

THE ST. JIM'S JUNIORS IN PAREE!

VOL. 4.

The GEM LIBRARY 1^a

No. 92.

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Tale by

Grand School Tale of
TOM MERRY & CO.

Marlin
Clifford.



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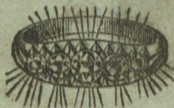
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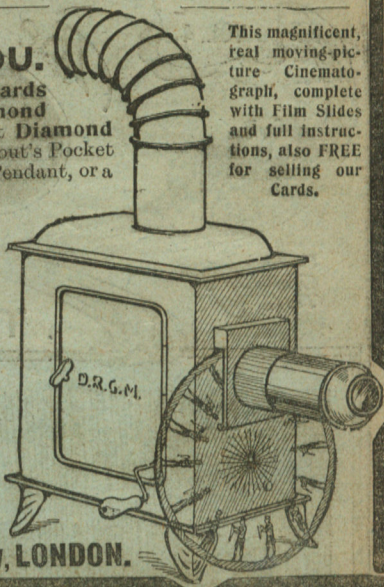


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EVERY THURSDAY

VOL. 4. No. 92.

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Complete Stories for Everyone and Every Story a Gem!



TOM MERRY & Co. IN PARIS.

A Grand, Long, Complete Tale of the Boys of St. Jim's.

By

MARTIN CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER 1.

St. Jim's Juniors in Paris.

TOOT!
 "Bai Jove!"
 Toot—toot—toot!
 "Gweat Scott! What is that?"
 Toot—toot!
 Arthur Augustus D'Arcy sat up in bed and rubbed his eyes.
 He did not wake up, as usual, in the Fourth-Form dormitory in the School House at St. Jim's though in the confusion of sudden awakening he imagined himself to be there for a moment or two.
 He was in one of a row of beds, in a large room with wide windows looking out on the Rue de Rivoli, in the heart of Paris.
 He gazed round him in astonishment as the hooting still sounded in his ears.
 "Bai Jove! It's you, Tom Mewwy!"
 Tom Merry chuckled.
 Arthur Augustus had been sleeping very soundly, and Tom Merry had adopted that method of awakening him, tooting the motor-horn close to his ears.
 The method had answered perfectly.
 D'Arcy sat up, and groped for his eyeglass, which he proceeded to jam into one sleepy eye.
 "Bai Jove! Has wisin'-bell gone, deah boy?"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Weally, Tom Mewwy—"
 "Rising-bell's gone," said Blake, hopping out of bed.

"But we haven't heard it, as we're some hundreds of miles from St. Jim's. Taggles could ring his loudest now, and it wouldn't make any difference to us."
 "Bai Jove! I forgot, you know, that we're in Pawis."
 "What's the time, Merry?" asked Piggins, sitting up in bed, with a portentous yawn.
 "Eight o'clock!"
 "Bai Jove! We're beastly late!"
 "We are!" said Tom Merry severely. "I'm jolly well not going to let you chaps get into bad habits, just because you're on a holiday in Paris. No late hours, and no sticking in bed half the morning."
 "No fear," said Digby. "Early to bed, early to rise—"
 "Makes a man live till he jolly well dies," said Monty Lowther, swinging his long legs out of bed. "Anybody seen my boots?"
 "Well, they're big enough to be seen," remarked Jack Blake, glancing round. "Is that one of them? Oh, no, my mistake—that's Kerr's portmanteau."
 "Ass!"
 "Where's the hot water?" asked Manners lazily.
 "Ring for the blessed garcon," said Blake. "When you want anything, you ring for the blessed garcon. He pops up like a jack-in-the-box."
 Tom Merry touched the bell.
 "Fatty's not awake yet," said Blake, with a glance at Fatty Wynn, who was still sleeping soundly, with a beatific smile upon his fat face. No doubt he was dreaming of last night's supper, which had been a substantial one.
 "Better wake him."

"Yaas, wathah!"

Tom Merry transferred himself and his motor-horn to Fatty Wynn's bedside. He blew a terrific blast close to Fatty Wynn's ear.

That blast would have awakened the Seven Sleepers, and it effectually awakened the Falstaff of the New House at St. Jim's.

Fatty Wynn started up from slumber in sudden alarm, throwing out his hands on either side of him, and there was a yell from Tom Merry as one hand caught him on the side of the face with a terrific smack.

"Oh!" gasped Fatty.

"Ow!" gasped Tom Merry.

"What's the row?"

"You ass!" roared Tom Merry, sitting on the next bed, and rubbing his face. "What the dickens do you mean by using my head as a punching-ball?"

"Oh! I—I woke up!" said Fatty.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes, I woke you," said Tom Merry.

"You woke me suddenly, then," said Fatty Wynn. "I always land out when I'm woke up suddenly. I've hurt my knuckles."

"You've hurt my head."

"I'm thinking of my knuckles." Fatty Wynn turned over on his pillow. "Don't wake me up again till it's time to get up."

"It's time to get up now, fathead," said Figgins.

"Bosh!"

"It's turned eight."

"Call me at nine."

"Here's the garcon with the hot water."

"Tell him to go and eat coke," said Fatty Wynn drowsily.

"Get up, lazybones!"

"Groo!"

"Do you hear, Fatty? Get up!"

Snore!

"My only hat!" said Tom Merry. "He's fast asleep again! Blessed if he isn't like the Dormouse in 'Alice.' Fatty! Fatty!"

Snore!

Toot! Toot!

The raucous roar of the motor-horn sounded close to Fatty's ears again, and he started up out of the arms of Morphineus.

"Ow! Stop that row! You've woke me up!"

He landed out again, but Tom Merry took care to jump back. Fatty's fist crashed upon the wooden head of the bed, and he gave a howl and sucked his knuckles.

"Ow! You ass! Lemme alone! I'm going to sleep! Yow!"

"Time to get up!"

"Look here!" howled Fatty Wynn. "This is a free country—it's a blessed Republic, and a chap can do as he likes. Go and eat coke!"

"Time!"

"I'm tired. I'm blessed fatigay," said Fatty Wynn.

"We're only here a few hours so far, and I want a rest. We got here yesterday morning—"

"And you snoozed nearly all yesterday."

"Well, I was up in the evening."

"You've had enough sleep. We're going out to-day to see some of the giddy sights. We're going to look in at the restaurants, Fatty."

Fatty Wynn looked a little more animated at last.

"Well, that's all right. Let me have another half-hour, and I'll be with you."

Tom Merry laughed.

"Not another half-minute, my son. Up with you!"

"I jolly well won't!"

"Help him out, you chaps."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Gerroff! Leggo! Yah! Yaroooh! Beasts!"

They took no notice of Fatty Wynn's expostulations. They tilted his bed up on one side, and Fatty Wynn rolled out, bedclothes and all.

He sat up in the midst of tangled bedclothes, with his fat legs sticking out of the tangle, and turned a red and wrathful face upon the juniors of St. Jim's.

"Beasts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I haven't rested thoroughly. It interferes with my digestion if I don't rest thoroughly. You've spoiled my appetite for the day."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fatty Wynn received no sympathy whatever. But as further repose was clearly impossible, he took his morning tub, and dressed himself. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was already busy at his toilet.

The swell of St. Jim's had not been long in Paris, but he had found an opportunity the previous evening of doing some shopping, and so, although he had brought little

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luggage, he was able to shine forth that morning with his accustomed splendour.

He was the last to finish, and the others waited for him.

"Let's go down," said Fatty Wynn, who, now that he was once dressed, was eager to get down to breakfast. "It's no good waiting for Gussy. He may be an hour yet."

"I sha'n't be a minute, deah boys."

"You'd better not," said Harry Noble, thoughtfully picking up a cake of soap and calculating the distance between him and D'Arcy.

"Weally, Kangaroo—"

"Buck up!"

"I have only to tie my necktie. Tom Mewwy, you are wathah a judge of colah, I know. Which of these neckties suits my waistcoat best, do you think?"

"Shove 'em all on, old chap, and you're bound to get a match."

"I wegard that remark as fivivolous."

"Oh, I'm going down!" said Fatty Wynn.

"Pway wait for me," said D'Arcy. "I will work the lift for you, deah boys. Upon reflection, I will wear the pale blue."

He donned the pale blue, and they left the bed-room.

"This way to the lift," said Monty Lowther.

And the group of juniors stopped at the well, guarded by iron gates, where the legend "ascenseur," engraved upon a white disc, announced that the lift was to be found.

CHAPTER 2.

D'Arcy Works the Lift.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY tried to open the iron gates of the lift well, though the lift itself was not in sight. The gates, of course, would not open.

D'Arcy rubbed his nose thoughtfully.

"Bai Jove! There's somethin' w'ong with this lift, deah boys."

"Ass!"

"I wefuse to be called an ass, Tom Mewwy!"

"Duffer, then! The gates won't open except when the lift's on a level with the floor. That's to prevent accidents. Otherwise, some silly ass would always be tumbling down the shaft."

"Yaas, I never thought of that."

"Oh, ring the blessed bell, or we shall never get down to breakfast," said Fatty Wynn impatiently.

"Oh, that's all right!" said Tom Merry. "I can work the lift, you know. You shove your hand through this little window, and give the rope a jerk, and the lift comes up of its own accord."

"Suppose somebody's getting into it when you give the jerk?"

"Ahem! They shouldn't be!"

"It won't move if the gates are open," said Kangaroo. "Give it a blessed jerk, and let's get going."

The lift cable was jerked, and there was a sound of whirring, and the lift slowly ascended to the floor where the juniors were standing.

As soon as it was level, Tom Merry opened the gates, which fixed the lift at that level. The juniors crowded into the lift, which was of a good size, and accommodated them all. Arthur Augustus calmly placed himself in position to navigate the lift.

Tom Merry gave him a dig in the ribs.

"Out of it, old chap!" he remarked.

D'Arcy turned his eyeglass inquiringly on the hero of the Shell at St. Jim's.

"I fail to undahstand you, Tom Mewwy."

"Out of it, Gussy."

"But I want to descend in the lift."

"I don't mean out of the lift, fathead. Leave it to me—I'll work it."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Better leave it to me," said Kangaroo. "I've picked up a lot of knowledge of machinery and things from that chap Glyn, and I really think—"

"Better leave it to me," said Jack Blake. "I—"

"Pway don't bothah, deah boys. I am goin' to work the lift."

"Look here—"

"It's all wight. I wathah fancy myself as a liftman, you know. It's as easy as wollin' off a garden-seat, you know. You pweess the button here for whatever floor you want to stop at, and the lift stops there of its own accord. It's a hydwauclic lift, you know. It's as simple as anythin'."

"Well, buck up," said Fatty Wynn. "I'm jolly hungry."

Arthur Augustus manipulated the button, and the lift descended. It came down to the ground floor of the hotel, which was the floor the juniors wanted; but it did not stop there.

It descended further, into the regions of the basement.



"Un franc!" bellowed the Frenchman excitedly. "un franc!" But Arthur Augustus only raised his hat and bowed again.

and a strong smell of cooking and a babble of French voices assailed the juniors.

"You ass!" roared Figgins. "You've taken us down into the kitchen."

"Bai Jove!"

"Oh, keep on. We'll have a look at the coal-cellars while we're here," said Digby sarcastically.

"Nothin' of the sort, deah boys. I am not intewested in coal-cellahs," said Arthur Augustus. "These little things will happen, you know, in the best regulated lifts. I'll take you up again in a jiffay."

"Well, buck up, fathead!"

"Weally, Blake, before goin' any furthah, I wish it to be distinctly undahstood that I object to those oppwobwious expvressions."

"Will you go up?"

"Certainly, but first—"

"Oh, jump on him, and let me work the lift," said Kangaroo.

"Pway don't be hastay, deah boys. I will take you up, and explain to Blake aftahwards."

"Oh, get a move on!"

A dozen grinning faces were staring at the juniors from the "below stairs" regions. D'Arcy jammed at the buttons, and jerked the cable, and the lift shot up with a speed that made the juniors stagger and catch hold of one another.

"Not so fast!" roared Tom Merry. "You'll have a blessed accident."

"It's all wight—it will slacken."

"It won't stop at the ground floor."

"Yaas—I've pwessed the button, you know."

"But—"

"I tell you it's all wight."

"But we're passing the ground floor, and going on!" yelled Blake.

"Bai Jove, so we are."

The lift was going up as if for a wager.

It shot past the ground floor, and the first floor, and the second floor, and the third floor. D'Arcy pulled on the cable to stop it, but in his haste and confusion he pulled the wrong way, and accelerated the speed of the lift instead of reducing it.

"My hat!" said Blake. "This is what comes of admitting dangerous lunatics into lifts. We shall go through the roof with a bang, I expect."

"Imposs, deah boy!"

"Why don't you stop it?"

"I am twyin'—"

"You're pulling the wrong way!" yelled Kangaroo.

"Bai Jove! I never thought of that."

Bump!

The lift stopped on the topmost floor. How many the

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An extra long tale of Tom Merry & Co. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

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juniors had not counted, but the number of floors reminded Tom Merry of the time he was in Chicago. Paris had its "skyscrapers," though not on so large a scale.

"Good, we're in the top notch now," said Kangaroo. "Unless Gussy wants to explore the chimney-pots, we may as well go down again."

"Weally, Kangawoo—"

"Get the lift down, ass!"

"I decline to be called an ass. I—"

Buz-z-z-z!

"Bai Jove! that sounds like someone wingin' a bell."

"It is a bell, fathead—it's the lift bell. Somebody wants the lift. You're keeping somebody waiting while you're doing these aeroplane turns."

"I'm sowwy. Still, we were in the lift first, you know."

Buz-z-z-z!

"Oh, do get it down."

"It's goin'."

The lift descended again. D'Arcy had pressed the right lever at last for the ground floor, and the lift floated down to its destination.

As it passed the third floor, a stout old gentleman, waiting at the lift-gates, shook those gates with both hands, and glared into the lift with a red and angry face.

He was evidently the person who had rung the bell for the "ascenseur," and when he heard the lift working he had doubtless thought it was coming for him.

He glared, and said things in French as it floated past.

"Might as well stop for him," said D'Arcy, thinking of that when the juniors' heads were on a level with the old gentleman's feet. "It would be only polite. They are vewy stwong on politeness here, you know. We'll reverse the thing, and go up for him."

Three or four pairs of hands seized the swell of St. Jim's in a forcible grip.

"You jolly well won't," said Jack Blake. "We'll get out on the ground floor before you come any more of your hanky-panky with the lift, thanks."

"Weally, Blake—"

"The liftman can go and fetch that chap. You wouldn't stop at the right floor, and we've had enough going up like a rocket."

"I must insist—"

"Rats!"

"Weally, deah boys—"

"Sit down!"

D'Arcy was forced by gentle pressure into the lift seat, vainly protesting, and Tom Merry brought the lift to a stop on the ground floor.

He opened the gates, and the juniors poured out of the lift.

The lift attendant was waiting there, summoned by the bell, which was still buzzing. He grinned, probably having seen the mysterious navigation of the lift from the bottom of the building to the top.

"This way to the grub," said Fatty Wynn.

"Bai Jove!" said D'Arcy thoughtfully. "It's a jolly good ideah, you know, to learn these things while you've got an opportunity. I shall always be able to work the lift for you fellahs, you know, if the attendant doesn't happen to be there!"

CHAPTER 3.

Fatty Wynn Feels Hungry.

UNCLE FRANK was seated at the breakfast table, perusing the Paris "Daily Mail," when the juniors of St. Jim's came in. The old gentleman looked up with a cheery nod and smile.

Uncle Frank was in Paris on business, and it had been his idea for the juniors to have a run over while he was there. Needless to say, Tom Merry & Co. had jumped at the chance.

Of course, there had been many volunteers for the party. It numbered ten, and there was one youth at St. Jim's who was determined that it should number eleven.

That youth was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's brother, D'Arcy minor.

D'Arcy minor had declared his intention, both by letter and telegraph, of joining the party in Paris.

