



CHATTERBOX.

“ Within it sat a little child,
The fairest ever seen,
His robes were like the amethyst,
His mantle of sea-green.”

FROM “THE BOY OF THE SOUTHERN ISLE,”
BY MARY HOWITT.



"There was Schultz, a huge figure in his grey uniform."

WANDERERS IN THE WAR.

BY A. A. METHLEY.

(Continued from page 383.)

ROGER slept badly that night, for again and again he roused himself to listen to the distant thunder and rattle which at times seemed almost to shake the barn itself, and in the morning he felt restless and excited. He wandered away into the village after breakfast, and it seemed to him then that other people were restless and excited too.

Supposing the French really came and recaptured the village, then this horrible nightmare life would come to an end, and he would be free once more to go in search of Val. The boy began to whistle as he set about his daily task of chopping firewood in the paved yard,

'It's a long way to Tipperary, it's a long way to go.'

Quite unconsciously the well-remembered tune rose to his lips, and he never realised what he was doing until he heard a harsh exclamation of surprise and a heavy hand was laid on his shoulder.

He turned quickly, and found himself confronted by one of the German soldiers, a tall, ill-favoured fellow with a broken nose and a decided squint, the very same man, indeed, who had beaten Jacques, and who, moreover, since that incident, had treated Roger himself with unconcealed hostility.

'What do you mean by whistling that vile song? Where did you hear it? Are there any dogs of English here? I will report this. You shall be punished as you deserve.' The sentences were shouted in loud, strident tones, and although Roger knew no German, he could not mistake their meaning. For a moment he stood silent and dismayed; but with the thought of the danger which threatened not himself and Evans alone, but the whole village, his courage and presence of mind returned. He jerked himself away from the rough, grasping hand, and stared at the man in pretended bewilderment.

Then, with a sudden inspiration, he began to whistle once more, and this time it was a tune which he had heard again and again during the past miserable days in the conquered village, 'Deutschland, Deutschland, über alles.'

The German could make no objection to that music, and the next moment several more soldiers came out of the inn and gathered round, laughing at the boy, and making him whistle one tune after another. The danger was over for the present, and Roger breathed more freely; but it had been a narrow escape, and several times that evening, as he sat beside Jacques in the kitchen, eating his supper, he noticed that the broken-nosed soldier, whose name was Fritz Schultz, was watching him furtively.

Roger realised that the situation was indeed serious and needed caution; but next morning, when he went into the village street, all the good resolves melted away, and, instead of keeping prudently in the background, he pushed his way through the throngs of village boys so as to see everything that was going on.

It was quite evident now that the German troops were on the point of leaving the place, but whether to go southward as victors or northward as fugitives he could not tell, and there was no one of whom he dare make inquiries. At last, unable to bear the uncertainty and

suspense any longer alone, he determined to carry the strange tidings to Evans, and to disregard, for once, the rule that he should never venture to the barn except under cover of darkness.

As he passed through the inn kitchen, Roger noticed that there were crowds of men there, standing or sitting at the tables on which a meal was spread, but he did not notice that one of them rose heavily from his place, picked up a rifle and followed him.

The unusual clamour and commotion in the village had penetrated even to the barn that morning, and anxious to know what was afoot, Graham Evans had managed to drag himself to the window from which a distant glimpse of the highway leading north was obtainable. He was standing there now, leaning against the rough, whitewashed wall, when Roger burst into the little inner room, with flushed cheeks and eyes wide and bright with excitement.

'They're going! the Germans are going!' and then he stopped short, for Evans, instead of listening, was staring beyond him at the open doorway. He swung round quickly, and there was Schultz, a huge figure in his grey uniform, with his rifle held ready and his teeth showing in a savage grin.

The boy stood motionless, stiff with horror and dismay, for in that terrible moment he realised that he had betrayed his friend.

