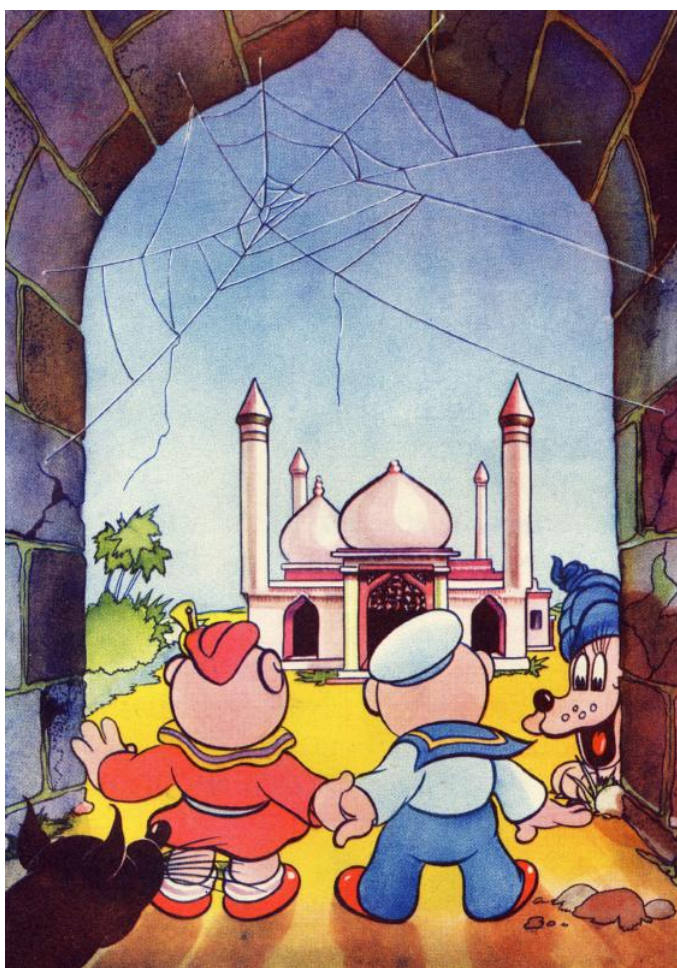


The Bruins – 4 A Visit to India

THE Bruins' first real peep at India was a truly magnificent one. They had landed at night and gone straight to a bungalow where they were to live during their stay, but early the next morning they journeyed forth to see the sights.



" Ooooh ! " breathed. Bertie and Belinda, as they gazed at the wonderful Mosque before them. " Is t-that a church ? "

Father Bruin told them all about the building, how it had stood for hundreds of years under the burning sun of. India, and the children could hardly tear them selves away from the scene, but when they were told by Ram Seerham, who was their Indian guide, that a

novel picnic had been arranged for them they, danced with glee and followed him at once.

" Why is it a novel picnic ? " asked Belinda

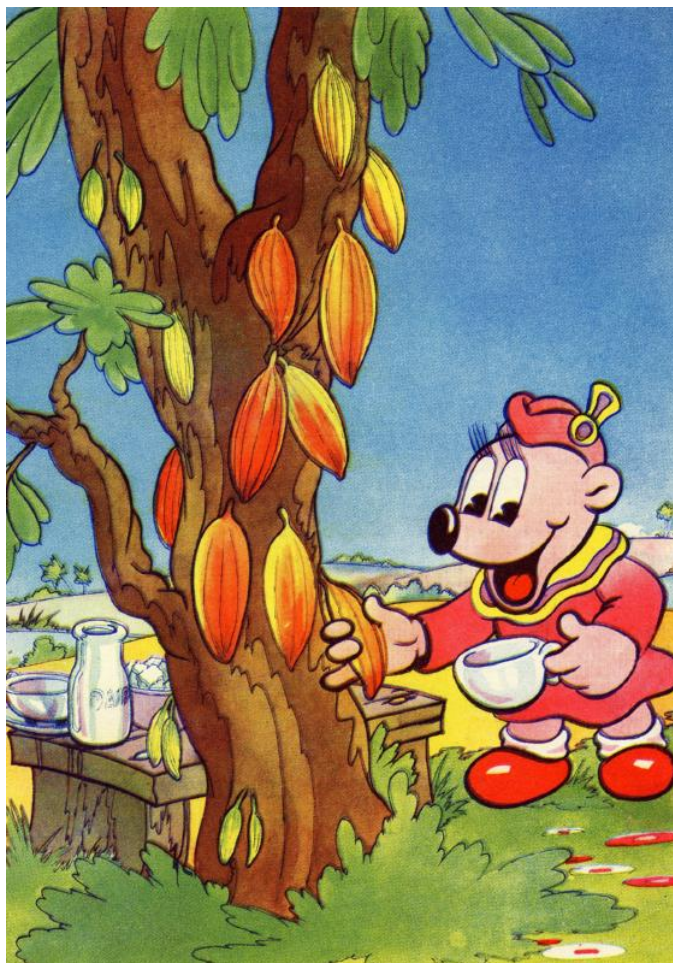
"Memsahib" (which meant "Missy" in English) " soon find out ! " answered Ram Seerham.

After a long walk which took them through some marvellous scenery, the party arrived at the scene of the picnic, set under the shade of a tree.