Most of the juniors smiled at the idea, but Tom Merry did not smile.

He knew Wally D'Arcy.

He would not have been surprised at any moment to see

the tumbled hair and inky fingers, and broad grin of the hero of the Third Form at St. Jim's.

"Pleasant morning," said Mr. Fawcett, as he laid down his paper. "I am glad to see that you are not late abed."

"Late for us, sir," said Tom Merry. "I'm going to have them out at seven in future. I cannot allow Gussy to get into lazy habits."

"Weally, Tom Merry—"

"Here's the giddy waiter," said Figgins. "Hallo, Hongri!"

They had named the waiter Henri, not knowing his name. D'Arcy had first applied the name to him. He said that the waiter was very like a waiter he had come across in Chicago, whose name was Louis. Hence he applied the name of Henri to this waiter, and the juniors took it up.

Henri came up with smiling, fat face, and widespread palms.

"They're not deaf and dumb here, by any means," Figgins remarked; "but they do a jolly lot of talking with their hands."

Henri began to talk with both hands and mouth.

"Dejeuner?" he asked.

"Brekker," said Fatty Wynn.

"Breakfast, Hongri."

"Oui, oui, petit dejeuner," said Henri. "Cafe complet."

"I don't know what cuffy congplay is," said Fatty Wynn.

"I want bacon and eggs, and fish cakes, and some marmalade to finish with. No good trying to get through a day without laying a solid foundation."

"Yaas, wathah."

"Tell him we want bacon and eggs, Kerr, and none of his blessed French kickshaws."

Kerr grinned.

All the juniors knew French—English French, so to speak—but they found that their French was sadly wanting when it came to dealing with Frenchmen in France.

Blake had confided some of his sufferings while seasick to the hotel proprietor, who was very sympathetic; but Blake discovered later that the Frenchmen believed that Blake was telling him that his mother was ill.

After that, Blake gave it up.

Kerr, who could do nearly everything, spoke French wonderfully, and it was unanimously agreed that he was to be the interpreter of the party.

He spoke to the waiter now, so quickly that his chum could not follow his meaning; but the waiter understood, and he outspread his hands comprehendingly and vanished.

"Do you weally understand all that, Kerr?" asked D'Arcy curiously.

"Ha, ha! Yes."

"And does Hongwi?"

"Yes."

"It is vewy remarkable. I weally considah it ought to be a speed limit, the same as for dw... cabs."

"Well, that wouldn't be a bad wheeze," said thoughtfully. "I don't believe they always understand other, though. That's why they eke it out by wriggling waving their hands."

"Yaas, wathah."

"Sure the chap understands about the bacon, Kerr?" asked Fatty Wynn.

"Ha, ha! Yes, that's all right."

"It's an important point. These people begin the day a roll and butter and coffee. Now, how could they expect to win the battle of Waterloo on that?"

"How, indeed?" said Mr. Fawcett, with a smile.

"You want to lay a solid foundation," said Fatty Wynn, encouraged. "Whether it's for seeing sights, or doing lessons, or fighting battles, what you want is a solid foundation to work upon."

"Yaas, wathah."

"I could get through dozens of their blessed cafe complets, and feel as if I hadn't begun," said Fatty Wynn. "He's a long time."

"Why, it's not a minute yet."

"It seems a long time, much longer than that. You're quite sure he understood about the bacon, Kerr?"

"Quite sure."

"It would be awful for him to turn up with nothing but rolls and butter after all this waiting."

"Minute and a quarter," said Tom Merry, looking at his watch.

"Your watch must be slow. I had a very light supper last night—only some cold beef and ham, and a pie, and a pudding, and some of their blessed kickshaws. I always wake hungry in the mornings in November, too."

"Not at other times?" grinned Lowther.

"Well, I seem to get specially peckish at this time of year. I always have a healthy appetite. I wanted to eat

ANSWERS

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to Paris chiefly to sample their cooking. I've heard a lot about it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What an awful long time that chap is."

"Two minutes."

"Two hours, you mean."

"You want the bacon raw, I suppose?" suggested Figgins.

"Well, I think we might have something cold to start with, anyway. I'd better begin on the rolls. After all, I shall have room for the bacon, too."

And Fatty Wynn began on the rolls-and-butter.

Henri was really very quick with the breakfast, considering that it was a substantial one for ten persons, and the cook must have done his duty nobly. But the fat Fourth-Former had made a decided clearance among the rolls by the time Henri reappeared.

Henri looked at the table in some surprise.

He had carefully placed ten rolls there, and now there were only three to be seen. Fatty Wynn eyed him hungrily.

"Mais," said Henri, "ze bread."

"Eh?"

"I zink zat I place ze pain—ze bread," said the puzzled waiter. "It is gone viz itself away. Zat is ferry curious!"

"Where's the bacon?"

"Je ne comprends pas."

"Oh, don't talk to me about your pa or your ma, either! I'm hungry! J'ai faim!" said Fatty Wynn. "I have hunger, as you put it in your lingo! J'ai faim—j'ai faim, beaucoup!"

"M'sieur?"

"J'ai blessed faim!"

"M'sieur?"

"They say these French are an intelligent race, and they don't even understand their own blessed language!" said Fatty Wynn, in disgust.

Henri, looking puzzled, planted down his trays.

Fatty Wynn had been expecting rashers of bacon, and he began to look dangerous, till he discovered that the little dishes contained an admixture of bacon-and-eggs. Then he was mollified, but he grunted expressively when he discovered that there was only one of the little dishes for him.

"Is it possible that that duffer thinks this will be enough for me?" he asked, in wonder. "Is he off his silly rocker?" "Ask him for more, then, before he goes," grinned Tom Merry.

"Henri! Waiter! Garsong!"

"M'sieur?"

"Bring me half a dozen more!"

"M'sieur?"

"Here, waitong—I—I mean, garsong—bring me—apportez moi—cinq ou six encore!" spluttered Fatty Wynn.

"M'sieur?"

"Half a dozen!" roared Fatty Wynn. "Some more—more—cinq—six—sept!"

"Oui, oui, oui!"

Henri grinned to show that he understood, and departed. Fatty Wynn grunted.

"Stupid people, the French!" he remarked. "I should think he might have guessed that one of those poky little dishes wouldn't be enough for a chap like me."

Fatty Wynn did not take long over his allowance of bacon-and-eggs. He had just finished it, and was ready for some more, when Henri arrived.

Fatty Wynn looked at him expectantly.

He became almost speechless when Henri deposited a plate on the table containing six or seven rolls of bread.

The fat Fourth-Former of St. Jim's stared at them.

"Where's my bacon?"

"M'sieur?"

"Where's that blessed bacon?"

"M'sieur?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Merry. "It's your giddy French! He thought you were asking him for half a dozen more rolls, in the place of those you scoffed!"

Fatty Wynn spluttered.

"The ass! The crass ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bacon!" said Fatty Wynn. "Eggs! Des œufs, fathead—lots of œufs!"

"Go it, Kerr!"

The grinning Kerr explained. Henri waved his hands and disappeared. He returned shortly with a tray containing sufficient bacon-and-eggs to satisfy even Fatty Wynn. The fat junior beamed.

"This is something like!" he remarked. "I shall be able to lay a solid foundation now!"

Arthur Augustus rose from the table.

"I weally cannot stay indoors while you lay a solid foundation, Wynn, if you are goin' to twavel through that lot!" he remarked. "You fellows comin' out?"

"Yes, rather!" said Blake and Digby, getting up at once.

"Wait a tick!" said Tom Merry. "We're all coming!"

Uncle Frank had already left the breakfast-table, after seeing the juniors provided for. He had finished his morning meal—a much lighter one—and had gone to attend to his business. He had cautioned the boys not to go about alone, and then left them to their own devices. He was a gentleman of experience, and he knew that they could take care of themselves, and that they would be better without a guide, philosopher, and friend of middle-age to look after them. They wanted to spend the first morning in a walk round Paris, and Uncle Frank had reached a time when he preferred to do his sightseeing sitting down.

Fatty Wynn looked up from his fourth helping.

"I'm jolly well not coming till I've finished!" he said.

"Don't you fellows wait for me, though!"

"Weally, Wynn—"

"We'll wait," said Figgins and Kerr loyally. "We'll run against you fellows presently, I expect."

"Meet at the Eiffel Tower," suggested Tom Merry.

"Turn up at the tower punctually at twelve o'clock—eh?"

"Right you are!" said the three New House juniors.

"Come on, deah boys!" said D'Arcy.

He had brought his silk hat down with him. Seven juniors put on hats or caps, and sallied forth, leaving Fatty Wynn to finish laying his solid foundation, and Figgins and Kerr to watch him doing it.

CHAPTER 4.

D'Arcy Does Not Get His Change.

TOM MERRY & CO. sallied forth from the Hotel Ste. Genevieve, in the Rue de Rivoli, in the highest of spirits.

The previous day they had been too tired by their journey to do more than just look round them, and this was their first real look at Paris.

It was a bright morning, very bright for the season—the clear, brilliant sunshine of Paris falling in a flood upon streets and squares and buildings, and showing up the cleanliness of the city, striking enough to the boys, who had just come from London.

Partly owing to the atmosphere, partly to the style of architecture, Paris strikes the new-comer as being as bright and clean as a toy city, though certainly some of the sights in the streets are far from pleasing to an English eye.

Arthur Augustus glanced round with great admiration as he found himself under the long stone colonnade that runs for a considerable length in the Rue de Rivoli.

"Bai Jove, this is a wippin' idea!" he remarked.

"What is?" asked Tom Merry.

"This colonnade! When it comes on to wain a fellow can still do his shoppin' without dangah of havin' his toppah wained!"

"Jolly good!"

"Wemarkably polite these people are," Arthur Augustus further observed, as a gentleman in a crush of foot-passengers, stepped aside for him to pass, and raised his hat with a courteous smile as he did so. D'Arcy raised his hat in return, and bowed, and the French gentleman bowed, and they parted with a mutually high opinion of one another.

"Remarkably," said Blake. "It must take up some time too, if they keep it up to concert pitch all day."

"I like it," said D'Arcy. "You fellows might observe their mannahs and customs, and copy them with advantage. I have always done my best to impove you, but I must admit without vevy gweat success."

"Are you looking for a thick ear, Gussy?"

"Certainly not, Mannahs! I wegard the question as wiculous!"

"Well, you came jolly near finding one, then, without looking for it!"

"Weally, Mannahs—"

Arthur Augustus was interrupted.

A man stopped in his path, and extended towards him a packet of picture postcards, with a bow and a genial smile.

D'Arcy shook his head.

"No, thanks, chappy!"

But the man persisted. He followed the elegant junior and insisted upon thrusting the packet into his hands. Then he waved his own hands and smiled.

D'Arcy put up his eyeglass, and glanced at the packet of cards, and then at the man.

"Vevy well, deah boy, if you insist!" he said, and slipped the packet into his pocket and walked on.

The man stared after him blankly, and followed.

"Bai Jove, they are a polite wate, and no mistake!" said Arthur Augustus. "Fancy a stwannah givin' a chap a packet of pictuah postcards like that!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I see no cause for laughtah, Tom Mewwy! It was a vewy civil thing to do, and the man did not look wick, either, as if he could afford to make pwesents."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It was vewy decent of him, I considah!"

"Oh, Gussy, Gussy, you'll be the death of me!" said Blake, wiping his eyes.

"Weally, Blake— Hallo, here is the chap again!"

The picture-postcard merchant tapped D'Arcy on his sleeve and began to wave his arms about like the sails of a wind-mill.

Arthur Augustus halted and looked at him.

"Non, non," he said; "I don't want any more! It's vewy polite of you, and I regard you as a weally decent chap, but I cannot wob you in this way."

"Monsieur—"

"Thank you vewy much! Bon jour!"

And D'Arcy walked on.

The man, jabbering and gesticulating, pursued him. The chums were shrieking with laughter, and Arthur Augustus was looking decidedly puzzled.

"Un franc!" bellowed the Frenchman excitedly. "Un franc!"

"What is he saying, Tom Mewwy?"

"A franc."

"What does he mean by that?"

"Ha, ha! He wants a franc for the postcards!"

"Oh!"

"He's not giving them away, you ass; he's selling them!"

"Oh!"

"Give him a franc, or he'll have the whole Rue de Rivoli and the Place de la Concorde about our ears!"

Arthur Augustus felt in his pockets.

"Pway do not cackle in that wickulous way, you fellows! How was I to know that the chap was sellin' the beastly things? I don't want any, and I only took them out of politeness. I haven't any silver! Here, my man, wun somewhere and change this for me!"

He put a twenty-franc piece into the hand of the picture-postcard merchant.

The man, who was a fellow of medium size, with keen, twinkling eyes and a black beard and a red nose, looked at the gold piece and then at D'Arcy, and babbled out something in which Arthur Augustus only distinguished the word "changer."

"Well, go and get change!" said D'Arcy. "I don't expect you to have nineteen fwances in your pocket!"

The man babbled again.

"Changer!" exclaimed D'Arcy. "Allez! Changez! Bunkez-vous!"

The man grinned, and disappeared in the crowd.

Jack Blake gave a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha! You champion ass, do you expect to see your nineteen francs again?"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I should wegard it as wotten to doubt a fellow's honesty," said D'Arcy, with dignity. "I pwesume he will bwing me my change?"

"Well, we'll see."

They waited by one of the columns of the colonnade for five minutes. There was no sign of the black-bearded man.

"Better move on," grinned Lowther.

"I have not weceived my change yet, deah boy."

"If you're going to wait for that, you'd better send for a campstool," said Manners. "The chap won't come back."

"I considah—"

"Ass! He's a mile away by this time."

"I wefuse to be called an ass."

Tom Merry took out his watch.

"We'll give him another two minutes," he said.

"Vewy well."

The two minutes elapsed. There was no sign of the picture postcard merchant. He was probably at a considerable distance by that time.

Tom Merry slipped his watch back into his pocket.

"Come on!" he said.

"Bai Jove! I don't know whethah we ought to communicate with the authorities," said Arthur Augustus.

"Rot! You shouldn't have trusted a street postcard seller with gold. It was your own fault, and you've no right to have him locked up."

"I was not thinkin' of havin' him locked up, deah boy."

"Then what—"

"I was thinkin' that he has probably met with some accident in goin' to get change."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus cast a last look round. But there was no sign of the postcard merchant, and the chums went on their way, the swell of St. Jim's the poorer by nineteen

CHAPTER 5.

A Sudden Recognition.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS several times cast a puzzled look round him as he strolled down the Rue de Rivoli with his chums. The street was very busy, with endless omnibuses and other vehicles streaming east and west, and countless taxicabs buzzing along at an amazing speed. Something seemed to puzzle Arthur Augustus, and at last he ejaculated:

"Bai Jove!"

"What's the matter?" asked Tom Merry, looking round.

"The duffabs are all goin' the w'ong side of the road," explained Arthur Augustus. "I weally wondah the gendarmes don't keep the twaffic in bettah ordah."

"The traffic's all right."

"My deah chap, can't you see that simply nobody keeps to the left—"

"They keep to the right in France."

"Oh!" said D'Arcy.

And when he came to look at it again, he discerned that the endless confusion was only in appearance, caused by the rule of the road being opposite to that to which he was accustomed at home.

"Bai Jove!" said D'Arcy thoughtfully. "I am wathah glad I didn't bwing my jiggah affah all. This would take some gettin' used to."

They strolled down to the Place de la Concorde—once the Place de la Revolution, and the scene of guillotining in the old days of the Terror. Many times Tom Merry and Blake had to clutch D'Arcy almost from under a whizzing taxi. There were taxies to right of them, taxies to left of them. They seemed countless, and they were all going at a terrific speed, so that it became an exciting task to cross at most corners. Sometimes, as in London, a policeman would hold up the traffic while a crowd passed over; but there seemed little of this. Foot passengers had to take their chance, as a rule; the taxi drivers were monarchs of all they surveyed.