Yes, the game was up, Evans himself saw that at a glance. He drew himself up to his full height, and there by the open window faced the enemy boldly with a little smile on his lips, and when a rough command was shouted by the German, held up his one uninjured arm in token of surrender.

Roger flung himself forward then with the recklessness of despair and clutched the intruder's arm, but he was shaken off and thrown down on to the hay. But the sudden onslaught had made Schultz fall back for an instant, and this gave time for a new combatant to appear upon the scene.

Jacques, the lame boy, had been sitting in the inn kitchen when Roger hurried through on his way to the barn, and he had seen the big German pick up his rifle and follow the boy out of the room. Suspecting mischief he got up too, and slipping unnoticed from the house, limped as quickly as he could across the yard. He arrived at his destination just in time to see Roger attack Schultz, and as the latter stepped back, he came up behind and, supporting himself against the wall, managed to insert his crutch between the German's heavily-booted feet. The man lurched forward again, stumbled and fell headlong with a yell of rage, his rifle flying out of his hand and clattering down on to the stone floor.

The next moment Roger had scrambled to his feet and possessed himself of the weapon, while Evans, seeing his opportunity, was searching in the hay for his hidden revolver. When Schultz, dazed and furious, staggered to his feet, he found himself defenceless and confronted by two armed opponents. The tables were turned completely.

It takes some time to describe what happened, but in reality it all happened very quickly, and in a few minutes the prisoner was crouching in a corner, bound hand and foot, with a gag fixed securely in his mouth, and with Evans' revolver levelled at his breast.

All this time the noise and turmoil in the village had been increasing and now it had risen to a veritable

uproar. Roger, running to the window and leaning out, saw that a disorderly rabble—grey-clad Germans—were hurrying helter-skelter across the open waste ground, while the strip of road beyond was choked with guns, horses, cyclists, marching men and great motors.

He turned back into the room to describe the scene, and Evans' eyes gleamed with excitement, although they still remained fixed upon the captive.

'Look here, you go to the inn and find out what's up'—he had almost to shout the words in order to make himself heard above the growing din—'I must know. We shall be all right here. Give Jacques that rifle. If the fellow moves it will be the worse for him. Now be off.'

Roger obeyed, letting himself out through the little door at the back of the barn, and in a few minutes he had reached the village street. There he stationed himself in a doorway and watched with wide, amazed eyes a picture of such excitement and confusion as he had never witnessed or imagined.

The Germans were in flight. That was the one marvellous, unmistakable fact, and a wild, headlong flight it was, for not only were the regiments that had occupied the place streaming northward, but other grey-clad hordes shared the retreat.

Roger was wedged into a doorway, and there he stood, blinded by the hot sun, deafened by the uproar, and almost choked with dust, for what seemed like hours. When the streets were clear again, and the last grey uniform had disappeared, he ran back to the 'Lion d'Or,' where he found the innkeeper just returned and the centre of an eager group of neighbours, who were embracing him, shaking his hand, and congratulating him heartily on his escape. The boy pushed his way through the throng and seized Monsieur Lemaitre's black coat-sleeves.

The man was puzzled for a moment, then he recognised Roger, and his white teeth gleamed in a friendly smile. He could, however, make nothing of the rapid, almost incoherent sentences, and was quite at a loss until the word 'Jacques' caught his ear.

'Jacques!' As he repeated the name a note of anxiety crept into his voice, and then he turned and hurried out through the house and into the courtyard behind. A number of men followed, and Roger ran ahead, leading the way to the barn.

When the prisoner had been secured and Evans carried into the inn, Roger, eager to miss nothing of what was happening, ran back to the street, which was now crowded with the inhabitants of the village. He was just in time to see the vanguard of the French army—a dusty, exhausted cyclist, with a red-white-and-blue flag fluttering at his handle-bar—ride into the market-place.

