "

" He is gleet wall of China ! " put in a voice at Bertie's elbow. " Him stetch light across China. "

And Sing-Loo-Hi, a very kindly Chinaman, proceeded to tell the Bruins all about the Great Wall of his country, which is one of

the wonders of the world.

Sing-Loo-Hi took a great fancy to the Bruins and when he offered to be their guide during their stay in China you can be sure they lost no time in saying a loud and grateful " Yes, thank you ! "

Some days later Bertie went off on his own to buy some presents for the folks at home, but somehow or other he lost his way, and found himself in a private garden. Sing-Loo-Hi had gone with the rest of the family, and thus Bertie was completely lost.

" Oh dear ! " he whimpered as he heard someone coming down the garden path. " Now I shall get into trouble. " And he quickly dodged behind a pillar as the owner of the house and garden appeared.

Suddenly the Chinaman spoke. " Why do you hide ? " he asked quietly. " Gardens are for all to enjoy. Come ! I will show you something. "

Bertie blushed as he came out of hiding and a moment later was gazing at a baby tortoise in the hand of the Chinaman. " For you ! " said the kindly man. " A present from China. "



Meanwhile, as Bertie was accepting baby tortoise AND its mother, Belinda was also doing some shopping in the town of Hownow. " I shall not be long, Mother, she had said to Mother Bruin, " and I will meet Bertie at the tailor's shop. Bye-bye ! " And away she pattered.

An hour later Belinda was so over loaded with parcels, that she was forced to leave them in a shop and search for assistance in carrying them.



" Dear, oh dear ! " she sighed. " I'll never get them all back to the hotel. I'm sure . . ." She broke off with a cry of surprise as she turned a corner. Her eyes opened wide as she saw two clever acrobats performing tricks in the street.

In a flash Belinda knew that her problem was solved, and so it proved because five minutes later she was marching gaily in front of the pig-tailed acrobats, who

balanced her purchases on their heads, hands, elbows, knees and toes. Really it was wonderful how kind people were in China.

Having left her parcels at the hotel, Belinda made for the tailor's shop where she was to meet her brother but, when she was halfway there, she remembered that she had not bought anything for old Professor Bing who lived near the farm at home in a house filled with treasures from all parts of the world.

"Missy in double ? " asked a voice at her elbow.

Belinda turned and for the second time, her problem was solved, for there was a Chinese wood carver who instantly offered to make her a present for the professor.

So it happened that a very, VERY happy Belinda finally met Bertie at the appointed place.

Yes, and it was some time before the tailor, who was to make them both some Chinese clothes, could get a word in edgeways and even then the children couldn't understand what he said.

You never heard so much laughter as there was in the tailor's shop. What with Bertie trying to understand Chinese writing on the bill for the clothes, and with Belinda being fitted with





some gen-u-ine Chinese garments, that included silk trousers, the shop rang with mirth.

" He ! He ! He ! " roared Bertie.

" Ha ! Ha ! Ha ! " cried Belinda.

" Ho ! Ho ! Ho ! " shrieked a lovely red parrot from his perch suspended from the ceiling. "Pretty Poll ! Fine feathers make fine birds ! Pretty Poll !

Finally everything was finished and, arm in arm, the cheery pair strolled off into the park to take their last peep at Hownow before sailing for other, equally exciting places.

" You know Bertie, " remarked Belinda, as the two stopped to admire some flowers in the park, " I haven't seen a single baby's pram in China. "

That's funny," agreed her brother, neither have I ! " And they glanced around in search of a nursemaid and pram. They saw the first all right, but not the second, because the bonny baby was being carried in a kind of chair on the maid's back.

Belinda thought this way of taking babies for an airing was SO novel, and she had SO much to say to the nurse and her charge that Bertie went off alone and it was ages before Miss Bruin returned to the hotel.

" Dear me ! " she said, as she gazed at a pile of luggage outside. " Someone else is leaving as well."

At that moment, however, she saw the labels on the baggage were marked " BRUIN FAMILY. PASSENGERS FOR AFRICA. HANDLE WITH CARE. " Then she knew how nearly she had been left behind.

An hour later the Bruins were on their travels once more.