Arthur Augustus gave a jump as, stepping into the roadway, a taxi hooted and buzzed close by him and made him jump back again. The taxi was empty, but it was going at a speed as if the driver were engaged upon a matter of life and death. Arthur Augustus brandished his cane furiously at the driver.

"You uttah wottah!" he shouted. "I wish you would come within hittin' distance, you feahful ass! I should like to give you a feahful thwashin'!"

"My hat!" said Tom Merry. "He's coming!"

It was true!

The taxi driver had mistaken D'Arcy's furious gesture for a signal that he wanted the taxi, and he was whirling round and whizzing back to the spot where the swell of St. Jim's stood.

D'Arcy's eye gleamed behind his eyeglass.

"Bai Jove! So he is!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pway hold my cane, Tom Mewwy."

Tom Merry took the gold-headed cane.

"Will you hold my hat, Blake?"

"What for?"

"While I thwash that taxi dwivah."

"You utter ass—"

"I decline to be called an ass." D'Arcy pushed back his cuffs. "The wottah made me jump, and thwew me into quite a fluttah. I am goin' to give him a feahful thwashin'."

"Ass! You'd be collared by a gendarme—"

"I should uttably wefuse to be collared by a gendarme."

Hoot-toto-tott-tototoot!

The peculiar wail of the French motor-horn rang out, and the taxi whirred up to the pavement.

The driver grinned at the swell of St. Jim's

"M'sieur!"

"You wottah!"

"Ou?" asked the driver, apparently mistaking that word for the name of his intended destination, and not comprehending it.

"You uttah ass!"

"M'sieur!"

"You feahfully impertinent beast."

"Pardon, m'sieur—"

"You cheeky duffah—"

"Mais, je ne comprends pas."

"Bai Jove! You will comprehend a punch on the beast's nose, I think—"

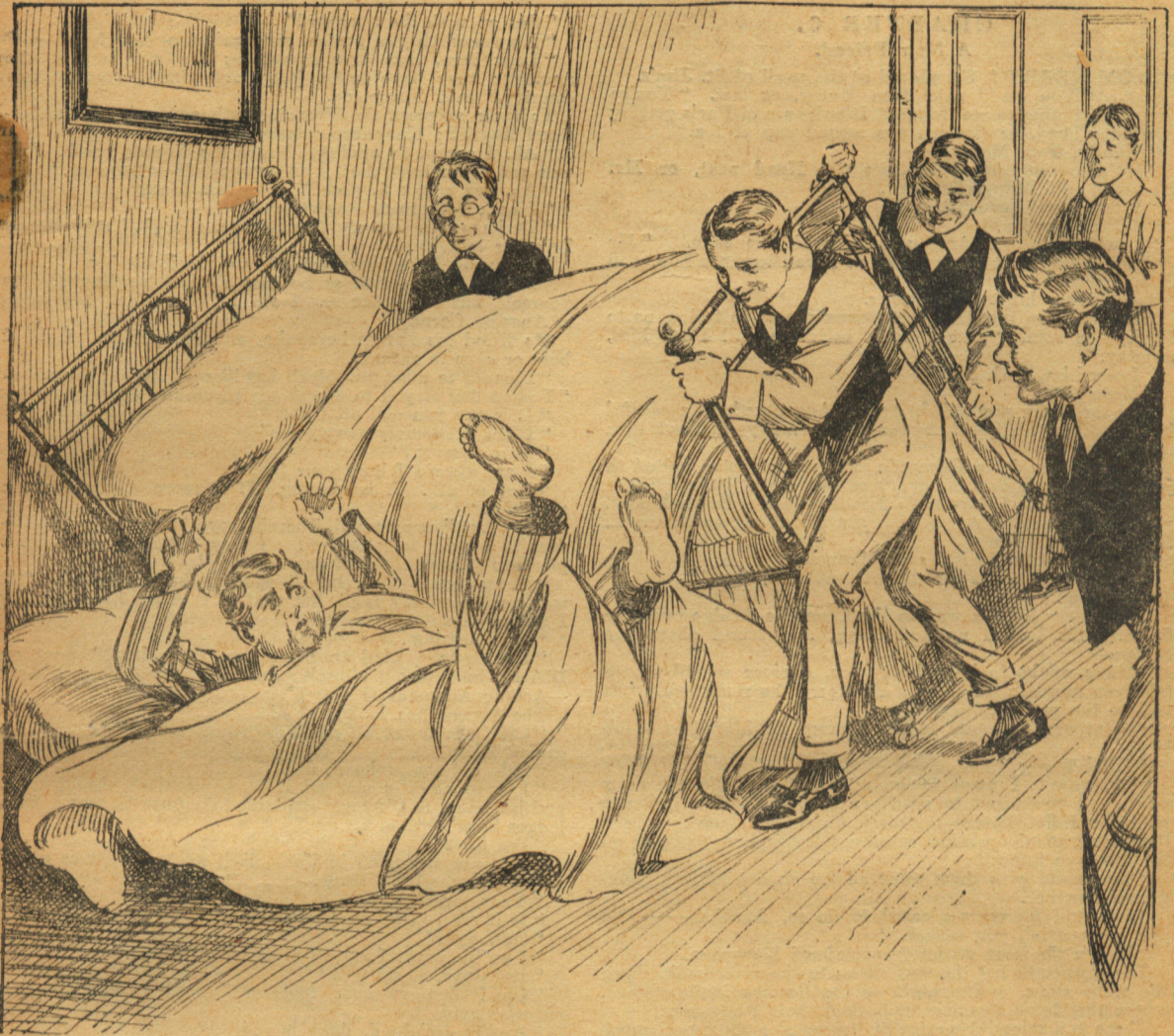
Tom Merry dragged the swell of St. Jim's back in time. Arthur Augustus wriggled in his grasp.

"Welease me, Tom Mewwy!"

"Rats!"

"I shall lose my tēmpah—"

"Go hon!"



Taking no notice of their fat chum's protests, the juniors tilted his bed up on one side and Fatty Wynn rolled out, bedclothes and all.

"I'm goin' to thwash this impertinent wottah—"

"Nothing of the sort; your mistake."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

Jack Blake chuckled. The taxicab driver had settled the matter by buzzing off. He hurled back a word at D'Arcy as he left.

Tom Merry released the swell of St. Jim's.

"Chase him!" exclaimed Monty Lowther. "Put on a spurt, Gussy, and you'll soon catch up the taxi."

"Yaas, wathah!"

And Arthur Augustus started to run.

It dawned upon him the next moment that Lowther was "rotting," and he turned back indignantly. The juniors roared. D'Arcy turned his eyeglass upon the joker of the Shell.

"Lowthah, I wogard you—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What was it that impertinent dwivah said as he went off, Tom Merry?"

"Better ask him."

"It was something like foo," said Digby. "I caught the word Anglais, and then there was the word foo."

"Fou!" grinned Blake. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"I see no cause for wibald laughtah. What was it the jan said?"

"Only that the Englishman was mad!" said Manners, nuckling.

"Bai Jove!"

"Better go and look for him," said Monty Lowther. "You'd find the taxi again, among all that lot—I don't think."

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Did we come out for a walk, or to watch Gussy quarrelling with cabdrivers?" asked Manners. "If Gussy wants to quarrel with cabdrivers, I think he ought to go into a cafe or a cabaret and do it quietly."

"Weally, Mannahs—"

"I recommended Blake to put a chain on him before he brought it out," said Kangaroo reproachfully.

"I should uttably wefuse—"

"Oh, come on!" said Tom Merry. "This way to the Eiffel Tower."

"Bai Jove!"

"What's the row now?"

"Wally!"

"What?"

"It's my young bwothah!"

"Rats!"

"Bai Jove! It's my minah!"

Arthur Augustus made a sudden rush into the crowd. The juniors rushed after him, but D'Arcy stopped in a minute or so, disappointed.

"He's gone!"

NEXT
URSDAY:

"THE TERRIBLE THREE'S XMAS PARTY."

THE GEM LIBRARY, No. 92.
An extra long tale of Tom Merry
& Co. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER 6.

A New Friend.

TOM MERRY & Co. glared at the swell of St. Jim's. "You ass!" said Tom Merry, at last. "You're beginning to see things! It's the air of Paris getting into your head, or else it's the second cup of tea."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"He'll be imagining he sees the Head next, or Mr. Railton," said Monty Lowther.

"I tell you it was Wally."

"Where was he?"

"Ovah there." D'Arcy pointed with his cane. "He dodged behind that stone pillah as I wan towards him, and disappeared."

Tom Merry knitted his brows.

"It would be just like that young rascal to follow us to Paris," he said. "But I won't believe it till I see him, anyway."

"I saw him, deah boy."

"More rats!"

And the party proceeded. Arthur Augustus kept a careful look-out, but Wally—if it was really Wally—did not turn up again.

In the Place de la Concorde, Arthur Augustus halted to jam his monocle into his eye, and look up at the obelisk.

"Awfully like Cleopatwa's Needle, on the Embankment, you know," said D'Arcy, with the air of a connoisseur in Egyptian monuments.

"It's the fellow to it," said Manners.

"Ah, that accounts for the wesemblance, then?"

"Go, hon!"

Tom Merry led the way to the Concorde Bridge over the Seine. He looked up and down, and round about the bridge.

"There ought to be a boat here, a river steambot, to take you down to the Champ de Mars," he remarked. "It will be fun going by river."

"What are we goin' to the Champ de Mars for, deah boy?"

"Eiffel Tower."

"Oh, yaas! I want to go up the Eiffel Towah vevy much. I pwomised to send my Cousin Ethel a postcard with the Eiffel Towah postmark on it, you know. I hear they are puttin' up some wireless telegraph appawatus on the top, you know."

"You could give them some advice on the subject," suggested Lowther.

"I should be vevy pleased to do so, Lowthah— Oh, you are wottin', you wottah!"

"Here's the boat station!" exclaimed Kangaroo.

The Cornstalk led the way down to the river-bank, down the stone steps, and straight to the floating landing-stage, where the Seine steamers embarked their passengers.

There is a splendid service of steamers on the Seine, much patronised by the Parisians, who make extensive use of the fine waterway Nature has provided for them free of charge. The landing-stage, bobbing up and down on the water, was crowded; and its motion reminded the juniors of the Channel passage as they came upon it.

"Bai Jove, it's wocky!"

"I'll hold you, Gussy!" said Lowther, reaching out.

D'Arcy backed away.

"You will do nothin' of the sort, Lowthah. I am assured that you are intendin' some beastly pwactical joke."

A howl from behind Arthur Augustus interrupted him.

In retreating from Lowther he had backed upon a French youth, and trodden upon his toe, bringing all his weight to bear upon it.

The French youth, a good-looking lad of about sixteen, doubled up with pain, and the howl he gave rang over the landing-stage.

Arthur Augustus whirled round.

"Bai Jove, I'm sowwy!"

"Ow!"

"I'm awfully sowwy, you know, m'sieur!"

"Yow!"

"Did I hurt you?"

"Ha, ha!" screamed Blake. "Did he hurt him? Doesn't the chap look as if he was hurt?"

"I apologise most pwofoundly—"

"Mon dieu!"

"Of all the asses—" said Lowther.

"It was your fault, Lowthah—your beastly pwactical jokes—"

"That's right, lay the blame on me!" said Monty Lowther resignedly. "You'll say it's my fault next that you've got that smear of paint on your sleeve."

D'Arcy glanced quickly down at his sleeve.

"By Jove, I—"

"Get on with the apology!"

"I wemebah you pushed me against a shop fwont—" "Look here, that chap's waiting for the rest of the apology; they have to be jolly long-winded ones in this country," said Kangaroo.

To their surprise the French youth grinned. He understood English; Kangaroo coloured.

"Ah, I accept ze apology!" said the French youth. "It was zat I am hurt, but it is no mattair—n'importe."

"Ah, you speak English?" said Tom Merry.

"I have been to ze Angleterre."

"Perhaps you are an Englishman, though," said Monty Lowther blandly.

The young Frenchman smiled and shook his head. "Ah, no! You zink so because I speak ze English like yourself, but zat is not so. I am a Frenchman. My name is Auguste Cernay."

He lifted his hat as he spoke, and the juniors all lifted hats or caps in return.

"Pleased to meet you, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus.

"I must beg of you to accept my pwofound apology—"

"It is vat you call all right."

"I am extwemely sowwy—"

"It is nozzing!"

"I am afwaid I hurt your foot."

"Not at all! It is nozzing. It is more a pleasiar zan ozzervise."

"My hat," murmured Tom Merry, "they carry politeness to a jolly long extent! Fancy telling a chap it's a pleasure to have his hoof on your toe!"

"Vevy good, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus. "It was weally not my fault, but that of that ass Lowthah, but I apologise all the same!"

"It iz nozzing!"

"I'm awfully glad to meet you, deah boy!" went on D'Arcy, introducing himself in turn. "My name is D'Arcy—Arthur Augustus D'Arcy!"

The French boy looked at him.

"Ciel! Is it zat all ze English are named D'Arcy?" he exclaimed.

"I do not comprehend, deah boy!"

"I have already met an English monsieur zis morning, and his name is D'Arcy," explained Auguste Cernay. "He lodges in ze pension viz me."

"Bai Jove!"

"You are strangers in Paris, is it not so—n'est ce pas?" said Cernay, with a smile.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Is it zat you go on ze steamer?"

"Oui, oui!"

"I go likewise; I get off at ze Eiffel Tower."

"Bai Jove, so do we!"

"Ciel! Zen ve goes togezzer!" said Cernay, with a cheerful grin.

"Awf'ly delighted, deah boy!"

Now, Uncle Frank had cautioned the juniors against picking up stray acquaintances, and they had promised to be very careful. But Auguste Cernay was evidently so genuine and frank and honest, that they could not have any doubts about him.

To pick up a French friend like this, too, was a piece of luck for the boys, who were without Kerr, their interpreter, and who had to admit that their own French, though it looked all right on the exercise papers at St. Jim's, was a little rocky when it came to talking to Frenchmen in France.

"That will be jolly," said Tom Merry.

"I show you ze place," said Cernay, with a wave of his plump hand—he was decidedly plump, like most French boys. "Ze tower—it is wonderful! Some say zat it is ze vat you call eyesore of Paris—but it is wonderful, all ze same."

The steamer came bumping along, and the crowd on the landing-stage boarded it, the juniors marching on with the rest.

There were seats on deck, and the St. Jim's party and their new friend sat down in a row. Arthur Augustus was looking thoughtful. Lowther gave him a friendly dig in the ribs and asked him what he was mooning about.

Arthur Augustus gasped.

"Pwaw don't be such a wuff beast, Lowthah! You have thwown me into quite a fluttah. I was not moonin', either. I was thinkin' of what our young fwient Cernay was wemarkin'."

Cernay was a good year older than Arthur Augustus; but that was D'Arcy's way.

"What was he remarking, then?" asked Lowther.

"About another chap named D'Arcy."

"Heaps of French chaps named D'Arcy, I shou'd think," said Lowther. "As a matter of fact, you're a beastly zed Gussy!"

"I wefuse to be called an alien!"

"You have to admit that your name was made abroad," said Lowther argumentatively.

"My ancestahs came ovah with the Conquewah," said D'Arcy, with dignity. "I pwesume they bwrought their name with them. They licked your ancestahs at the battle of Hastings."

"Well, they've been in England a long time, but that makes no difference. They were a lot of blessed aliens," said Lowther obstinately. "As a matter of absolute fact, William the Conqueror and his whole gang were a lot of blessed aliens, who come over to England for what they could get!"

"I cannot allow you to speak diswespactly of my ancestahs, Lowthah!"

"Rats!"

"I should be sowwy to make a genewal disturbance by thwashin' you now—"

"You would be sorry if you started!" chuckled Lowther. "But you haven't told me whence that thoughtful frown yet."

"Oh! You see, Cernay says it's an English chap named D'Arcy."

"Yes, so he did."

"Well, it occurred to me that it might be that young wascal Wally. I know he's in Pawis, you know."