The solitary forerunner was soon followed by a troop of cavalry, and then the people, freed at last from their hated thralldom, surged forward in a wild enthusiasm of welcome:

'Allons, enfants de la patrie;
Le jour de gloire est arrivé.'

As Roger heard the ringing strains of the Marseillaise, and saw the Tricolour float once more in its own place instead of the eagle flag of Germany, he told himself that surely all his troubles were coming to an end, that this must mean victory, and that the 'Day of Glory' had indeed arrived. And then, looking round,

he caught sight of a man on the opposite side of the street among the crowd of onlookers—a man dressed in a peasant's blue blouse and with a long scar across his face.

CHAPTER XIX.

WHILE Roger was living out his dreary, anxious days in the conquered French village, Val, also a prisoner of war, was far away in the inn at the foot of the dead-tree hill. For the first few days, however, the little girl did not realise in the least where she was. Her ankle was badly inflamed after the journey, and she was so worn out with pain and exhaustion that it was a relief to be able just to lie still and do nothing, although the bed was a very hard and uncomfortable one, and the room in which it stood was a dark and barely furnished attic.

Captain Heinz left the inn the morning after their arrival, on important business, his sister said; and Fräulein nursed Val, binding up her foot, bringing her plain, badly cooked meals, and even sometimes reading aloud to her from a little copy of Hans Andersen's *Fairy Tales*.

At last there came a morning when Val awoke feeling quite fresh and brisk, and with hardly any pain in her foot. She got up, dressed herself, and then, as Fräulein Heinz did not appear, opened the door of her room and made her way slowly down a narrow, crooked flight of stairs.

The stairs brought her to a dark and rather untidy kitchen, where a woman was stooping over the fire, stirring something in a large pot. She was muttering to herself in a low, mumbling voice, and did not look up or take any notice when Val came down the creaking wooden steps with Bob panting and shuffling in her wake.

'She must be deaf, and she certainly looks very grumpy,' the little girl said to herself; and she glanced across to an open door, through which green branches and blue sky could be seen.

(Continued on page 398.)

ALMOST A ROBINSON CRUSOE MOTOR-CAR.

PERHAPS the oddest motor-car body in the world is that belonging to an American naturalist, which is fashioned from a solid tree-trunk. This is hollowed out into a living-room and bedroom, for the gentleman and his wife tour in their motor caravan, and live and sleep in it.

It is made from a giant Redwood tree-trunk, which the naturalist found in California, where it had been lying on the ground for many years. He had been pleading for the preservation of these Redwood trees, and thought that if he could have one on view with him, his arguments might carry well. He therefore had the tree carved out to suit his purpose, but when it was all finished it was so large and heavy, it could not be lifted on to the motor framework. That, however, did not daunt a motorist of such originality.

A pit was dug beneath the Redwood tree-trunk, with a descending path to it, and the motor driven gently underneath, so that the body could be secured to it. Now the naturalist can go where he will, in his 'little wooden hut,' which weighs three tons.

THE CHRISTMAS GHOST.

(Concluded from page 364.)

IT was the Christmas term—did I tell you that before?—and it was getting well on towards the Christmas holidays before the tuck mystery had been discovered. We were all thinking hard of home and jolly things, or perhaps we might have noticed that Eagles was looking a bit queer. He started talking in his sleep, and sitting up in bed and shouting in the night. And then Barnes spoke to me about it. 'I have the cubicle next his,' he said, 'and it's always *ghosts* he talks about. I believe Perkins is at the bottom of it.'

'Well, if he is, leave him alone,' I said. 'You can't do anything. He's a mean sneak, and besides, he's furious with you already, for what you did about the tuck. And he's a much bigger chap than you.'

'Wait,' said Barnes. 'We've played the "biter bit" on him; leave it to me to "hoist him on his own petard." Then he said no more about the matter at all until the very last week of the term. 'I say, Perkins,' he said then, quite suddenly in the dormitory, 'ever seen a ghost?'

