

"No, Brown, I cannot. I am sure old Sab is sitting on the stairs."

(N.B.—When there was devilry in the air Sab would sit on the stairs all night.)

"I tell you go. If Sab is on the stairs he will not lick you so hard as I will if you do not go after my cloak."

I realized the force of this remark, and went with a beating heart after the cloak. I got down on the stairs, as far as the lavatory-stairs door, which I gingerly opened, though I scarcely expected that Sab would be in possession of the two steps outside. As I opened the door, a succession of blows fell straight on my head, and I was completely knocked down. For some moments I lost consciousness; but I believe the blows continued, for when my senses returned the bruising was still going on. I did not move or speak, for I was afraid of betraying myself.

I was in a dilemma. Was I to be "tunded" there, or up in my bedroom, where the doctor would surely pursue me? I adopted the latter course, and fled for my life with such extraordinary agility that I was enabled to undress and get into bed before Sab appeared in the long room.

"Some boy in this room has been recently out of bed."

I thought, why not some one in the brown room? all the occupants of which were out of bed and dressed.

"I will have you all get out of bed, and show me that you are undressed."

The order was obeyed, and Sab, who was nonplussed, after saying, "Thirty-and-five years have I been head-master of this school," &c., &c., (groans and hisses) disappeared; whether to bed or to sit on the stairs, I know not.

The expeditions still continued, though of course the times were modified and varied. With reference to these willow-trees, I may observe that many were ancient and full of tinder. In the summer, when we had no use for these trees, it was not uncommon to drop a spark in the tinder about dinner-time, and in the evening we would be regaled with an exciting fire.

On the first of May there was a holiday. The school was decorated by us over-night with flowers, and branches of trees were placed

against the walls. The times and means for obtaining these branches were similar to those employed for getting the willow-trees.

It was customary for the bullies to call out the militia for three weeks in the year.

Sab had a horse and pony which grazed on the common, and were rarely used. The former animal was fabled to have been present at Waterloo, and was used, when the militia was called out, by the head bully, who styled himself captain. The pony was taken possession of by the second bully, who was the adjutant. The remaining bullies were infantry officers. I shall state presently how the non-commissioned officers were supplied. We would meet on the common, and answer to our names. The first order involved us, the private soldiers, in unpleasantness and danger.

An open drain, running with a shallow stream at the end of our field, passed under a kind of tunnel through the garden of a gentleman named Must. At the end of the garden the drain was communicated with by a stream of considerable volume, by means of a flood-gate, which was occasionally opened to flush the drain. Our first order was to pass under this tunnel and touch the flood-gate, where the officers were stationed, and could see that we all obeyed the command. I need not say how unpleasant it was to pass under this tunnel, which was not sufficiently high to admit of our standing upright, nor need I remark that the odours we inhaled differed very much from those one scents in Rimmel's shop. About half-way up this tunnel I was met by an old soldier, returning with the information that the officers were endeavouring to open the flood-gates. If this remark was true it mattered very little whether one went back or forward; and therefore, as obedience is a soldier's first duty, I went forward to the end and returned in safety. Either the old soldier told an untruth, or else the officers failed in their attempt. Anyhow the panic and consternation in the regiment were intense. After this we fell in, began slow march, warmed up into "double quick," and had to jump or scramble over hedges and ditches as best we could. On nearing home, an order was given to charge and scale the high double-doors of the playground, which had been carefully fastened, and the top of which I could scarcely reach by jumping.