"No fear!"

"I am quite sure of it, deah boy. I shall twy to find out fwom Cernay if it is my minah. He had no wight to come to Pawis, but if he is here, it is my duty to look aftah the young wepwobate."

And D'Arcy, feeling the troubles of a family man heavy upon him, looked quite serious.

Lowther chuckled.

Meanwhile, Auguste Cernay was chatting away nineteen to the dozen, pointing out to the juniors of St. Jim's and describing the various places of interest on the banks between which the Seine steamboat was gliding.

CHAPTER 7.

On the Seine.

AUGUSTE CERNAY proved an invaluable acquisition for the juniors of St. Jim's. It seemed that he was in Paris himself on a holiday, and was going round to see some of the sights when he fell in with Tom Merry & Co. Nothing, as he explained to Tom Merry, could have been more fortunate. He was himself, ciel, very fond of company, and was desolated at having to go round alone, and at the same time he was glad of an opportunity of doing the honours of Paris for the English visitors. He had himself in London been treated with much politeness by the people there, and he was glad of an opportunity to repay the obligation. To all of which Tom Merry replied with somewhat "rocky" French that he was equally enchanted to make the esteemed acquaintance of Monsieur Cernay, and that he, too, regarded the accidental meeting at the Pont de la Concorde as an unimagined stroke of luck.

Cernay was all smiles, evidently happy to do the honours of Paris. He was equally evidently convinced that Paris was the greatest and finest city in the world, and, indeed, the capital of the Universe, as the Parisians sometimes claim.

The juniors were privately of opinion that Paris was very clean and bright, but not quite up to old London in many respects; and Kangaroo hinted that Melbourne could knock spots off it in some ways. But they did not say so to Auguste. He had the simple, childlike faith of a Frenchman in his native land; it did not even occur to him that anybody could differ; and Tom Merry would not have told him that Paris was not the finest city in the world, any more than he would have told a child that his rocking-horse was not the finest rocking-horse in the world.

The steamboat glided along by the Quai D'Orsay, and the eyes of the juniors were turned towards the curious yet graceful structure of the Eiffel Tower in the distance.

That network of interlaced iron was certainly curious, and Cernay was proud of it in one way, if not in another.

"It does not improve ze landscape," he remarked, with a Gallic shrug of the shoulders. "Zat is so. But it is big—were vill you see vun biggair—eh?"

"Nowhere," agreed Tom Merry.

"Zen ze view from ze top—superb!"

"Yes, it must be."

"Zen zey are going to use ze summit for ze wireless telegraphy, so zat it vill not be always ze useless ting."

"Good!"

The official came along for the fares, and Tom Merry & Co. discovered that they could go any distance on the river as far as the steamboat went—for the small sum of fifteen

centimes—nearly three-halfpence—that fare being doubled on Saturdays and holidays—Dimanches and fetes, as the notices at the stations had it.

The juniors received metal discs in exchange for their fares, which they had to give up on landing.

The motion of the steamboat was easy and pleasant, and the trip gave the juniors a good view of the Seine and its traffic.

Although nothing like the Thames for size or for traffic, it was a big and busy river, and a curious and interesting sight.

Auguste Cernay looked up at the tower, and looked at side station for the Champs de Mars, and the juniors followed him upon the landing-stage, where they gave up their metal discs.

They ascended the steps from the river bank, and the great tower loomed up over their heads, soaring into the clouds.

Auguste jammed his eyeglass into his eye, and took a survey of it from the Pont d'Iena.

"Bai Jove!" he remarked. "It's awfully big, you know. I should say that it was much biggah than the Monument in London, you know."

"Ass!"

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"It's nearly five times as high as the Monument."

"Well, I said it was biggah, didn't I?"

Lowther snorted.

Tom Merry looked at his watch, and looked round for Figgins. They had agreed to meet Figgins & Co. at the Eiffel Tower, but it was early yet.

Auguste Cernay rose when the boat stopped at the river-his companions.

"Zat you ascend?" he asked.

"Yaas, watah!"

"I have been up before, but I love to go again. Zis way."

The juniors entered the pillar at the south-western corner, at which a notice said that the lift was working. They took a ticket each, paying three francs each for the same, which Lowther remarked was a jolly lot for going up a beastly tower. He asked the lady in the bureau whether she could not make a reduction for quantities; but as the lady understood no English, she only smiled.

"Where's the beastly lift?" asked Arthur Augustus, turning his eyeglass round.

"Zis way."

"Merci!" said D'Arcy, who was gradually dropping into the French "Thank you," and stopping his "Thank you vewy much."

They walked into the little waiting-room adjoining the lift shaft, D'Arcy taking the room for the lift, as visitors to the tower will do sometimes. He sat down on one of the seats, and waited for it to move.

Several minutes elapsed, and Arthur Augustus looked round him with a puzzled air.

"We are not goin' up," he remarked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Did you expect the whole tower to go up?"

"I natuwallly expected the lift to wise," said D'Arcy, with dignity. "I believe that is what lifts are supposed to do."

"This is the waiting-room, ass."

"I wefuse to be called an ass."

There was a whirring and a creaking, and the lift came down. The door was opened, and the passengers crowded into the lift. There were a dozen more beside the juniors from St. Jim's.

"Bai Jove, we're off at last!" said D'Arcy, as the attendant clanged the gates shut.

"Yes, rather!"

"Bai Jove!"

"It's all right; there's no danger."

"I did not think there was any dangah, Digby. I have left my cane on the seat in the beastly waitin'-room."

"Go hon!"

"Well, you won't see it again, that's one comfort," remarked Lowther. "You've nearly poked my eye out with it several times."

D'Arcy tapped the lift-man on the shoulder.

"Pway stop, deah boy!"

CHAPTER 8.

The Eiffel Tower.

THE lift-man stared at D'Arcy. The lift went on. The swell of St. Jim's pointed downward excitedly.

"Pway stop! I have forgotten my cane."

"M'sieur!"

"Go down again."

"Je ne comprends pas."

"Descend, you duffah—descendez!"

The man grinned.
 "You ass!" said Tom Merry. "Do you think he's going to descend for your beastly cane? Wait till the lift goes down again."

"Impossible."
 "Hallo! Here we are."
 "Premier etage," said the attendant.

The lift stopped.
 "First stage, mes amis," said Cernay.
 "Good!"

The juniors poured out from the first platform of the tower. Arthur Augustus stopped with one foot in and one foot out, to argue with the lift-man.

"I must weally have my cane, you know."

"M'sieur!"
 "Are you goin' down now?"

The man pointed upwards.
 Another attendant gently shoved D'Arcy off the lift floor, and the gates closed, and the grinning liftman disappeared upward.

"Bai Jove!"
 "The lift will be down again presently," remarked Kangaroo consolingly, "then you can go down and look for your cane."

"It may be taken by somebody by mistake."

"Yes, I shouldn't wonder."

"Is there anothah lift, Tom Mewwy?"

"Yes."

"Good! Where?"

"In the south-eastern pillar of the tower—yonder."

D'Arcy frowned majestically. The Eiffel Tower lifts are in the legs of the tower, or pillars, of which there are four, at a considerable distance from one another. To use another lift D'Arcy had first to descend to the ground, and then walk across to the opposite extremity of the tower.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy, I wish you would be sewious about a sewious mattah," he said. "My cane may be lost."

"You shouldn't forget it," said Digby.

"I did not forget it on purpose, Dig."

"Well, go down the steps for it," suggested Manners.
 "You can do that without waiting for the lift. There is a staircase here."

"Bai Jove, you know, I nevah thought of that!"

And Arthur Augustus made for the staircase, and disappeared, and the juniors strolled round the extensive platform of the "premier etage" of the Eiffel Tower.

The gigantic structure seemed still more gigantic when they were upon it. It was quite a walk round the first story.

"Hallo, there's a restaurant here!" remarked Lowther.
 "Lucky Fatty isn't here yet, or there would be a jolly long halt for refreshments."

"Ha, ha!"

"Zis is vere you buy ze presents for ze enfants at home," said Auguste Cernay. "Zey are all dear—tres cher—but what would you have? You buy ze picture carte also, ici, and you post him in ze lettair-box—ze boite. Zen you have ze Eiffel Tower postmark on ze lettair."

"Good!"

The juniors all bought picture postcards, and stamps too—timbres—and posted them in the "boite."

They strolled round the platform, looking at the various stalls, and resisting with difficulty the pressing invitations to purchase; and they wondered where Arthur Augustus was all the time.

He reappeared at last.

There was a gasp, and he emerged from the staircase, and sank into a seat. They gave him a grin for welcome.

He was breathing hard, and the perspiration was thick upon his aristocratic brow.

"Tired?" asked Tom Merry sympathetically.

The swell of St. Jim's sniffed.

"Bai Jove, I am uttahly exhausted! I did not weally believe there were so many steps in the world, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It is no laughin' mattah. I am exhausted, and have been thwown into quite a fluttah. It was decidedly wotten."

"Did you find the cane?"

"Yaas; an attendant was mindin' it, and I gave him a couple of fwancs."

"Well, somebody's benefited, so it's all right."

"It's not all right, Lowthah. Goin' down wasn't so bad, but comin' up the stairs again was simply feahful."

"Why did you come up the stairs?" asked Tom Merry.
 "You could have waited till the lift was coming up again."

"Bai Jove, you know, I nevah thought of that!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, deah boys—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Never mind," said Tom Merry. "Come and have some ginger-beer, and you'll feel all right."

Arthur Augustus rose.

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NEXT THURSDAY:

GRAND CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER.

"That is weally not a bad ideah, deah boy."

"Where's the buffet, Cernay?"

"Zis way."

They gathered round a buffet. A smiling attendant shook his head and waved his hands at the mention of ginger beer. He evidently didn't know what it was, even after D'Arcy had put it in French—D'Arcy's French—as "la biere de jinjaire." Even then, strange to state, the man was at a loss. Cernay came to the rescue.

"He have no beer of ginger," he said. "Zere is lemonade, and zere is orangeade, and zere is beer and wine."

"Well, we'll bar the beer and wine," said Tom Merry.
 "Orangeade sounds all right."

"Yaas, wathah!"

The attendant mixed glasses of orangeade, and they sucked the refreshing liquor through straws, and pronounced themselves much better.

Then they walked round the platform again, and Arthur Augustus stopped at nearly every stall to purchase.

Most of the stalls were attended by women, and Arthur Augustus did not think it polite to pass on without answering them when they spoke; and having stopped to speak, what could he do but purchase something?

In five minutes he had two large models of the Eiffel Tower under his arm, three cardboard boxes tied with ribands in his left hand, and a couple of parcels in his right.

He gave Lowther his cane to carry, and would have given the others some of the parcels, but they declined with thanks.

"What the dickens are you buyin' the blessed things for?" Tom Merry asked.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy, I suppose a chap must be polite."

"Well, if you're going to keep on being polite to this extent, you'd better hire a porter, or a pantechnicon van."

Arthur Augustus sniffed. His purchases grew and grew, until when they stopped at the lift again, to go up to the second storey, he was weary and heavy-laden.

After some reflection, he left all his purchases upon a seat, and went into the lift without them. Cernay tapped his arm.

"It is good—verry good of you to trust ze honesty of ze French people so mooch," he said; "but zere are—vat you call?—rokes—"

"Eh? Oh, wogues, you mean?"

"Oui, oui, oui! Zere are rokes everyvere, and ze zings may be stolen."

"Good! I wathah hope they will be, you know."

"You pay ze money for zem," said Cernay, looking puzzled.

"Yaas, wathah; and I'd pay anothah five fwancs for somebody to steal them."

Cernay shook his head. He did not understand, but the things were left where D'Arcy had placed them. D'Arcy was only too anxious to get rid of the lumber. They ascended to the second stage, and found it a smaller edition of the first. The view from the railing round it was splendid. It was a clear day, and they could see Paris stretched out below them.

Cernay clasped his hands ecstatically.

"Is it not grand? Magnifique—n'est ce pas?" he cried.

And the juniors agreed that it was.

CHAPTER 9.

Fatty Wynn is Pleased with the Eiffel Tower.

"LOOKS like a blessed toy city, doesn't it?" murmured Lowther, out of hearing of the enthusiastic Cernay.

"You could put three or four of these into London, and never notice they were there."

"Ha, ha!"

"Well, size isn't everythin'," remarked D'Arcy. "The place is vevy clean, though it isn't vevy large. It's wathah hard to believe that those gardens down there are weal. They look like stage carpets. I wathah think that the French are a little too neat sometimes."

"Ciel! Is it not grand?"

"Ripping!"

"Yaas, wathah."

"But it will be plus grand—much more grander—from ze top," said Cernay.

"We'll go on, if Gussy doesn't want to buy up all the curiosity shops," remarked Manners.

"Weally, Mannahs—"

"Oh, go it—blow another fifty fwancs!"

"I am wunnin' short of fwancs, as a mattah of fact."

"I should say so."

But although D'Arcy was running short of fwancs, he managed to make a good many purchases, being unable to resist the winning smiles and the wheedling voices of the French saleswomen.

He had a dozen cardboard boxes and parcels by the time



"Une lettre, m'nsieur!" The swell of St. Jim's sat up in bed and took the letter from the voluble gargon. "Bai Jove!" he grumbled, "a beastly lettah for me!"

the juniors were ready to ascend to the third and last stage of the great tower.

He took them up with him this time, greatly bothered to know what to do with them.

It was a different lift that carried the juniors to the top. On the top platform—troisieme etage—the view was magnificent.

Paris was rolled like a panorama round them—the great city and the distant suburbs—the view stretching from one end of the city to the other—from Bercy to the Bois de Boulogne—from St. Ouen to Mount Parnasse.

And everything was so clean, and neat, and tidy, that the juniors had a curious feeling that they were looking upon a toy model of a city.

"Ripping!" said Tom Merry.

"Magnifique."

"Yaas, wathah!"

Monty Lowther looked at his watch.

"Time for some grub, you chaps. We can't go any higher unless we go by aeroplane. Hallo, who's that coming out of the lift?"

"I'd know those legs among a thousand," said Manners.

"Figgy!"

Figgins and Kerr stepped out of the lift. The fat Fourth-

ormer of St. Jim's was not to be seen."

"Hallo, Figgy."

"Oh, you're here!" said Figgins.

"Yes. Where is Fatty?"

Figgins chuckled.

"He insisted upon stopping on the first stage. There's a restaurant there, and he said he was hungry."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Figgins, deah boy, allow me to pwsent you to a new fwiend, Monsieur Auguste Cernay. Monsieur, this is Figgy—I mean Figgins—"

"It is viz great plaisir zat I meet ze respected Figgins," said Auguste Cernay, shaking Figgins's big hand, which Figgy held out to him, and then embracing Figgins, somewhat to his alarm.

"Tres glad to meetay you," said Figgins, in mingled English and French. "It is a bien honour to makey your acquaintance."

"Bai Jove! I—"

"Here, Kerr, pitch it to him in French!"

"What-ho!" said Kerr.

And Kerr pitched it to him, as Figgins expressed it, in French, gabbling away at a rate that Auguste Cernay could not outdo. Cernay gabbled away at the same time, waving his hands as well, and so getting in a little extra, as it were. What it was all about the other fellows had only a faint

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NEXT
THURSDAY:

"THE TERRIBLE THREE'S XMAS PARTY."

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idea; but Kerr and Cernay appeared to be mutually satisfied when the performance was over.

"Bai Jove!" Arthur Augustus murmured to Tom Merry. "Don't you weally think there ought to be a speed limit in jabbewin' Fwench?"

And Tom Merry laughingly agreed. "I say, it's no good our waiting up here for Fatty," said Kangaroo. "He won't leave the restaurant till there's a famine there. Let's get."

"Right you are." So they descended to the second platform, and then the premier etage, and there, in the restaurant, they found Fatty Wynn.

Fatty was sitting at a table all to himself, and the table, as a novelist would put it, groaned under the goodly viands.

