

tall blue-gums; the flash of the fantail's flight threw gleams of light into the dark bushes; the scrub was white with manuka blossom, and in the bush the snowy clematis flung itself in clusters of falling stars against the sombre greenery; the sweet scent of the native bramble filled the air, and in many a deep gully the flame flowers of the rata were already beginning to show their scarlet tips. Everywhere was the sound of running water, and a vivid subtle sense of life and growth.

embarking on so mad a scheme without either knowledge or capital.

"Fool! fool! fool!" I said to myself. And, remembering how Jack had yielded to my entreaties against his own judgment, I felt a profound respect for his common sense such as I had never experienced before. I had always in my secret heart thought myself a little cleverer and more practical than Jack, but now he had proved himself the wiser of the two.



"PROMISE ME NOT TO STIR WHILE I RUN FOR THE LOLLIES."

The yearly miracle of the spring. Under ordinary circumstances my heart would have beat in unison with this joyous festival, but now those ominous words, "I promise to pay," seemed written all over the face of nature, and I could not get behind or above them. My health also was not very strong, and the hope that should have been an unspeakable joy became overshadowed with fear. What if the hour of trouble should find me homeless, aye, and penniless too?

I saw, or thought I saw, all our folly in

At last the long dreaded day dawned, and as I dressed myself and went slowly about my work, I had a dull ache at my heart and a fearful expectancy of what each hour might bring forth.

According to custom I went into the store directly after breakfast and set the door wide open preparatory to sweeping out the dust, as I did so I looked mechanically across the road, expecting to see Bob Lawson and the baby, half dressed, tumbling about before the unfenced cottage as their custom was, and even