" We have arrived. " cried the Indian. " Help yourselves to cocoa. "

" Excuse me " murmured Belinda, " but although I can see the milk, the sugar, the cups and. the things to eat, I cannot see the tin of cocoa. Have you forgotten it, Mr. Ram Seerham ? "

" Ha ! Ha ! " laughed Father Bruin. " I knew you'd be puzzled. No, our guide has not forgotten. The cocoa is growing on the tree. See, those are cocoa pods. We'll make it ourselves. Come along, Belinda, you pick the first pod; "



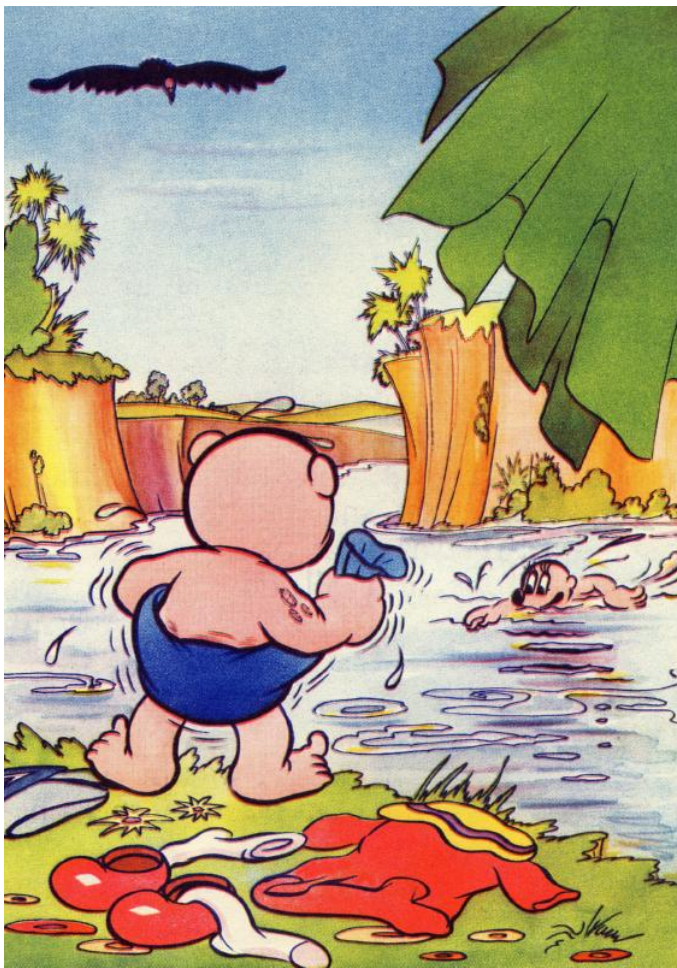
This was done, and never had the children enjoyed a picnic as much as that Indian one.

The time for them to return to the bungalow came all too soon, but the sun was sinking and they had to be home before the tropical night came down like a blanket suddenly thrown

over a bright light.

The next day the whole family set out with tents, cooking stoves, food and other necessary things for a camping expedition.

The children were terribly excited, so excited in fact that they soon became boiling hot with running about in the sun.



"Phew ! " gasped Bertie. " I wish I could have a cool bathe. " The words had hardly left his lips before his sister came panting up, and stammered out the good news that she had found a lovely stream that was clear of crocodiles, large fish, herons and all other bothersome creatures.

" We can all have a grand bathe ! " she finished.

Well, what are we waiting for ? " demanded Bertie, and it was he who led the way to the finest dip any of them had ever enjoyed.

Now the party had already erected their tents in a sheltered spot, and they looked forward to returning to the camp for a nice long snooze. It was already dark, except for a big moon,

when they reached the sheltered spot and Bertie was the first to notice that something was wrong.

" Shush " he whispered. " Some one else is sleeping in our tents. Go quietly and we'll surprise them."

It was the strangers who did the surprising, however, because the Bruins discovered that the tents were filled with many of the inhabitants of the nearby jungle.

Panthers, leopards, gazelles and even a python curled about the tent pole, were all there fast asleep and as happy as any animals in the world.

" What's to be done ? " whispered Mother Bruin.

"Bertie and Belinda can sleep in the sleeping bag outside the tent, but you and I will have to find another place to sleep, " said Father Bruin.

Then came an adventure which proved that it is never wise to be TOO curious. You see Bertie had watched the snake-charmers charming the reptiles with their trumpets and was curious to know how it was done.



" Me show the sahib ! " said a kindly old snake charmer. "

You sit on the ground, take the trumpet so and blow down it so. Sahib understand ? "



Bertie Sahib understood so well that he soon had a big snake waltzing all round his head, but then came the problem of stopping it. Directly he stopped playing the snake made as if to bite him, so he played on and on and on, and would , have been playing still, if the real snake-charmer hadn't turned up and relieved him.

"Phew ! " gasped Bertie. " No more snakes for me, ! I'm off to the

bazaar." And away he fled.

After buying some earthenware jars at the native bazaar, Bertie was about to leave when the dealer looked up at him and asked " Would the sahib like heaps of gold ? The sahib has a kind face so I tell him where to find plenty, plenty gold in big chunks. "

Bertie nearly dropped his jars in his excitement, but finally he thanked the old Indian again and again, took a creased old parchment map and scampered back to the bungalow to find his mother and father looking sadder than he had ever seen them.

" What IS the matter? " he demanded.

" We have spent, all our money," explained Father Bruin. We will have to stay here for ever."

Bertie Bruin grinned. " Not a bit of it ! he cried and, unfolding his map, he explained about the gold. " Come along," he added, let's build a ship to reach this treasure island. "

" Whoopee ! "