There was a happy smile upon the face of Fatty Wynn. He had had a late breakfast, and he was having an early lunch; but he appeared to have an excellent appetite, to judge by the way he was wiring in.

He looked up with a smile at the juniors. "Hungry?" he asked.

"Well, getting peckish," said Blake. "Is there anything left for us?"

"Heaps," said Fatty Wynn; "I haven't had much so far—only cold chicken, and what they call rosbif and some potatoes saute, and cauliflower, and an escalope de veau—they call it that, but it's jolly good veal in English—and some—"

"My hat! Where have you stacked it?"

"Look here, Lowther—"

"Pway allow me to pwsent you to a new fwind, Fatty."

"Just a minute, Gussy."

Even courtesy could not make Fatty leave his plate till it was cleared. Then, while it was being changed by the waiter he rose, and was introduced to Auguste Cernay. Cernay looked at him with great interest. He had never seen a human being put such a dejeuner out of sight before.

The juniors sat down and lunched.

Auguste Cernay was the guest of the party, and he accepted the hospitality of the English party with much grace.

Although Fatty had had such a good start, he was not finished before the others, and when he was finished, he showed a strong indisposition to move.

"You haven't been to the top of the tower yet, Fatty," said Figgins.

Fatty mumbled something.

"I suppose you want to go to the top. You want to be able to tell the fellows in the New House at St. Jim's that you've done it."

"Ye-e-e-es."

"It's not a question of walking, you know—you can go up in the lifts."

"Ye-e-e-es."

"Bai Jove! You ought to go, Fatty."

"Yes, yes; but, you see, you fellows can tell me all about it instead," said Fatty. "I'd rather not make any exertion just now."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, it's time we were moving," said Tom Merry.

"Oh, I say, not just yet!"

"Rats! You don't want to spend the rest of your life on the premier etage of the blessed Eiffel Tower, do you?" said Manners.

"I don't feel quite up to walking."

"You should have eaten only enough for six, then."

"Look here, Manners—"

"Rats!"

"Bai Jove, we ought to be movin'," said Arthur Augustus. "I was goin' to show you fellows the Bastille, you know."

"It's at the other end of the city—what there is of it," said Tom Merry. "Better have a look round this end first. The Trocadero, and the Champs Elysees. This is the aristocratic quarter, Gussy, and it will suit you better."

"Yaas, pewwaps there is somethin' in that."

"If you don't mind, I'll stay here a bit," said Fatty Wynn. "The view is splendid, you know."

From where he sat Fatty Wynn had a view of several people lurching at the tables, and of nothing else. But, perhaps he considered that view splendid.

"Stuff!" said Figgins.

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Get up!"

"I'm fatigued."

"Well, come and walk it off, then."

"Now, look here, Figgins—"

"Take his other arm, Kerr."

"Certainly."

"Oh! Shut up! Chuck it! Look here—"

Fatty Wynn's chums took no notice of his remonstrance. They jerked him from his seat, and marched him out of the

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restaurant grumbling. Tom Merry, who was in charge of the funds of the party, settled with the waiter, and the whole party followed.

They descended to the ground, and left the Eiffel Tower. There was a thoughtful expression upon Fatty Wynn's face now. He stopped, and looked back at the tower, and nodded his head.

"It's a ripping place," he said.

Auguste Cernay beamed upon him.

"Ah! You admire ze tower!" he exclaimed. "You zink it is ripping?"

Fatty Wynn nodded emphatically.

"Yes, rather. Compare it with the Tower of London, for instance—"

"What!" ejaculated Blake, forgetting Cernay for the moment. "Compare that lump of jagged iron with the Tower of London! Are you off your rocker?"

"I mean what I say," said Fatty Wynn obstinately. "The Tower of London is historical, and romantic, and all that—but a chap gets jolly hungry while he's going over it, I jolly well know that. Now, this place has a ripping restaurant—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can depend on getting a feed here, if you can pay for it—"

"Oh, my only aunt!" said Tom Merry. "Fatty's judging the building by the feed you can get in it. It beats Westminster Abbey on those lines."

"Well, if a chap's hungry—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Fatty Wynn was marched off, Figgins and Kerr keeping hold of his arms and keeping him going at a good rate in spite of his protests. And a stroll along the river led the party to the Avenue d'Antin, along which they walked to the Rond Point of the Champs Elysees.

CHAPTER 10.

D'Arcy Minor.

THE juniors spent some pleasant hours in exploring the West End of Paris, their new friend proving a great acquisition in guiding and explaining. They walked right up the Champs Elysees as far as the Place de l'Etoile, where the great avenues branch off in every direction. At the Avenue de Bois de Boulogne they packed themselves into three taxi cabs, and had a drive in the Bois—and a pleasant drive it was, and they were greatly delighted with the wood. And they had the advantage of learning that they had to pay big supplements on the cab fares for going beyond the city borders in a cab—a lesson which Tom Merry determined should make him more careful in the future. They walked back to the Place de l'Etoile, Fatty Wynn declaring all the time that he was on the point of dropping down in an expiring state.

"Lesson not to over-eat," said Kangaroo.

Fatty Wynn looked indignant.

"It isn't that!" he exclaimed with emphasis.

"What is it, then?"

"I'm getting hungry!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here—"

"We'll have tea somewhere presently," said Tom Merry.

"We ought to turn up in the Rue de Rivoli soon. We don't want to go back the way we came, though."

"Our fwind Cernay will diwect us on a new woute."

Cernay reflected for a moment.

"Certainement. Follow me."

"I'm hungry."

"All right, Fatty—I'll buy you a bun as we go along."

Fatty Wynn grunted.

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They turned out of the Place de l'Etoile and walked down the Avenue Macmahon towards the Avenue Des Ternes. More than once they turned their heads to look back at the huge Arc de Triomphe soaring high in the great Place.

Tom Merry had proposed ascending it, but on hearing that there was no lift the juniors had looked very doubtful.

After the walking they had done, they did not feel much inclined for mounting the endless steps to the top of that great monument of Napoleon's victories.

They turned their backs on it, therefore, and walked on to the Avenue des Ternes, where Cernay told them a horse 'bus would take them back to the Rue de Rivoli by a new route.

The 'buses seemed few and far between. As the juniors stood waiting at a corner, Fatty Wynn uttered a sudden exclamation.

"Look there!"

"Bai Jove! Is it Wally?" asked Arthur Augustus, who was thinking of his minor at that moment.

Fatty sniffed.

"No, it isn't! There's a restaurant there!"

"Oh, rats!"

"I was thinking we might have some tea."

"Bosh!"

"I'm hungry."

"Yes, you must be!"

"Voici," exclaimed Cernay, "le voiture!"

"Here's the 'bus, Fatty!"

The omnibus, drawn by three horses abreast, lumbered up, and the juniors boarded it. They mounted to the top—it was preferable to ride in the fresh air, and Tom Merry had already discovered that double-fare was charged for the inside.

There was nearly room on top of the 'bus, only one of the juniors having to stand. Fatty Wynn was the last up, being slowest in his movements, and he found no seat left for him.

Auguste Cernay jumped up at once.

"Zat you take my seat, my friend!"

But a Welshman could be as polite as a Frenchman.

"Not at all, dear boy," said Fatty Wynn.

"Ciel! I insist!"

"Not a bit of it."

"I beg you—"

"Oh, no!"

"I beseech—"

But Fatty Wynn shook his head.

"Better for Fatty to stand," said Blake. "If the conductor objects to anybody standing, you don't understand French, Fatty, you know!"

Fatty Wynn chuckled.

"Trust me!"

The omnibus rolled and rumbled on through the streets of the Faubourg St. Honore. The conductor mounted to the roof and began to collect the fares, without giving any tickets in exchange.

He stopped when he came to Fatty Wynn, and began to talk and gesticulate.

Fatty Wynn shook his head.

"No speak French," he said.

Jabber, jabber again, and waving of hands.

"You speak English?" asked Fatty calmly.

"Non, non!" shrieked the conductor, who had evidently been asked that question before, and knew what it meant.

"Mais, vous descendrez?"

"No, I can't sing a song here!"

"M'sieur, vous—vous—"

"Eh?"

The Frenchman shrieked.

Fatty Wynn shook his head slowly from side to side.

Tom Merry, remembering that "pourboire" was the open sesame in France, slipped a half-franc into the conductor's hand.

The man looked at it, and looked at Tom Merry, and looked at Fatty Wynn, and then descended the steps.

"You're all right, Fatty!" said Tom, laughing.

"Am I?" said Fatty. "My legs are beginning to ache!"

One of you School-House chaps ought to stand. No, Cernay, won't take your seat—I'll take yours, Lowther."

"The mistake," said Monty Lowther blandly; "you

excuse take yours, Gussy."

"The leader of the party," said Figgins solemnly. "Gussy

sa to consider Fatty as his guest, and treat him accord-

ly."

"Bai Jove, you're wight, Figgay! Pway take my seat,

Fattay!"

Fatty Wynn grinned and settled down into Arthur

Augustus's seat. The swell of St. Jim's stood up, holding on

to the rail with one hand, and holding his topper on with the

other—for there was a breeze in the narrow street, and the

'bus rocked violently over the road, as French 'buses always

do.

From his coign of vantage, as it were, D'Arcy had a good view, and he gave a sudden jump, and nearly let go his silk hat, as he caught sight of a figure standing at the corner of the Rue du Faubourg St. Honore and the Rue Royale.

"Wally! Bai Jove!"

Tom Merry looked quickly.

"My hat! You're right!"

There he was—D'Arcy minor of the Third Form at St. Jim's, with a cap on the back of his head and a cheeky smile on his face as usual. He had caught sight of his major on the top of the 'bus, and he grinned at him.

Then he saluted D'Arcy in a way that could hardly be considered as properly respectful in a younger brother. He placed his thumb to his nose and extended all the fingers of his hand, at the same time closing his left eye.

Arthur Augustus simply gasped.

"Wally! You young wascal! Stop the 'bus, Tom Mewwy, and I'll—"

"Ha, ha! He's gone!"

The 'bus rolled on, and Wally disappeared in the crowd.

CHAPTER 11.

Arthur Augustus, Knight-Errant.

"BAI Jove!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, with a deep breath. "I twust you will cwedit now my statement that Wally is in Pawis, deah boys!"

"Seeing's believing," said Manners.

"Well, Tom Mewwy has seen him."

"Fact," said Tom Merry. "It was Wally right enough."

"My hat! The cheeky young bounder! He must have bolted from St. Jim's!"

"Yaas, watahah! He said he would come, and a D'Arcy always keeps his word!" said Arthur Augustus. "The Head will give him a feahful lickin' when he goes back!"

"Serve him right, too!"

"Yaas, I agree with you there, but now that he is in Pawis it is my duty to look aftah him," said Arthur Augustus. "I will descend here. You fellows need not come."

"But—"

Without waiting to argue the point, Arthur Augustus scuttled down the steps and jumped off the 'bus while it was still going. He staggered, and went down on his hands and knees, and his silk hat rolled off. He had a miraculous escape from being run over by five or six taxies at once, but a friendly hand helped him to the pavement, and another rescued his topper.

Arthur Augustus distributed a handful of small silver and coppers among the newsboys who had rescued him, and rushed off in search of Wally.

The chums on top of the receding 'bus had watched him breathlessly, and as soon as they saw he was safe Tom Merry jumped up.

"Where are you going?" asked Lowther.

"After Gussy! He'll never find Wally, but he'll get into some bother if he goes alone."

"Let him!"

"Rats! I'm going to look for him! Cernay, old fellow, I'll see you again at our hotel—you'll come to dinner?"

"Viz pleasure, my friend Merry."

"You'll look after Cernay, Blake?"

"Right you are!"

Tom Merry ran down the steps. Monty Lowther and Manners ran after him. Wherever the Terrible Three went, they always went together. The 'bus rolled on past the great church of the Madeleine without the Terrible Three.

A silk hat bobbing among the crowd guided Tom Merry and his chums, and in a few minutes they ran down the swell of St. Jim's.

Tom Merry clapped a hand on his shoulder.

"Bai Jove! Is that you, Tom Mewwy?"

"Yes, ass."

"I wufuse to be called an ass! You were quite safe on the 'bus!" said D'Arcy. "Howevah, pewwaps you are wight to stick to me! I am goin' to look for Wally."

"Do you think you will find him, duffer?" asked Lowther.

"I decline to be called a duffah, Lowthah! He was standin' at that cornah!"

"He's not standing there now," said Manners.

"Bai Jove! No, he's gone."

They halted at the corner, where the Faubourg St. Honore street meets the Rue Royale. D'Arcy minor certainly was not in sight. The Third-Former of St. Jim's had probably seen his major descend from the 'bus, and had made himself scarce in consequence.

"Bettah look for him, deah boys."

"Oh, go ahead! You're as likely to find him as a needle in a bundle of hay, but go ahead if you like," said Tom Merry resignedly.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Buck up!"

They hunted up one street and down another. But

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NEXT

"THE TERRIBLE THREE'S XMAS PARTY."

THURSDAY:

D'Arcy minor was not to be found. The early dusk was falling now, and Monty Lowther suggested getting back to the Rue de Rivoli.

"Yaas, I suppose it is no good hangin' about," said Arthur Augustus. "I am vewy anxious about Wally, though."

"Wally can look after himself, you know."

"Yaas, but—"

"As a matter of fact, Gussy, not to put too fine a point on it, Wally is more able to look after himself than you are."

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"This way," said Tom Merry. "I'm beginning to feel like Fatty Wynn, that a good dinner is the proper caper."

"We will keep a good look-out for Wally as we go home."

"Oh, all right!"

The four juniors walked down the Rue Royale, and turned round by the Ministry of Marine, into the Rue de Rivoli.

Arthur Augustus insisted upon keeping a keen look-out for Wally; and his look-out consisted in peering into every possible and impossible corner for the elusive Third-Former of St. Jim's.

The buildings they were passing, like most buildings in that quarter of Paris, had arched ways opening into inner courtyards, and D'Arcy stopped at every entrance, and peeped into the interior, where the doors being open gave him a chance.

He surprised several concierges by turning his eyeglass upon them, and peeping past them into the hidden courts behind.

He was about to step in and explore one, when Tom Merry seized him and dragged him out again.

"Pway welease me, deah boy, I think I saw somebody there."

"You ass!"

"I wefuse—"

"Come on!"

"But I saw somebody—"

"Well, I suppose somebody lives in the house, duffer."

"I decline to be chawacterised as a duffah. I distinctly saw somebody, and vewy likely it was Wally. I caught only a glimpse."

"I tell you—"

Arthur Augustus tore himself away, and dashed into the courtyard. He nearly ran into a stout old lady, who looked at him in surprised inquiry.

The swell of St. Jim's got out of the courtyard more quickly than he got in.

"Well, was it Wally?" demanded Manners.

"Wathah not?"

"Then come on, and don't play the giddy goat!"

"Pway wait a minute, deah boys."

A fat Frenchman, evidently a concierge, had stepped out, and he gave Arthur Augustus a deep bow, which the swell of St. Jim's returned.

"Hold on, deah boys, pewwaps this chap has somethin' to tell us."

"Rais! He wants to let you a room, perhaps."

"Pway shut up a minute, Lowthah!"

"Oh, go and eat coke! I want my blessed dinner."

"Ordah, a minute! Pway pwoceed, monsieur—I mean, talkez-vous—no, that isn't wight—ditez-moi. Is that bettah?"

The man outspread his hands and jabbered.

"He's talking about somebody named Louie," said D'Arcy, who had caught the word "touer" among the torrent of words from the Frenchman. "No, deah boy, I don't know any lady of that name in Pawis."

The Frenchman jabbered again.

"He's still talkin' about Louie," said D'Arcy, looking very puzzled. "I weally do not undahstand. What are you gwinnin' at, Tom Mewwy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I see no cause for laughter. Pway wepeat all that fwom the beginnin', m'sieur."

The concierge jabbered away. The words "chambre a louer" were distinguishable among the rest, but unfortunately Arthur Augustus did not catch on to their meaning.

