

*By the Same Author*

THE STORY OF DOCTOR DOLITTLE  
THE VOYAGES OF DOCTOR DOLITTLE  
DOCTOR DOLITTLE'S POST OFFICE  
DOCTOR DOLITTLE'S CIRCUS  
DOCTOR DOLITTLE'S ZOO  
DOCTOR DOLITTLE'S CARAVAN  
DOCTOR DOLITTLE'S GARDEN  
DOCTOR DOLITTLE IN THE MOON  
DOCTOR DOLITTLE'S RETURN  
DOCTOR DOLITTLE AND THE SECRET LAKE  
DOCTOR DOLITTLE AND THE GREEN CANARY  
DOCTOR DOLITTLE'S PUDDLEBY ADVENTURES

DOCTOR DOLITTLE: A TREASURY

PORRIDGE POETRY  
THE STORY OF MRS TUBBS  
TOMMY, TILLY AND MRS TUBBS  
NOISY NORA  
THE TWILIGHT OF MAGIC

**GUB GUB'S  
BOOK'S**

AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FOOD  
IN TWENTY VOLUMES

**BY HUGH LOFTING**

**JONATHAN CAPE · LONDON**

*NOTE: Prof GUB GUB Announces that  
Owing to the High Cost of Living  
the other 19 Volumes of this GREAT work  
have been Temporarily Postponed.*

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TO  
"DUTCHIE"  
NORA VAN LEEUWEN  
OF THE DUTCHOVEN  
THAT  
GREATEST OF ARTISTS  
IN  
COOKING  
GUB GUB DEDICATES  
(WITH)  
DEEP RESPECT  
THIS  
BOOK

TOMMY STUBBINS, THE SON OF JACOB STUBBINS,  
COBBLER OF PUDDLEBY-ON-THE-MARSH, EXPLAINS  
SOME THINGS ABOUT THIS BOOK AND GUB-GUB THE  
PIG

I NEVER thought that I would find a book about Gub-Gub a more difficult task than the books I have written about Doctor Dolittle. Yet that is true.

With the Doctor, although the work of being his Secretary often kept me up very late at night, taking notes full of arithmetic and science, there was this to make it easier: I nearly always had the great man himself there, to ask questions of, if I should get stuck.

But with Gub-Gub it was different. There wasn't much arithmetic or deep science about what he wanted written; but he was very little help to me when we got to a difficult place. Whenever there was any question or doubt it was I who had to do most of the deciding. John Dolittle was himself a very good author with a lot of experience; while Gub-Gub - although he wanted every one

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to think him the greatest author in the world – had no experience at all.

Yet for whatever faults this book may have, Gub-Gub must not be held entirely to blame. Perhaps I am by no means the best person for the work. Maybe I am not what is called a good editor, that is, one who is clever at arranging, and putting in good understandable words, the writings and sayings of others. But at the time that this was written there were very few people, besides the Doctor and me, who could understand animal languages. Some day, no doubt, there will be many more.

John Dolittle himself of course could have done much better; and I had hoped that he would undertake the work. Gub-Gub had asked me to go and speak to him about it. But Dab-Dab the duck overheard our talk. And although she was only a duck she took wonderfully good care of the Doctor and his home.

“Tommy Stubbins,” said she to me – very severely – “if you bother John Dolittle with putting that silly pig’s nonsense-scribble into human writing, there is going to be trouble. You know very well the poor man is far too busy with really

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important matters to fuss around with a stupid hog’s gabblings about food.”

“Oh, but, Dab-Dab,” I said, “eating and food are very important to the human race, too, after all. I have looked over what Gub-Gub has written, in pig language, and much of it is quite good – and quite amusing.”

“That’s just it, Tommy,” said she, ruffling her feathers. “He has told me some of the things he wants to have put in his book. He is trying to be funny most of the time. Eating is not a matter to be played with and joked about. It is a serious subject.”

“Oh, well now, Dab-Dab,” said I, “I’m not so sure. Eating should be a jolly business. I admit it’s serious enough when you’re starving. But you yourself take life too seriously altogether.”

“Well,” said she, shrugging her wings, “I have plenty of cause to – with this family. But the Doctor’s too busy. There are no two ways about that. If Gub-Gub’s book must be put into English, why don’t you do it yourself, Tommy?”

After thinking this over I decided the house-keeper was right. Poor John Dolittle, with all his work in doctoring the creatures that flocked to his

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doors morning, noon and night - together with the many books he was writing on animal medicine and natural history - certainly had no time to spare.

And so that was how I came to take on the job myself.

Gub-Gub was delighted, when I told him, to know that his work, on which he had laboured so long, was at last going to be published, printed on a real printing press and sold in the bookshops.