Some of us laughed. Eagles looked frightened; and Perkins grew red. 'Shut up!' he growled.

'No; but, really,' said Barnes coolly; 'I have heard a strange story. 'Do you know the old grandfather clock outside in the passage? Well, once in a hundred years it strikes *thirteen* instead of twelve at midnight, on December the eighteenth, and a white figure steps out of the clock-case! A kind of Christmas ghost!'

'Rot!' said Perkins. 'No clock could do it, as you know well.' But his voice sounded a bit queer.

December the eighteenth was the last day of term, and I wondered why Barnes had fixed upon that date; also why he had made up the story at all, for I supposed it *was* made up! But I wondered more than ever when the eighteenth came.

For, 'I say,' said Barnes to me in the evening, 'I want you to look after Eagles for me to-night. I have reason to expect that Perkins is going to play the ghost trick on him. I've been lying awake, and I've heard things that the little chap's let out in his sleep. Well, I've got to be out of the dormitory to-night, but I leave him in your charge.'

'But—where will *you* be?' I blurted out.

'Trust to "Sherlock,"' said Barnes, with a wink. 'Between ourselves, I'm going to pay Perkins out in his own coin.'

I simply couldn't sleep that night; partly because it was the last night of term, but also because there seemed to be all kinds of goings-on in our dormitory. As soon as the house was quiet, Barnes slipped out of bed—he has the cubicle by the door—and disappeared. Then Eagles was awfully restless, too; he kept sighing and tossing about. I heard 'ten' strike, and then 'eleven,' and as the time drew near to midnight I began to think of Barnes's story of the Christmas Ghost.

And just as I was thinking about it, twelve began to strike. *One!* came from the big clock outside; *Two!* *Three!* and so on, till Twelve was struck. I was smiling to myself, when—suddenly my smile changed pretty quickly, for—*Thirteen!* sounded the clock outside, and there was a loud howl in the passage!

In an instant I was out of bed and away towards the shriek, and when I got to the place I can tell you

I was startled, for there, close to the clock, were—*two* 'ghosts,' if you'll believe me!

'Here, take his other arm; he's had enough,' said Barnes's voice, for he was one of them. 'It's Perkins—in case you don't guess it—dressed up in his counterpane to frighten young Eagles; but he has jolly well got the dose himself, instead!'

Perkins didn't say a word. He was as white as his own sheet as we two took him back to his bed.

'Oh!' cried little Eagles when we got to the door.

'Here, you lie down, small chap,' said Barnes. 'We're not ghosts, either of us. And, what's more, you'll probably not hear of, nor see a ghost again in this school, on account of the fright that Perkins has had. You're a great bully,' he went on, turning to the big chap who was scrambling into bed, 'and you deserve what you got. Trust a bully to be a coward, too! You saved up a grudge against Eagles ever since you were found out in your greedy thefts, but the Christmas Ghost has been too much for you. I said—didn't I?—that once in a hundred years the clock would strike thirteen, and that a white figure would step out of the clock-case. Well, my story was true, for it's happened; and I made it happen, though I don't suppose it will ever happen again.'

'I say, Barnes,' I whispered, when the dormitory was still again, and young Eagles was sleeping more quietly than he had slept for weeks; 'of course I understand about the "Ghost," but—how did the clock strike thirteen?'

'My good chap, as easy as winking. I thought it out—and didn't it sound queer, too!' Barnes laughed. 'As soon as it had struck twelve, I just twisted the hands right round the face; then, of course, the clock struck *One*—and twelve and one make thirteen!' Barnes laughed again. 'But it was for Eagles' sake I did it,' he said; and that bully Perkins deserved it. I wouldn't have played the Ghost but for that.'

That's the end of the story of the Christmas Ghost, except for one thing: Perkins didn't come back after the holidays. His bullying ways had been noticed by others besides us, and next term his cubicle knew him no more. We weren't sorry. And, as for young Eagles—well, he's grown in pluck a jolly lot since then!