"He's talkin' about a lady named Louie," he said. "He says it's a shame—or a sham, I can't quite make out which."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pway don't cackle, deah boy. It seems to me as if Louie is bein' badly tweated, and he thinks it a shame."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If Mademoiselle Louie is bein' badly tweated, Tom Mewwy, I wegard it as our duty to go to her wescue."

Tom Merry leaned against the wall and yelled. The concierge was pointing to the house entrance, somewhat excitedly. Apparently he was trying to explain by gestures what his words failed to convey.

"He wants us to go in, Tom Mewwy."

"Ha, ha! I darsay he does."

"I am goin' in."

"Right-ho! We'll wait."

D'Arcy turned his eyeglass reprovingly on the Terrible Three, who were chuckling away for all they were worth. The swell of St. Jim's thought their merriment most ill-timed, when there was a lady in danger who was to be rescued.

"Weally, deah boys—"

"Oh, go in—we'll wait!"

"It is quite poss, that there may be dangah. I do not shwink fwom dangah, but I weally expect you chaps to back me up."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wegard your laughtah as fwivolous, on such an occasion—"

"If there's danger, yell to us, and we'll come," said Lowther.

"Oh, vewy well!"

And Arthur Augustus followed the concierge into the house. The Terrible Three roeked with laughter as they waited for him to reappear.

CHAPTER 12.

Arthur Augustus to the Rescue.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS followed the concierge, and was shown into an entrance hall, and then to a staircase. The concierge pointed upward.

D'Arcy looked at the staircase, and then at the concierge.

There might be a lady in danger, and if so D'Arcy was quite ready to go to the rescue, but the house certainly seemed commonplace and ordinary enough.

Was there some mistake?

"Is Louie in there?" said D'Arcy, pointing. "Louie—est-elle la?"

"Oui, oui, m'sieur!"

"Well, that's plain enough," murmured D'Arcy. "I suppose there must be somethin' the mattah, or he wouldn't be bringin' me in to see Louie like this. I wondah what she is like. Is she in danger, deah boy?"

"Je ne comprends pas."

"Louie—est-elle—let me see—en danger, you know?"

"Ascendez, s'il vous plait," said the concierge.

D'Arcy gave up the attempt.

"Vewy well; I suppose there's somethin' w'ong, as you said it was a shame."

"Chambre," said the concierge, catching the word.

"Oui—oui!"

"Well, if it's a shame, I'll look into it, and see that Louie isn't badly tweated," said D'Arcy. "Go on!"

The concierge showed him the way upstairs.

They stopped on the second floor, and the man opened a door, and showed a large and luxuriously furnished apartment.

D'Arcy put up his eyeglass and looked into it.

The room was quite unoccupied.

"Well?" said the swell of St. Jim's.

"Oui—oui!"

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Three taxis were called up outside the hotel, and the St. Jim's juniors, resplendent in evening dress, marched out and entered them.

"But Louie—mais Louie—"

"Oui!"

"But—mais—but Louie—she isn't here," said D'Arcy, looking very much puzzled. "I don't compwehend—je ne comprends pas."

"Cette chambre a louer," said the concierge.

"Weally, deah boy—"

"Vous cherchez chambre a Paris?"

"Je cherehe Louie," said D'Arcy. "I'm lookin' for Louie, but she doesn't seem to be here."

The concierge began to look angry.

"Cette chambre, cette chambre, oui, oui, oui!" he exclaimed. "Cent francs par semaine. You comprenez?"

"Yaas, I understand that—a hundred francs a week," said D'Arcy, more and more perplexed. "But where is Louie?"

"Cette chambre!"

"I dare say it is a shame, but I can't see anythin' goin' on."

The concierge waved his hands wildly.

"Chambre a louer!" he shrieked. "Cent francs par semaine."

"I weally begin to believe that you are dwunk," said D'Arcy, with dignity. "I wefuse to stay here any longer and listen to your wot."

And he turned indignantly towards the stairs.

"Ah, non, non, monsieur!" exclaimed the concierge, following him eagerly. "Soixante-dix francs par semaine."

"Sixty-ten—oh, seventy francs a week!" said D'Arcy.

"I don't catch on. Je ne comprends pas. Go to the dooce!"

"Soixante francs par semaine."

"The pwice is comin' down, I see, and we might come to terms if I had the faintest ideah what you were talkin' about," said D'Arcy. "But I haven't, so I'll say good-bye!"

And he went downstairs.

The concierge raved after him, and D'Arcy caught the words: "Cinquante francs par semaine." So the price had come down to fifty francs a week; half that which the concierge had first named.

But Arthur Augustus had had enough of it.

Without turning his head, he strode from the building, and rejoined the chums of the Shell, who were almost in hysterics by this time.

D'Arcy looked at them severely.

"Well!" gasped Tom Merry. "Have you rescued Louie?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Manners and Lowther.

"Is she safe?"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Where is she? Not hurt, I hope?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wefuse to weply to fwivolous questions," said Arthur Augustus icily. "The man must be dwunk. There was no lady in dangah at all."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hold me, somebody!"

"I wegard your laughtah as widiculous, and your wemarks as absurd," said D'Arcy. "I wefuse to stay here and watch you makin' asses of yourselfes!"

"Oh, fair play!" exclaimed Lowther. "We've stayed here while you made an ass of yourself."

"Weally, Lowthah—"

Tom Merry clutched D'Arcy by the arm with one hand, and with the other pointed to a projecting sign outside the house. D'Arcy turned his eyeglass upon it.

"Read that!" said Tom, nearly choking.

Arthur Augustus read it.

The sign bore the legend:

"Chambre a louer."

"Bai Jove!"

"That means room to let," grinned Tom Merry. "He wasn't saying it was a shame about Louie—he was saying that he had a chamber to louer—let. See?"

"Gweat Scott!"

"He thought by your poking your head into the place that you were looking for digs."

"Bai Jove!"

"Hence these tears—I mean these cackles? Gussy, old man, you ought to join a travelling show. You'd make a fortune for it."

"Weally—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Manners. "Gussy ought to go back and apologise now."

"Weally, I think I might give the chap a tip, you know," said D'Arcy, stepping into the arched entrance again, and feeling in his pocket.

"Ha, ha, ha! Give my love to Louis!"

"Pway don't be widiculous, Lowthah!"

D'Arcy stepped into the concierge's room, and astonished the man by presenting him with a couple of francs, which changed his frown into a smile, and then rejoined the Terrible Three.

"I wathah think we will return to the hotel, now, deah boys," he remarked. "It's no good lookin' for Wally any more, and it causes a beastly lot of trouble."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the juniors, still chucking—excepting D'Arcy, who preserved a dignified gravity—walked up the Rue de Rivoli to the Hotel Ste. Genevieve, where they found their friends already arrived, and at dinner.

CHAPTER 13.

A Letter from Wally.

AUGUSTE CERNAY dined with the chums and Uncle Frank, with whom he was soon on very good terms.

Mr. Fawcett had been a little anxious at first when he learned that Tom Merry & Co. had chummed up with a chance acquaintance; but he was reassured when he talked to Auguste. As it happened, too, Mr. Fawcett had had business dealings with Cernay's father, and so knew something of his people. Cernay was soon a general favourite with the English boys. He was talkative and excitable, but bubbling over with good temper and politeness, and his flow of animal spirits never slackened.

He took his leave of the juniors at last, after inviting them to dinner the following evening at his quarters, an invitation which they cheerfully accepted. Then he whizzed off in a taxicab and disappeared.

"Nice kid," said Tom Merry. "I like him."

"Yaas, wathah! I shall be vevy glad to accept his invitation to dinnah, too."

"So shall I," said Fatty Wynn. "I wonder what the grub will be like?"

"I wasn't thinkin' of the gwub. I was thinkin' that it is extremely pwob that we shall find my minah in his house."

"Possibly."

"I wegard it as vevy pwob. You see, Cernay is stayin' in a pension—"

"Eh? What's a pongshong?" asked Digby.

"I didn't say pongshong."

"Oh, you mean pawshaw!" said Blake.

"Ahem!" said Lowther. "He really means a pawng-shawng."

"Rats!" said Kerr. "It's a pahshah."

"Bosh!" said Manners cheerfully. "You mean, of course, a pan-seeong."

"Rubbish!"

"Bosh!"

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"Rats!"

"Well, call it a pongshong, it doesn't matter," said D'Arcy mildly. "Cernay is livin' in a pension, as they call the boarding-houses ovah here. Now, that is just the place Wally would go to, you know. He wouldn't join our party, because he knows Uncle Fwank would feel bound to pack him off to England. He wouldn't go to an hotel, because that would be too pwominent, and, besides, he can't have vevy much cash. A pension is just the place for him, and he could easily get one wecomended to him by a chap in England. Young Jameson, of the Third, has stayed in a pension in Pawis, I wemembah, with his people, duwin' a vacation. I wemembah Wally tellin' me."

"Blessed if I know what to do with him if we find him," said Tom Merry. "If he's left St. Jim's without the Head's permission, he ought to be sent back."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"But can we send him back?"

"Oh, yaas! I will command him to go."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see any weason for unseemly mewwiment in that wemark, Blake."

"Well, I think I can see him going when you command him, that's all," grinned Blake.

D'Arcy looked thoughtful.

"Well, as a mattah of fact, he nevah does show me the wespect due to an eldah bwothah," he remarked. "He is wathah a young wascal. Pewwaps it will be necessary for me to give him a feahful thwashin'."

"Not in Cernay's quarters, I hope," said Tom Merry, laughing.

"Bai Jove, no! It would be wotten bad form to kick up a wov in another fellow's quartahs."

"You will have to try your eloquence on him, that's all," said Tom Merry. "If he won't go, we'll promise him a ragging when we get back to St. Jim's. Besides, the pleasure of seeing Cernay again—and Wally, of course—it's a good wheeze to have dinner in a French pension—you will see what it's like, you know. You can't see France simply by staring at the monuments and getting a crick in the neck."

"That is vevy twue; and I wopose that we go to the opewa this evenin' to see some of the music of Pawis."

"There's a farce at the Palais Royal," said Lowther, who preferred fun to music, either operatic or classical.

Mr. Fawcett broke in quietly.

"I must ask you to consult me before selecting a theatre to go to," he said. "Paris theatres, as a rule, are not suitable places for boys, or for grown people, for that matter. You can go to the Theatre Francaise, or to the Opera, or the Opera Comique, or the Odeon."

"Wight-ho, my dear sir!" said D'Arcy. "Of course, we shouldn't think of goin' without askin' your permish. Pawis is a wathah peculiah place in some wespacts."

"It is a fine city," said Mr. Fawcett. "But there are national differences between French and English people, and their notions of some matters are as wide apart as the poles. You must not make the mistake of hastily despising anything that does not agree with English ideas, even if it is something that appears wrong to you, and harmful. Only don't mix in anything here that you would not mix in in London, if your parents were with you. But I need not tell you that."

And that evening to the Theatre Francais they went, and found stage French much easier to understand than street French, and more in accordance with the French they had learned in England.

They saw a comedy of Moliere's, and though they lost much of the meaning, they followed the play quite well enough to enjoy it.

They had two adjoining boxes to themselves, and they stayed to the finish, without yawning their heads off, as many English members of the audience did.

Then, tired enough, for the hour was late, they returned to the Hotel Ste. Genevieve, tumbled into bed, and slept the sleep of the just.

Arthur Augustus was the last in bed, as he always had a few little ceremonies in connection with his hair, his teeth, and his clothes to go through. He was just settling into a peaceful slumber, when there was a rap at the door, and the garcon came in.

"M'sieur!"

Nobody moved. The garcon stopped beside D'Arcy's bed.

"M'sieur!"

"Go away."

"M'sieur!"

"Allez."

"M'sieur!"

"Va!"

"M'sieur, une lettre."

"Bai Jove! A beastly lettah for me."

"Une lettre, oui, m'sieur."

D'Arcy grumbled, and sat up in bed. He took the letter, and the garcon vanished, leaving the electric light burning for D'Arcy.

The swell of St. Jim's sleepily opened the envelope. He started, and became a little wider awake as he recognised the handwriting of his worthy minor.

"Bai Jove, it's fwom Wally!"

The letter ran as follows:

"Dear Gus.—I'm here, you see. I'm digging in a pension now. I'd rather join your crowd at the hotel; but no larks! Are you going to make it pax? If so, put a notice in the 'Petites Annonces' column of 'The Paris Daily Mail,' and I shall see it. Say 'Pax—Gussy,' and that will do. They'll charge you a franc. Mind, no larks."

"WALLY."

"The young wascal!"

"Turn that blessed light out!" came a sleepy voice from Kangaroo's bed.

"Wats!"

"Turn it out!"

"I've just had a letter—"

"Blow your letter!"

"It's fwom Wally—"

"Blow Wally—"

"Weally, Kangawoo—"

"Oh, blow!"

Arthur Augustus switched off the light.

CHAPTER 14.

Arthur Augustus Cannot Find the Bastille.

BREAKFAST the next morning was a little late for the juniors. They had had a tiring day and evening, and they wanted rest after it. It was about ten o'clock when they gathered round the breakfast-tables in the dining-room on the ground floor.

Mr. Fawcett was gone out, but Henri looked after the juniors in excellent style.

Arthur Augustus read the letter out for the general edification, and there was a general grin over it.

"Like his cheek," said Lowther.

"Awful nerve," said Figgins.

"Yes, rather!"

Arthur Augustus looked thoughtful.

"Pway do not chawactewise the actions of a D'Arcy as cheeky," he said. "It seems to me a wathah disrespectful epithet. Howevah, I shall not make it pax with the young wascal. I shall not blue a fwanc on an advert. in 'The Paris Daily Mail.' I shall go to Cernay's this evenin', and colah him."

"What are we going to do this morning?" asked Kangaroo.

"Well, we saw the West End yesterday," said Tom Merry. "Let's have a look at the East End to-day."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"We can get a 'bus outside for the East and save walkin'," said Fatty Wynn.

"Trust Fatty to think of that."

"Well, you see—"

"I am goin' to show you fellows the Bastille," said Arthur Augustus. "You wemembah weadin' in the beastly histowy-books at St. Jim's, about the mob pullin' down the Bastille at the beginnin' of the Gweat Revolutiun. I am wathah cwious to see it."

"How are you going to see it if they've pulled it down?"

"I suppose there is somethin' left."

And breakfast being over, and Fatty Wynn half persuaded, and half dragged away from the table, the juniors of St. Jim's set out to see the Bastille.

They had, of course, read much about that famous fortress—relic of the Dark Ages, great stronghold on the border of Paris whence, in the days of the monarchy, the French kings had been able to overawe their subjects.

The guns of the Bastille had commanded the Faubourg St. Antoine, and the dungeons of the Bastille had been a dark terror to the whole country. For long centuries it had stood there, a menace to all men who dared to think freely, or to speak freely what they thought. Many a hapless Frenchman had vanished behind those dark portals, never to reappear in the living world. And, the cup of its iniquity being full, the place had been wrenched down stone by stone by the mob of Paris in the year 1789, and the crash of the falling Bastille had given the signal for freedom to all France. The history of that grim fortress the juniors knew we, and they were curious to see the place where it had stood.

They boarded the 'bus, and climbed to the top, and rolled seaward down the great Rivoli Street, past the Pont Neuf, and the Chatelet, and the Hotel de Ville, till the Rue de Rivoli gave place to its continuation, the Rue St. Antoine.

D'Arcy tapped the conductor on the arm when he came up for the fares.

"A la Bastille?" he asked.

"Oui, m'sieur."

"Good. Where do you get off?"

"M'sieur."

"Ou descendrez?"

"A la Place de la Bastille, m'sieur."

"Merci beaucoup."

Arthur Augustus looked round for the Place de la Bastille. The omnibus rolled out of the Rue St. Antoine into a great square, with a monument in the centre.

"Bai Jove! I suppose this is the place."