He was a little disappointed when I told him I feared I could not use his own drawings as illustrations. I would have liked to. But - well - Gub-Gub's pictures were distinctly piggy pictures; and I doubted if any printer could have printed them. Gub-Gub was no ordinary artist. He did not often use pencil or ink or paint. He liked much better to do his illustration in mud, drawn on the stable walls. He even painted one picture (the portrait of the Picnic King) in strawberry jam and mint-jelly. He said that no paint or chalks, nothing, could give him just the beautiful green he needed, except mint-jelly. I told him I was sorry, but I thought perhaps it would make things easier for

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the printers if I did the pictures and left out the mint-jelly.

I cannot say that I think my own illustrations nearly as striking and unusual as Gub-Gub's. But at least this much must be said of them: I have tried my hardest to carry out Gub-Gub's wishes in every picture. The pig watched over my shoulder while I did them, grunting out remarks and orders, until they looked exactly the way he wanted them to be.

But alas! when I came to go over what he had written (in the Dolittle Pig Alphabet) I found I had a much bigger task to deal with than I had reckoned on. To begin with, the pages were very hard to read. Turning written Piggish into English is not easy at best. The spoken, or grunted, language is fairly simple - if you have had plenty of practice. But Gub-Gub, although he had had many lessons from the Doctor in writing Pig-signs in copy-books, was a very untidy author. The pages were full of blots - large messy blots. Many of these were caused by his eating ripe tomatoes when he was at work - tomatoes gave him ideas, he said. And of course the juice of the tomatoes was always running down on to the paper and getting mixed up with the ink.

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And, oh, what a lot he had written, to be sure! He used wrapping-paper instead of ordinary writing-paper. He hated to write in what he called a small finicky hand. And one whole attic in the Doctor's house was filled, from floor to ceiling, with sheets and sheets of brown paper, a yard square and all covered with his bold untidy handwriting – foot-writing was what Dab-Dab called it.

Some people who read this will remember that the pig, when he first spoke to the Doctor's animal family about his book on the Art of Eating, said he was going to call it, "A SHORT ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF FOOD – *In Twenty Volumes.*" But also, we must not forget, Gub-Gub knew so much about food that twenty volumes would seem by no means long to one as learned in the art of feeding as he was.

And so I had to give him a second disappointment when I told him I would have to cut it down, in order that we could print a book about the ordinary size that most books are.

More than that, when I had sorted out from the great mass of his writings those parts which I thought people – human readers – would like best,

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I saw it would help a lot if I added something about how he collected his information for the book, and – well, a few other little things which will be read and understood later on.

I do not mean that any of Gub-Gub's Book is not strictly his own. It is only that I had to change the form as well as the length of it. It took me a long time to think of this best form or arrangement. And this was how I at last decided:

The Pig Author was in the habit of reading what he had written to anyone who would listen to him. As soon as he got a new chapter finished he would try it out on the other animals of the Doctor's household. He nearly always did it in the evening, when the animals usually clustered round the fire before going to bed. It became almost a regular thing to have the whole family, Jip the dog, Too-Too the owl, Dab-Dab the duck, Cheapside the London sparrow, the White Mouse – and sometimes myself – gather in that comfortable kitchen of the Doctor's after supper, while Gub-Gub sat at the table and read to us from his sheets of wrapping-paper. He often also lectured to us, explaining his book as he went along. He called it "author's readings."

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The other animals of course gave their opinions, saying which parts they liked and which parts they didn't like – sometimes not very politely. A good deal of what they had to say, for and against, struck me as being important and worth putting into the book. The author's readings however spread over many weeks – some months, in fact. Therefore, I found that again I had to cut down. And, as will be seen, in the form in which I did give the book to the printers I have taken ten of these evening gatherings, or readings, and made them into chapters. In each of them I have set down everything as it happened and every word as it was said, whether it came from Gub-Gub himself or from those who were listening to him.

And so we will begin with –

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"My-Goodness-Gracious-Mary-Agnes!" cried Dab-Dab, flouncing into the room. She threw down a tray with a great clatter upon the table. "That pig will be the death of me yet."

"Why?" asked Jip. "What has he done now?"

"What has he done?" squawked the Duck. "I

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thought the end of my patience was reached when he started calling himself '*Doctor Gub-Gub, D.S.D.*,' but – "

"What does D.S.D. mean?" asked the White Mouse.

"Doctor of Salad Dressings, if you please," snorted Dab-Dab. "That was bad enough. But now he has got hold of a pair of John Dolittle's spectacles. There's no glass in them – just the tortoise-shell frames. And he's wearing them. Thinks they make him look like an author. At this moment he's traipsing around the house with those spectacles on his snout, spouting passages from his own silly book."

"Tee-hee-hee!" tittered the White Mouse. "What a picture! But you know, Dab-Dab, I think his book ought to be lots of fun. 'An Encyclopædia of Food.' I've no idea what *encyclopædia* means, but it sounds like something awfully good to eat – something that would last a long time, too. I do hope Gub-Gub has plenty about cheeses in his book."