E. TALBOT.

A SAD TALE.

'WHAT shall I do for a dinner to-day? What shall I do with Spot?

My mistress is out, and I'm all alone, and very sad is my lot.

I wanted to have such a splendid day, with a romp in the garden sun,

And plenty to eat, and birds to catch, and thoroughly kittenish fun!

And now Spot's broken my dinner plate, and eaten my dinner too,

And I'm all alone and miserable! What shall I do? Boohoo!

* * * * *

'What shall we do, my poor little Puss? First you shall be well fed!

Then we shall have a splendid game, and Spot shall be sent to bed!'



"Spot's broken my dinner plate, and eaten my dinner too!"

‘CHATTERBOX’
AND ‘CHATTERBOX NEWS-BOX.’

1919 ISSUE: NOTICE.

OWING to the restrictions imposed upon consumers of paper, it will be impossible to present *Chatterbox News-box* gratis with the weekly numbers of *Chatterbox* after the 1918 issues are completed, and it is necessary to curtail *Chatterbox* itself slightly at the same time. From the commencement of the 1919 issue, therefore, weekly as from No. 1, 1919 (to be issued on September 19, 1918), *Chatterbox News-box* will be charged for on the same terms as *Chatterbox* itself, and from September 19, 1918, onwards will form part of the weekly issues of *Chatterbox* for 1919. The 12 issues of *Chatterbox News-box* will be Nos. 4, 9, 13, 18, 22, 26, 31, 35, 40, 44, 48, and 52 of the weekly numbers of *Chatterbox*.

WHEN THE WORLD ROLLED BACK.

STUBBS, H., was a very intelligent boy. So, for the matter of that, were Stubbs, W., and Stubbs, J., but, as they are not much concerned with this tale, their intelligence does not matter. Stubbs, H., not only had intelligence, but he had imagination, which led him constantly to make suggestions to the Master in school; and if the Master was in a good-humour, these gave rise to most interesting discussions. Of course, these gave much more pleasure to the boys than the cut-and-dried lessons which, for the time being, had to take a back place, and Stubbs therefore was very popular.

One day his class was being given a lesson, and the Master was explaining all about the earth and the moon and the sun, and their relations to one another.

Then Stubbs said: ‘Please, sir, what would happen if the world rolled backwards, instead of rolling onwards round the sun, as at present?’

To the joy of the class, the Master replied, ‘Well, that is something to think about; let us consider the point. Has any one any ideas on the subject?’

‘Snub’ Claymore was the first to speak, and he thought that the sudden alteration would send everybody flying into space, but the teacher reminded him of the law of gravitation. Then another boy thought that everything would be altered, and that we should have night instead of day, and summer in place of winter. The Master pointed out that this would only affect the first year of the change, and afterwards things would go on as regularly as before.

Then Stubbs had an inspiration, and said, ‘I think, sir, that every one would go back in learning things—I mean that they would begin to forget things.’

‘I see what you mean,’ said the Master, ‘that after say four hundred years of rolling backwards, we should be in the same state of civilisation as the world was four hundred years ago.’

‘Yes, sir,’ said Stubbs, modestly.

‘Dear me!’ said the Master. ‘Why, you mean that in time, if the world went back far enough, the people would give up their houses and take to trees and caves, as they did in prehistoric times.’

‘That would be jolly,’ said Snub Claymore, ‘then

we should see all the funny animals that used to walk about.’

Then the Master began to describe some of these creatures, and grew so interested that he went on until school-time was over. The class complimented Stubbs on the pleasant afternoon he had given them, and they all agreed that they wished the world would roll back soon, as living in the tops of trees would be much more exciting than their present everyday life. The prospect so fascinated Stubbs himself, that he could not help discussing it with his brothers when he went to bed that night, until they fell asleep, when he wisely followed their example.