"A place within the meaning of the Act?" asked Lowther. "Pway, don't be funnay, deah boy. This is a holiday, you know."

They descended from the omnibus, and Arthur Augustus looked round for the Bastille. They let him look.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus, when he had swept the whole square, from the Gare de Vincennes to the Boulevard Beaumarchais with his eyeglass, "I weally do not see the Bastille."

"Look again, old chap."

"I weally think I had bettah inquire."

"Ha, ha!"

"What are you cacklin' at, Tom Mewwy?"

"Oh, inquire away."

Arthur Augustus raised his silk topper to a gendarme, who politely touched his cap in reply, and looked at him.

"Pway, where is the Bastille?" asked Arthur Augustus.

The gendarme smiled and shook his head.

"Pardonnez moi! Ou est la Basteey?"

The man lifted his eyebrows and shrugged his shoulders.

"La Basteey," repeated D'Arcy, giving the word the best French pronunciation he could. "La blessed Basteey."

Another shrug.

"Vous ne comprenez pas?" asked D'Arcy.

"Oui, oui, m'sieur, je comprends," said the gendarme smiling.

"Ou est-il, donc?"

A shrug again.

"What the dooce does the man mean?"

The gendarme pointed to the column in the centre of the square.

D'Arcy put up his eyeglass and looked at it. It was the famous Column of July—de Juillet—but D'Arcy was not acquainted with it.

"Yaas! Well?"

"La Bastille."

"Eh?"

"La Bastille, m'sieur."

"He pwetends that that beastly monument is the Bastille, deah boys."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"My dear ass—"

"I decline to be called an ass—"

The gendarme smiled, pointed to the column again, and passed on. The chums of St. Jim's chuckled merrily.

"I uttably fail to see the cause of this wibald laughin'," said D'Arcy, with a frigid look of great dignity.

"My dear duffer, that column is all there is left of the Bastille," said Tom Merry laughing. "The mob yanked it down in 1789."

"I pwesumed that the wuins were left."

"They didn't leave a bone," said Tom Merry, "and a jolly good thing too. They used up a lot of the stones in building the Concorde Bridge, where we took the boat yesterday."

"And that column—"

"Oh, that's not to commemorate the Bastille—that's to commemorate another blessed revolution, I forget which," said Tom Merry. "It's rather difficult to keep count of them. There's a line marked on the ground here somewhere to show just where the Bastille stood when it was standing; but they've built over part of the site, some of these shops and cafes. The last time there was fighting here was in 1871. That was in the Commune. They had the ends of all these streets barricaded, and held out a long time against the Government troops."

"Bai Jove! that must have been jolly excitin'," said D'Arcy. "They seem to be vewy excitab chaps. It may all happen again one of these days."

"Shouldn't wonder. Not while we're here, though. We shall miss it."

"Yaas, that is wathah wuff."

Tom Merry laughed.

"Stand round me and keep the people from pushing," said Lowther. "I want to get a snap of that column. It's put

up there to commemorate something or other, I suppose, so I may as well take it."

"Yaas, wathah."

And Lowther opened his camera.

"Will you stoop down here for me to rest the camera on top of your head, Gussy?"

"Certainly not."

"Well, I ought to have a wooden support of some kind—"

"Ha, ha!"

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Keep those mugs from shoving, then, anyway."

"Wighto."

The juniors stood round Lowther like a wall, and diverted the traffic on the path, much to the surprise and indignation of a good many pedestrians.

There was much muttering and exclaiming, and waving of hands, and the juniors came near being shoved into the road altogether when Lowther finished his snapping.

"It's all right, kids."

And the juniors of St. Jim's allowed the pedestrians to use the path again, and strolled on their way round the Place de la Bastille.

Fatty Wynn suddenly called a halt.

"Here you are, you chaps."

"Eh! What is it?"

"A restaurant! I'm hungry."

And Fatty Wynn led the way in.

CHAPTER 15.

The Jardin des Plantes.

FIGGINS and Kerr followed the fat Fourth-Former, and they reappeared in a couple of minutes, leading Fatty Wynn by the ears. Fatty was protesting loudly, but the company paid no heed to his protests.

"Not time for feeding yet," said Figgins cheerfully.

"I'm hungry."

"Oh, that's only a fancy of yours."

"Look here, I jolly well ought to know whether I'm hungry or not!" exclaimed Fatty Wynn indignantly.

"Well, you ought, but you don't," said Kerr. "You're not going to have anything more to eat till deuzieme dejeuner, so that's flat."

"Look here—"

"Rats!"

And the unfortunate Fatty had to give in.

From the Bastille the juniors walked down to the river, and crossed it at the Pont d'Austerlitz, Austerlitz Bridge.

"Where are we going?" asked Fatty Wynn.

"Jardong des Plong," said Figgins.

"Eh?"

"Jardah des Plah," said Digby.

"Of course," remarked Blake. "You mean the Jawdaw des Plaw."

"Bosh!" said Lowther. "The Jawdawng des Plawng."

And they walked on to the Jardin des Plantes.

The Zoo of Paris was open, and the juniors went in, there being no charge for admission, which, as Blake remarked, was an advantage.

They walked up and down the paths, looking at the various bipeds and quadrupeds, and admired the crocodiles, and the whale's skeleton, and other show pieces of the Jardin, and arrived at the bear-pit.

"Bai Jove! it's vewy like the Zoo in Wegent's Park," Arthur Augustus remarked.

"You didn't expect it to be like the gym at school, did you?" asked Lowther.

"Wats!"

"Nice, good-tempered looking chaps," said Tom Merry, looking down at the bears in the pit.

There were two Polar bears there, one of them swimming in a little pool, and the other walking round looking up at the visitors above expectant of biscuits.

Close by was a stall where bread, biscuits, and cakes were sold to be given to the bears, and Arthur Augustus stepped to it and laid down a five-franc piece.

Madame in charge of the stall was all smiles.

She loaded all the juniors with bread and cakes for five francs, and they lined up round the top of the pit.

Both bears came below, looking upward, as they saw the cargo of comestibles the juniors carried in their hands and under their arms.

They were indeed good-tempered looking beasts, and evidently on the best of terms with visitors at the Jardin des Plantes.

"Here you are," said Figgins. "Hold these cakes for me, Fatty, while I pelt them."

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NEXT

THURSDAY:

GRAND CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER.

"Right you are, Figgy."

Figgins tossed roll after roll to the nearest bear, who, made expert by long practice at that sort of game, caught them in his mouth, and devoured them as fast as they were thrown.

Meanwhile, Fatty Wynn was not feeding the bears; he was feeding Fatty Wynn.

The cakes were nice, and Fatty thought it a sin to waste them, and he was wiring into them almost as fast as the bear.

"By Jove, they're going quickly," said Figgins, as he turned round for a fresh supply.

Fatty Wynn did not reply; he could not, his mouth was too full.

Figgins glared at him.

"Why, you horrid, greedy waster, you're eating them yourself!"

"Gug-gug-gug—"

"You—you—"

"Groo—"

Figgins took away the rest of the cakes before Fatty could demolish them, and pelted the bears with them.

Arthur Augustus was feeding the bears with nice white rolls.

He jabbed one on the end of his cane, and leaned over the low stone parapet to feed it into the bear's mouth.

The white bear rose on his hind legs to reach the roll, but could not quite do so.

Arthur Augustus leaned over further and further, and Monty Lowther made a sudden grasp at his legs, which startled D'Arcy almost out of his wits.

He gave such a sudden start that his silk hat fell off, and dropped into the pit just in front of the bear.

Monty Lowther dragged the swell of St. Jim's back from the parapet.

"You ass!" shouted D'Arcy.

"Where would you have been if I hadn't saved you?" demanded Lowther severely.

"You uttah ass! I was in no danger."

"Is that what you call gratitude?"

"You—you wottah! Where's my hat?"

"Your hat!"

"Yaas, wathah! It fell off."

"Can you speak bear language?"

"Of course not, you ass!"

"Then it's no good asking after your hat. Bruin doesn't understand English. He's a French bear, I suppose."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus whirled round and looked into the pit. There was his silk topper. He sprang upon the parapet.

Tom Merry and Kangaroo seized him just in time and whirled him off it.

"You ass—"

"Pway wesease me, deah boys."

"What are you going to do?"

"I'm goin' down for my toppah."

"And how would you get out again?" demanded Tom Merry.

"Never mind that; I must weseue my toppah."

"Blow your topper!"

"Weally, Kangawoo—"

There was a sound of a crunch from the bear-pit, and shrieks of laughter from the St. Jim's juniors.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove!"

"Too late!" gasped Tom Merry. "The hat's gone!"

The bear had been pawing over the hat, evidently under the impression that it was thrown down for him to eat. He had not liked the look of it at first; but perhaps his residence in Paris had infected him with French politeness. At all events, he finally made up his mind to eat the hat.

His strong jaws closed on the silk topper.

There was a crunch, and Arthur Augustus gave a wail as he looked at the remnant of his topper in the jaws of the Polar bear.

"Bai Jove! My toppah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus looked on in anguish. The bear took a big bite at the hat, and then another, and finally ejected it, apparently not liking the flavour.

"Seems a pity to lose it," said Lowther meditatively.

"Do you think we could hold Gussy by his ankles, Tom, and lower him into the pit to pick up the hat?"

"Ha, ha! Yes, if Gussy likes."

"It is not worth while weseuin' the toppah now," said D'Arcy. "I am goin'—"

"We haven't finished here yet."

"It's all wight. I'll wun off in a taxi to find a hattah's, and wejoin you at the entrance, deah boys."

And off went Arthur Augustus D'Arcy in search of a new topper.



Harry Wharton gasped and struggled under the weight of Bulstrode & Co. "Lemme gerrup, you asses!" he panted. "I'm in a hurry." *An amusing incident in "BUNTER, THE DETECTIVE"—the grand long complete school tale by Frank Richards in "THE MAGNET" Library. Now on sale. Price One Halfpenny.*

CHAPTER 16.
At the Pension.

TOM MERRY & Co. did not see Arthur Augustus again till they returned to the Hotel Ste. Genevieve. The swell of St. Jim's had taken the opportunity of doing a little more shopping, and his chums returned in some anxiety about him, and found him trying on a succession of neckties.

He looked round as they came in.
"Oh! So you're back, deah boys!"
"Yes, you ass!" said Tom Merry wrathfully. "We missed you."
"Yaas, wathah! I thought I would do a little shoppin'."
"We thought you had got run over."
D'Arcy turned his eyeglass upon Tom Merry.
"Weally, Mewwy, deah boy, I am surprisid at you! As a mattah of fact, I was beginnin' to feel wathah nervous about you fellows."
"Ass!"
"I decline to be called an ass. To change an obnoxious subject, how do you think this necktie suits me?"
"Beastly!"
"This one, then?"
"Rotten!"
"Well, this one——"
"Outrageous!"
"Bai Jove! You are not even lookin' at them. I wegard your wemarks as uttahn fwivolous."
The juniors were home in good time to prepare for the

visit to Auguste Cernay's quarters. The pension where he dwelt was situated in one of the avenues branching off the Place de l'Etoile, within sight of the Arc de Triomphe. Mr. Fawcett had been called away that evening on business, and could not go; but the juniors knew the way well enough, and if they had not, the taxicabs could have found it for them.

At a quarter to seven three taxies were called up outside the hotel, and the juniors marched out and entered them. It was D'Arcy's first opportunity of sporting his evening clothes, and he had come out resplendently.

He sank into his seat with a sigh of content.
"A fellow feels so much more comfy when he's decently dweessed," he remarked. "There is somethin' vewy comfortin' in a dwess shirt."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"There is nothin' to cackle at in that wemark, Blake."
"There is something to cackle at in that dress shirt, though," said Blake.
"Bai Jove! What's wrong with the shirt, deah boy?"
"It's got a duffer in it."
"Weally, Blake——"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
The taxies rolled off.
Paris was lighted up, and the juniors looked with interest upon the busy streets as they rolled on. At night the outdoor life of Paris struck them more than ever. The cafes and the restaurants were crowded, and hundreds of tables along the streets were occupied, in rows under awnings.

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An extra long tale of Tom Merry & Co. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

NEXT THURSDAY: "THE TERRIBLE THREE'S XMAS PARTY."

Arthur Augustus's eyeglass was never idle for a moment.

"I wondah what time these people spend at home?" he remarked.

"Not much apparently," said Tom Merry. "That's where you score by living in a colder country. A fireside is a necessity, and a fireside means home."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"This must be a jolly thirsty country," Blake remarked. "About every third shop sells drinks. Wherever you look there's 'Biere' or 'Vins fins' or 'Cafe.' I wonder where they put it all?"

But the lights of shops and restaurants and faces faded away as the cabs rolled along the Champs Elysees.

Along that magnificent and well-lighted drive they went at the usual pace of French taxicabs—the auto cabs, that is, for the horse taxies proceed at a funereal pace. They were in no great hurry, but it was useless telling that to a Parisian taxi driver. They shot along like arrows, with grunting and snorting galore to startle timid pedestrians out of their wits.

"Bai Jove! Here we are!"

The vehicles halted in a row.

Tom Merry looked out.

The side of the avenue was formed of huge, white buildings some seven or eight stories in height; the huge, imposing structures that gave a distinctive character to the Etoile quarter. A large, lighted hall stood open to all comers.

"Good! Here we are!"

The juniors alighted, and dismissed the taxies.

They were shown into a large, well-lighted salon, where a stout dame received them graciously enough, and Kerr was called upon to talk French again. His chums listened in great admiration as he babbled away at express speed.

There was an exclamation at the door, and Auguste Cernay rushed in to greet his English friends.

Cernay's greeting was enthusiastic and impressive.

"It is zat I am happy to greet you viz me," he said. "You vill also be pleased to meet un English garcon who is viz ze house—chez nous?"

D'Arcy looked eager.

"Is he here, deah boy?"

"Oui. I have tell him zat ze English friends come to ze diner chez moi, and he ver' much please. He is same name as you, mon ami."

"D'Arcy?"

"Oui, oui."

"What is his Christian name?" asked Arthur Augustus anxiously.

Cernay shook his head.

"Je ne sais pas, mon ami."

"You'll soon see if it's Wally," said Tom Merry. "Why not confide in Cernay, and get him to make sure of Wally?"

"Bai Jove, that's a good ideah!"

Cernay looked at them inquiringly.

"Vous cherchez—you seek somevun?" he asked.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Somevun ici—here?"

"Yaas. My minah; my young bwothah, you know."

"Vot're frere?"

"That's my—my minah—a cheeky young wascal. He's wun away f'rom school, and come to Pawis. I thought the chap here might be young Wally."

"Ciel!"

"If he sees me he'll dodge off."

"Oui, oui, je comprends."

"Could you manage to bwing him in, deah boy, before he sees me?" suggested the swell of St. Jim's anxiously.

Cernay chuckled.

"Zat would be good shoke."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Mais, but you not vant to hurt him?" said Cernay. "I zink zat he is zinkin' somevun looking for him, from vat he say, and he not vish to be found."

"Oh, I only want to look after him."

"All in ze friendly way—hein?"

"Oui, oui. Yaas, wathah!"

"Zen I fetches him in."

"Good!" said Blake. "We'll soon see if it's the young scamp now."

"Vous excuserez moi—one moment," said Cernay.

"Go ahead, deah boy."

Auguste Cernay left the drawing-room. The chums of St. Jim's waited expectantly. There were several other persons in the room, but Cernay apparently was not acquainted with them all. One stout gentleman, with a German cast of face, was seated at the piano, dabbling over the keys while he waited for dinner to be announced. D'Arcy distinguished the melody of the "Funeral March of a Marionette," a composition he was fond of, but which he hardly recognised as the German gentleman tapped it off.

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"Zis way," said Cernay's voice at the door.

"But—"

They knew the voice that uttered that "but." It was that of the scamp of the Third Form at St. Jim's.

"Wally!" murmured Piggins.

"Come in, mon ami!"