"Oh, you *would* like your books to be cheesy," growled Jip. He was lying on the hearth, his nose between his paws stretched out towards the

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fire, his eyes shut. Anyone would think he was asleep, but this was only his favourite way of listening to the conversation after supper; and he never missed a thing.

"Huh! And you would like your books to be beefy, I suppose," smirked the White Mouse, turning up his pink nose.

Too-Too the owl, the great mathematician, was seated on the back of my chair, still and quiet as the furniture itself.

"That pig, Gub-Gub," he said presently in a thoughtful voice, "reminds me of a boy I knew once. A small boy, with a large appetite – lived on a farm where I had a nest in the barn. One day a visitor asked him what was his favourite sport. 'Eating,' he answered. 'Well, but what is your favourite outdoor sport?' asked the visitor. 'Eating outdoors,' said the boy."

"Yes, that sounds like our Gubby, all right," chirped Cheapside the London sparrow. He hopped up on to the table and began his usual job of helping Dab-Dab to clear away by picking up the crumbs on the tablecloth.

"Tell me, Tommy," he said, "'ow does our Perfesser Bacon manage about 'is spellin'?"

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"He doesn't, Cheapside," said I. "You see the Dolittle Pig Alphabet is made up of signs, not letters. Each sign stands for a word, sometimes for a whole sentence."

"Huh! Something like Chinese?"

"Yes," I said, "something like it – only much simpler."

"It would have to be that indeed," said Dab-Dab. "The simpleton! He's for ever nosing into the Doctor's books about gardening and cooking. But of course he isn't reading really – just pretending. It's my opinion that pig couldn't spell the word *ham* – not if you promised him a seven-course meal."

"Just the same," chuckled Polynesia the parrot from the top of the grandfather clock, "it is wonderful how much information he has managed to collect for his book."

Chee-Chee the monkey slid across the floor and threw another log on the fire.

"Yes," he said, "and he doesn't get it all from books. He pesters me all the time to tell him about the African jungle fruits, and the vegetables too – like yams and wild mangoes, palm kernels, dates, ground nuts and what not."

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"Well, you're all going to get a dose of him very soon, I fancy," muttered Dab-Dab. "When I was washing the dishes just now he passed through the pantry, and he said something about giving us an author's reading to-night. So those who would like to go to bed had better go - Oh, goodness! Here he comes."

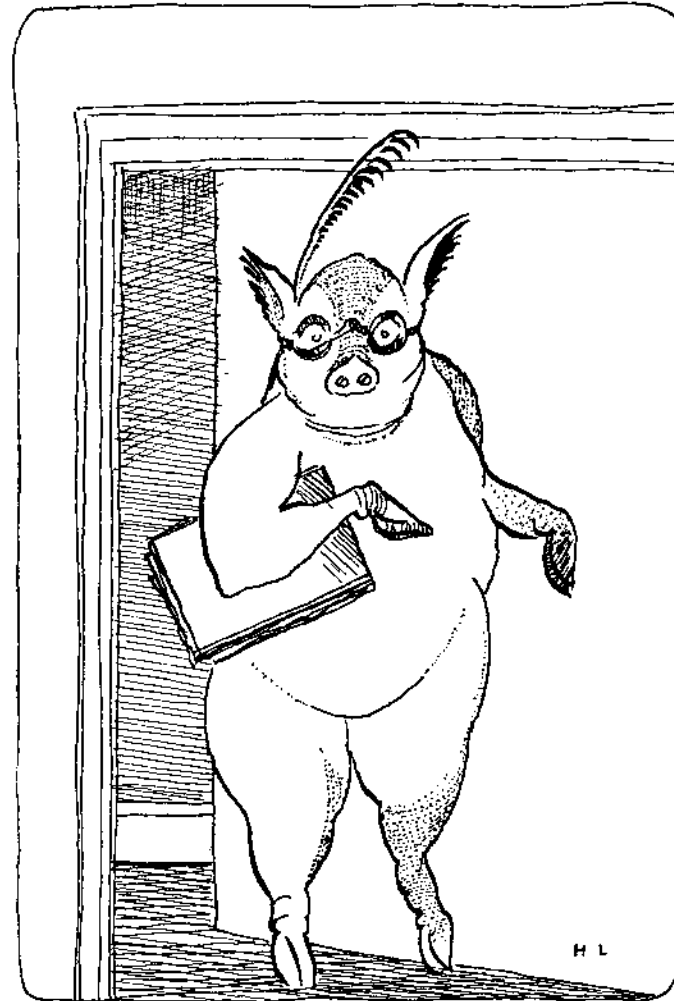
There was a knock upon the door. Gub-Gub's only difficulty in getting about the house was the door-knobs. He had to use both his front trotters to turn them and he always knocked when he could get anyone else to let him in.