Early the next morning he sat up in bed and looked round him with astonishment. There were leaves everywhere—dark in front of him, and around him—but overhead the sun had turned them a beautiful golden-green. He seemed to be in a perfect cavern of leaves, and as his eyes became accustomed to the soft, dim light, he found that he was sitting in a large round basket, shaped like a saucer and filled with bracken. For a moment he imagined he had been turned into a bird, then it suddenly flashed across his mind that what he had wished for had come to pass—the world *had* rolled backwards, and he had become a tree-dweller.

Scarcely had he arrived at this conclusion when there was a sudden parting of the foliage, and some large animal jumped on to one of the branches of the tree on which the nest was placed, causing it to rock up and down in a most unsafe manner.

Stubbs at first thought it was a huge monkey, but soon discovered it was a boy about his own age, and a second look showed him it was Snub Claymore.

There was the same freckled face, funny little nose, and thick crop of bushy red curls, but the rest of him was quite unrecognisable. His only garment was the skin of an animal, which was kept in place by a belt of plaited reeds; and his bare arms and legs were covered with soft, short hair.

‘Hullo, Snub!’ said Stubbs; ‘is that you?’

‘Yes, I’m Snub,’ said the newcomer; ‘but who are you?’

‘You know me, I’m Stubbs, H.’

‘I know that you’re in our nest,’ said Snub, ‘and if my father finds you, he will kill you.’

‘Why?’ said Stubbs.

‘We kill all strangers,’ said Snub, ‘because food is so scarce,’ and he said it in such an ordinary, matter-of-fact way that it made Stubbs feel quite uncomfortable.

‘Well, perhaps I had better clear out of this,’ he said. ‘I don’t want any of your food.’

‘If you will come with me,’ said Snub, ‘I’ll show you a safe place where I go when it is advisable to keep out of the way.’ And so saying, he dropped from the branch on which he had been sitting to one six or seven feet below.

Stubbs looked with amazement at the ease and precision of his jump, but although he thought himself as good a tree-climber as any one, he felt no temptation to try such a jump himself, and clambered down much more slowly and cautiously.

‘Why, you climb like a bear!’ said Snub.

‘But aren’t we very high up in the tree?’ said Stubbs.

‘I shouldn’t care to fall.’

‘Yes,’ said his companion. ‘Our nest is the highest in the tree; my father bought it of a man for five thousand nuts.’

'Nuts?' said Stubbs. 'Don't you have money?'

'No,' said Snub, 'money is no use; nuts are food, and that is all that matters. My father is rich, he has just bought a splendid cave for the winter—it has cost fifteen thousand nuts. We shall live in that most of the time; this is only our summer house. But come along, you are not safe here.'

After much scrambling, Snub helping his awkward movements, Stubbs found himself perched precariously on the branch of a tree which gave him a view of the ground below.

Immediately in front of him was a large clearing, in which some sort of corn was growing, and around its edge were groups of people. 'That is our cornfield,' said Snub; 'we are very proud of it. They say there used to be plenty of cornfields once, but they are very scarce now. Look, there's my father talking to those men; he is the biggest of them.'

Stubbs saw half-a-dozen men, all with shaggy heads and beards that covered their faces. They were dressed in skins, and each was armed with a huge club. There were also some women and children with long hair falling over their shoulders, and some of the younger ones with wreaths of flowers on their heads.

Suddenly there was a shrill cry, and in a moment every one on the ground sprang hastily into the nearest tree—with an agility that much astonished Stubbs.

'What's the matter?' said he to Snub.

'Hush!' said the latter, becoming rigid and tense; then, from the side of the clearing nearest to them, came a huge cat-like animal. It came stealthily forward till it was almost directly beneath the branch to which the boys clung, and Stubbs gazed at it with horror. It was bigger than the largest tiger he had ever seen at the Zoo, and its lips were drawn back exposing its hideous fangs, which gave it a most ferocious appearance.