"It's he, sure enough," giggled the White Mouse.

I rose and pulled the door wide. In the opening stood a strange figure: Gub-Gub as an author. Under one arm he carried a large untidy bundle of papers; behind his ear there was an enormous quill pen; upon his nose there was a pair of tortoise-shell spectacle-frames; and upon his face there was a look of great weariness.

"Dear, dear!" he sighed. "No one has any idea how fatigued I am."

"Fat you may be," snorted Dab-Dab. "But what should make you *fatigued*?"



"In the opening stood a strange figure"

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"Research," the great author groaned. "Untiring, endless research."

"Where did you do your research," asked Jip; "in the strawberry bed?"

"What is research?" asked the White Mouse.

Gub-Gub pulled a chair up to the table beside my own and sat down. Then he wiped his spectacles carefully - although they hadn't any glass in them - upon the tablecloth and put them back on his nose. "Research?" said he. "Well - er - research is - er - bibliography."

"And what is bibliography?" the White Mouse asked in a meek voice.

"Oh, you go to libraries and you read in their books. Then you know what to put in your own."

"Ah, I see. Just copying," snickered the White Mouse.

"Not at all," said Gub-Gub, with an annoyed look on his face. "It isn't copying at all. It's very hard to describe. There are some things in the life of a great writer which are beyond your understanding, Whitey. Research is one of them, it seems. All afternoon I have been trying to make sure of the exact spot where King Alfred burned the cakes. My head is so tired. I am beginning to

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wonder if there ever was a King Alfred – and certainly if he ever burned the cakes. I have just come from the library now. My study – the attic upstairs, you know – is just piled to the rafters with the books I brought back with me. And presently I will have to return to my labours, my – er – bibliography. But first I thought you might like to hear a Food Sermon which I wrote last night.”

Chee-Chee's eyebrows went up till they disappeared into his hair; while Polynesia broke out in whispers, into her usual and dreadful Swedish swearing.

“Holy cats!” growled Jip. “A food sermon?”

“Yes,” said Gub-Gub brightly. “It begins this way:

“Dearly Beloved Brethren,  
Is it not a sin?  
To eat a roast potato  
And to throw away the skin?”

That is a well-known quotation, first used as a text, I believe, by His Grace the Archbishop of Batterby. And –”

“'Ere, 'ere, 'ere! 'Alf a minute,” put in Cheap-

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side. “I don't think we quite feel like a sermon this evening, your Reverence. But what was you digging round after Alfred the Great for?”

“I wanted to put him in my Food Map.”

“And what's the use of a Food Map?” asked the sparrow.

“Oh, it's a lot of use,” said Gub-Gub. “The Geography of Food is a very important chapter in my book. And the Food Map is an important part of that chapter. I have made several maps and thrown them away because I wasn't satisfied with them. It is so difficult to get the writing small enough to put in all I want. The map should be not only a great help in learning the Geography of Food but also for the History of Food. I would like it to show all the towns where the great events in food history happened – the place, for instance, where Alfred is supposed to have burned the cakes which the old lady had set him to watch while they were cooking. But also the map should mark all the towns and countries which are famous for different kinds of eatables. Such as, Melton Mowbray, where the pies come from; the river Niva in Russia – caviar; Yarmouth, famous for its bloaters; and Banbury where the well-known cakes

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are made – that same Banbury, by the way, where we were invited in our childhood to

“ Ride a cockhorse  
To Banbury Cross  
To see a fine Lady  
Ride on a white horse.  
With rings on her fingers  
And bells on her toes  
Tra-a-la-la, et cetera.’ ”

Gub-Gub finished by waving his two front feet in the air as though he were beating time to music.

“You mean with bells on your trotters and rings in your nose, more like,” snapped Dab-Dab. “What a tiresome pig!”

“Still I don’t see what you’re going to *do* with this map, when you get it finished,” said Cheapside.

“Do with it! Why, it will be most valuable,” said Gub-Gub. “It tells you where to go to find different things to eat. Supposing you got up in the morning and felt like spending a nice, quiet, banana week-end. All right. You just look at the map and take a boat for Central America. Perfectly simple.”

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“I see what he’s getting at, Cheapside,” said Jip. “He’s going to have a sort of bill-of-fare take the place of time-tables. All you’ve got to do is go to a booking office and say, ‘I want a ticket to the best pudding you have. First class, please.’ Yes, it’s simple, all right.”

“Tee-hee-hee!” tittered the White Mouse.

“I’m afraid none of you are taking me very seriously,” said Gub-Gub. He glanced at the clock. “I’ll tell you some more another night. It is the hour for my bibliography. I must go and bible.”

And with great dignity he gathered up his papers and left the room.