'It is a sabre-toothed tiger,' whispered Snub. The huge beast moved slowly for a few paces, and then suddenly stopped, while its tail waved to and fro. Then Stubbs saw something that made his heart stand still.

A little child had crept into the growing corn, and had not been noticed when the alarm was given, but the keen eyes of the fierce beast had noticed it, and it crouched to spring. At the same moment, from a tree close by, there leaped a woman, who dashed at the child, caught it up in her arms, and then stood facing the monster. There was an instant's pause, when there came whizzing through the air one of the great clubs, which struck the tiger such a blow that he howled, and turning savagely, seized the club, and tore at it with his great teeth. He soon dropped it, however, and turned again to the woman, but it was too late, for, taking advantage of the short respite, the brave mother had sprung back into the tree, where ready hands helped her to safety. The savage beast sprang after her as she disappeared, and for a moment clung to the trunk of the tree, but another club striking fiercely on his head, he dropped back snarling to the ground. Then, as a third club struck him with unerring aim, he slunk off into the bushes.

For some minutes there was silence, until a cry came from the distance, and then the people began to come down again from their trees.

'What a hideous beast,' said Stubbs. 'Aren't they afraid he will come back?'

'No,' said his companion; 'one of our boy Scouts has reported that he has gone right off. By following among the tree-tops he can keep him in sight a long time.'

'Have you always people on the look-out?' said Stubbs.

'Oh, yes, both night and day. We take it in turn, and have to keep our eyes open; and, even then, some one is always being carried off. There are lots of other brutes and reptiles about.'

'I say,' said Stubbs, 'what time is breakfast? I'm feeling hungry.'

'I don't know what breakfast is,' said Snub; 'but if you want to eat, you must go and look for your food. I had some last night, and I don't suppose I shall get any more till this evening.'

'I can't wait till then,' said Stubbs. 'I must try and find some nuts.'

'Come along, then,' said his companion, 'but be careful not to make a noise, or some one will see you.'

They made their way from branch to branch of the close-growing trees, but had not gone far before a sudden outcry came from the people on the ground.

'Some one has seen you,' said Snub, excitedly; 'get away as quickly as you can—I'm off!' And with a quick spring he disappeared into a mass of foliage, leaving his hapless companion to follow as best he could. Frightened and bewildered, Stubbs clambered desperately upwards, and as he struggled his fears were increased by the shouts and movements amongst the neighbouring trees, which announced the approach of his pursuers.

In desperation, he made a jump for a branch next to the one where he had been crouching. He managed to get hold of it, and to draw himself up on it, though it bent and swayed under his weight as he worked his way towards the thicker end.

He had almost attained a position of safety, when, to his horror, the great shaggy head of Snub the elder poked itself round from the other side of the trunk.

The eyes glared at him with astonishment and fury; then, with a howl of rage, the man darted forward to seize him.

With a cry of fear, the unfortunate Stubbs convulsively retreated to the thin end of the branch, till it was bending dangerously under his weight.

The savage pursuer struck violently at him with his heavy club, but the wretched boy was just out of reach. With every blow, however, the branch groaned and quivered until he was nearly shaken off; then the furious man himself came forward crawling on the branch. Inch by inch he crept along the bending bough, and inch by inch the hapless Stubbs retreated, till there was a loud crack, when, with a despairing shriek, he fell headlong to the earth...

Stubbs, H., sat up, and looked around. From the demeanour and attitude of Stubbs, W., and Stubbs, J., he rightly gathered that they were connected with the fact that he was sitting on the floor of his bedroom instead of being in bed. He was much relieved at finding that the world had not rolled back, and that it had been only a hideous dream.

He therefore felt no resentment against his brothers for the way in which they had waked him, and, as he explained to his mother when she came up to stop the pillow-fight that ensued, they were not quarrelling, but only having a little fun.



"It was bigger than the largest tiger he had ever seen."