And Cernay, with his arm linked in Wally's, came into the salon. Wally looked at the group of juniors, and seemed inclined to bolt for it. But Cernay kept tight hold of his arm, and marched him on.

D'Arcy put up his eyeglass, and surveyed his minor severely.

"Wally! So I've found you at last, you young wascal!"

CHAPTER 17.

Arthur Augustus Sings.

WALLY chuckled.

Arthur Augustus had expected his minor to be overwhelmed, but it was not easy to overwhelm the scamp of the Third Form at St. Jim's.

He simply chuckled.

D'Arcy's frown grew more severe.

"Weally, Wally—"

"Oh, come off, cocky!" said Wally cheerfully. "None of your rot, you know! How on earth did you get here?"

"Weally—"

"And where on earth did you dig up that waistcoat?"

"I purchased this waistcoat in the Wue de la Paix, you disrespectful young wascal! I wegard the colour scheme as wippin'. There is as much colour in it as is consistent with good taste for an evenin' waistcoat. Now, Wally, I twist you will—"

"Oh, don't you begin, Gussy!" said Wally, in a tone of remonstrance. "Keep all that for the School House at St. Jim's!"

"Did you wun away f'rom school?"

"Not much!"

Arthur Augustus looked relieved.

"Bai Jove, I'm glad to hear that, at all events! I was vewy much afraid that you had left St. Jim's without askin' the Head's permish."

Wally grinned.

"So I did, Gus!"

"What! You said you didn't wun away!"

"I didn't; I walked!"

"Weally, Wally—"

"You young ass!" said Tom Merry. "You've bolted?"

"What-ho!"

"You'll get into a fearful row when you go back."

"Not half! I'm not going back till the governor has interceded with the Head, and made it all right for me," explained Wally.

"Weally, Wally, you cannot expect the governah to do anythin' of the sort."

"I sha'n't go back till he does—you see!"

"I shall be compelled to take you by force, Wally!"

"Rats!"

"If you say wats to me—"

"And many of 'em!" said Wally cheerfully.

"I am sorry, but I see that there is no w'esource for me but to give you a feahful thwashin', and—"

"Going to kick up a row in another fellow's quarters?" asked Wally, with a grin.

"Bai Jove! N-n-n-n-no! But you must come with us when you go, Wally!"

"More rats!"

"I weally do not know how to deal with this youngstah," said Arthur Augustus, looking round. "He does not treat me with the pwopah respect due to an eldah bwothah!"

"Horrid!" said Kangaroo.

"Yaas, wathah! I am afwaid I did not give him enough thwashin's in his early youth. Pewpaws that is the cause. But, as a mattah of fact, I wathah think it's in the family. I have a lot of twouble lookin' aftah my eldah bwothah, too. Now, Wally, I must insist upon your joinin' our party at the hotel."

"More rats!"

"You can join us on parole!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "Not to be detained, you know, against your will."

"Oh, that's all right, then; that will do, especially as Cernay is leaving Paris to-morrow, and there's nobody else here near my age!"

"Leaving Paris?" asked Tom Merry, glancing at Cernay.

The French lad nodded.

"Oui, oui! I am returning to the provinces to spend my holiday until Christmas. I vish much zat you could all come to ze Chateau Cernay with me, and spend ze Noel che-moi."

"I wish we could," said Tom Merry; "but I'm afraid we're booked for home for Christmas. It would be jolly!"

"Zen, when you leave Paris, come and stay viz me a few days before Christmas," said Cernay. "I vill speak viz mon pere, and he write to you. What?"

"It's awfully good of you."

"Mon pere he write in any case," said Cernay. "You vill see somezing of French country life, as vell as ze life of ze capital."

A bell buzzed.

"Zat is for dinner."

"And not before I'm ready, either!" Fatty Wynn murmured, in an undertone, to Figgins. "We've been here an hour or more, I think."

"Ten minutes, ass!"

"It seems like ten hours!"

But when Fatty Wynn took his place at the table d'hote his face beamed with a smile of satisfaction.

He could see that there was going to be a good dinner, and he was not disappointed. The dinner was superb.

How many courses there were, Fatty Wynn did not count; but he did his duty manfully at each, from the hors d'œuvre to the dessert.

It was a long innings for Fatty, and a good innings, and by the time he had finished he was feeling at peace with himself and all the world.

When they adjourned to the salon, Fatty Wynn sank into a comfortable cushioned seat, and did not move or speak for an hour at least.

There was a large company, and they were all gay and good-humoured, and Auguste Cernay's English friends were made much of.

The German gentleman played the "Funeral March of a Marionette" again. Blake confided to Digby in a whisper that it sounded to him like the funeral march of a coke-hammer, but everybody seemed pleased.

Then a charming demoiselle sang in French, and another in Italian; and finally it came out that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had a tenor voice, and was accustomed to use it.

So D'Arcy had to sing.

It was then that Fatty Wynn was observed to stir for the first time. Arthur Augustus was looking over the music to find a song to suit himself, as he explained that he had brought no music.

"Is Gussy going to sing?" asked Fatty, turning a look of alarm upon the swell of St. Jim's.

"Yes, rather!"

"Oh, lor'!" said Fatty.

And the other fellows thought it.

But Arthur Augustus went ahead with the confidence of a chap who knew that he possessed an exceptional tenor voice.

He found a song to suit him. It was a tenor solo from one of Verdi's operas, and D'Arcy had inflicted it upon the juniors of St. Jim's many a time and oft.

He jammed it on the piano, and the German gentleman, who had kindly offered to accompany him, ran his fingers over the keys.

Blake looked hopelessly at Tom Merry.

"My hat!" murmured Tom softly. "It's 'La Donna'! Wait for the top note!"

"The French are a very polite nation," murmured Lowther. "This is where their politeness will be put to a test."

"Yes, rather!"

The company were all attention as the melody of "La Donna" rippled off the ivory keys.

D'Arcy started:

"La donna e mobile,
Qual piume al vento,
Muta d'accento,
E di pensiero!"

"Good for the first lap!" murmured Blake. "Only, wait for the top note!"

"Sempre un amabile,
Leggiadro viso,
In piano in riso,
E menzoniero!
La donna e mobile,
Qual piume al vento,
Muta d'accento——"

That was where D'Arcy balked.

The faces in the room were as grave as those of a bench of judges as Arthur Augustus D'Arcy struggled manfully with his note.

"Go it, old hoss!" murmured Wally. "Put your beef into it!"

And D'Arcy did.

The second verse went off a little more easily, till D'Arcy came to the finish—the really difficult passage.

The juniors, as it were, lay in wait for it. D'Arcy came to it, and tackled it gallantly.

Up and down that long and difficult run his voice harked away merrily, sometimes a tenor, now a bass, now a baritone—first in one key and then in another. The German gentleman was thumping away bravely. When D'Arcy did it at a junior concert at St. Jim's, he generally got more laughter than the funniest turn on the programme. But French politeness stood the strain even of D'Arcy's top notes.

There was a murmur of appreciation when he finished, because he had finished, perhaps. D'Arcy bowed his acknowledgments.

He dropped into a seat beside Blake.

"Bai Jove," he said, "the appweciation of music in Pawis seems to be vewy keen! I will give them anothah tenah solo pwesently."

"No, you jolly well won't!" said Blake.

"Weally, Blake——"

"You keep off the grass!"

"My deah chap, the way they listened show they're awfully musical!"

"It doesn't, ass; it shows they're awfully kind-hearted!"

"Look heah——"

"Rats!"

"I shall thwash you when we get back to the hotel!"

"All right; anything but top notes!" said Blake heartlessly.

To which Arthur Augustus replied only with a sniff.

But it was a very pleasant evening, in spite of the tenor solos, and the juniors were very pleased with everything when they bade their hosts good-bye. They carried off Wally with them to the hotel, and Mr. Fawcett, though he looked very grave at first, promised to help to make the young scamp's peace with the Head.

Uncle Frank was told of Auguste Cernay's invitation, and nodded approval. The next evening came the letter from Cernay pere. And when the juniors had finished their rounds of the sights of Paris, Uncle Frank saw them off at the railway-station for the Chateau Cernay for the Christmas holiday.

"It's early for a Christmas holiday," Tom Merry remarked, "but when we get back we shall be scattered far and wide in all corners of the country, so my idea is to have a Christmas party together here while we've got the chance."

"Yaas, wathah! I wegard that as a good wheeze!"

And the chums agreed that it was.

THE END.

NEXT WEEK!

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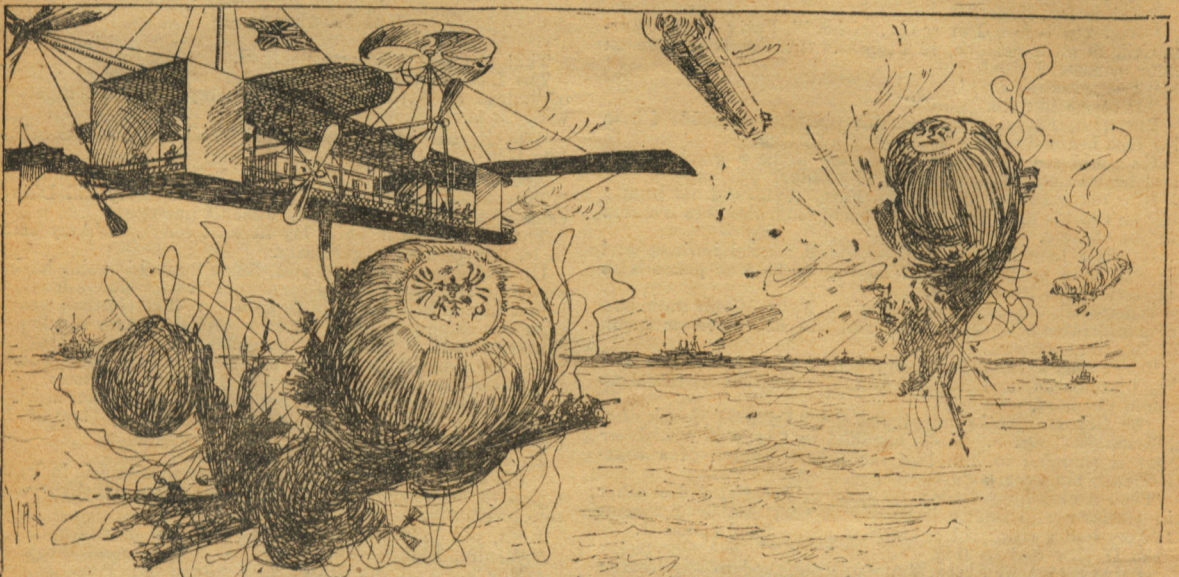
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BRITAIN'S REVENGE

THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS ARE:

AUBREY VILLIERS, nicknamed Sam Slick. A lad who has performed wondrous service for his country in her time of need, during the terrible invasion by the Germans.

STEPHEN VILLIERS, his brother. He is Sam's companion in all his exploits.

After the sweeping defeat of the Germans in London, as related in "Britain at Bay," the country is astounded by two brothers—men named Carfax.

Harrington Carfax, a scientist-inventor, discovers the way to make gold, and presents to the Chancellor of the Exchequer £100,000,000.

John Carfax has invented an absolutely perfect aeroplane, and he takes Sam and Steve to Germany.

On the way they capture a German naval officer, and John Carfax sends the Teuton into Berlin with his own terms. At the conclusion of his demands, he adds:

"If my terms are unaccepted by noon, I shall proceed to destroy Berlin."

In the meantime, the airship is instrumental in saving a British force which has landed on the German coast from annihilation. After the fight the general, who is an old friend of the boys', comes forward to greet them.

(Now go on with the story.)

The Law of Nations!

"I might have known you two would be in anything surprising that was afoot!" chuckled the general, shaking hands with both the boys warmly. "You've got the two smartest youngsters in the Service, or out of it, here, Mr. Carfax! But this is a marvellous machine of yours!" he continued, gazing wonderingly at the Condor. "The whole world is ringing with the fame of it, and you!"

"Yes, by Jove, sir, and your exploits, too!" said the gunboat's commander, with a cheery laugh. "You're making some of them scratch their heads at home. We had the news of your evening's performance at Potsdam, just before we left the Thames, by wire. The Government's fairly tearing its hair."

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NEXT THURSDAY:

GRAND CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER.

"Yes, I expect it is," said the general gravely.

"Why, what do you mean?" said Carfax abruptly. "Am I to blame for what has happened?"

"Oh, I'm not blaming you—not a bit, sir! Wouldn't matter if I did!" laughed the naval officer. "But you've made things in rather a tangle for 'em. The German Government's simply bombardin' England with telegrams and messages, denouncing your brutal and wicked conduct, and demanding your instant recall. They're trying to raise all Europe against you, to force Britain to make you drop it. But Europe isn't having any; she won't be sorry to see Germany have the shine taken out of her."

"Well?" said Carfax, staring at him.

"The British Government's disowned you—that's about the fact of it, sir," said the naval officer, who seemed to look upon it as rather a joke. "They couldn't do anything else, I suppose. It's said they're ordering you to stop your campaign, only the deuce of it is, they can't get at you," he chuckled. "I believe the commander of the other gunboat, who's senior to me, has got a despatch which he's to get into your hands if he finds a chance. I see one of his staff coming ashore with it now."

A sub-lieutenant, who had just landed, inquiring for Mr. Carfax, delivered into his hand a sealed official letter. Carfax tore it open, and as he read it a deep frown grew upon his face. He crushed the letter savagely in his hand, and for some time stood looking before him in moody silence.

General Blake and the gunboat's commander, a few paces apart, were talking together, and the soldier learnt, in a few sentences from his naval companion, of the Condor's descent upon Potsdam, and her threat to demolish the capital.

It was, of course, the first time the general had heard of it, and it astonished him greatly. He turned to Carfax.

"You have stupendous power in your hands, Mr. Carfax, with this wonderful machine," he said gravely. "Is it true, may I ask, that you have threatened Berlin?"

"It is, most decidedly," said Carfax drily.

"But do you not know that it is against the law of nations?" said the general.

"The same story!" ejaculated Carfax, with hot im-

patience. "That is what this despatch tells me," he said fiercely, holding out the crumpled letter, "from the Secretary for War, in Pall Mall. He orders me and implores me to withdraw at once, and deliver no more attacks. Fool! What have I to do with the law of nations? I could destroy them all in a fortnight."

"Come," said the general, laying a hand on Carfax's arm, "are you not a Briton still?"

"Of course I am!"

"Then you must hold by the laws your country agreed to," replied General Blake gravely. "The dropping of explosives from balloons or airships of any kind is forbidden by the international code. That was settled at the Hague Conference three years ago. All nations bound themselves to obey it, and it was Britain herself who proposed the law."

"That's so," murmured Sam, "for Britain had most to lose by it then."

Carfax was thunderstruck to find the general against him.

"You, too?" he cried. "Why, sir, I hold the fate of Germany in my hand! The British Government has disowned me, and refused all responsibility for me. Well and good. Leave me alone to deal with Germany, and if she can catch me, let her hang or shoot me, and welcome. In twenty-four hours I will lay the land waste, and force her to bow the knee to the country her invading army ravaged. I cut myself adrift from all intercourse with Parliament two days ago, because I was sick of their arguing and haggling."

"It is not a question of Parliament, but of the whole nation," said the general. "Britain's honour is bound up in it. What would you think of me if I served out explosive bullets to my men, so that every wound they made upon a German would shatter him, and be impossible to heal? Those are forbidden by the law of nations, too. The dropping of shells or petrol bombs on armies or cities from above is also banned. If you do this thing in the name of Britain, you dishonour her before all the world."

Carfax's face was rigid and tense. He showed the great strain which the truth from the general's lips caused him. Beads of perspiration stood on his forehead, and Sam, knowing all it meant to the great inventor and patriot, felt a strong pity for him, though Sam in his heart agreed with the general.

"Do you know what you are saying?" said Carfax, in a deep, choking voice. "You may be right—I almost feel that you are. But if I agree to this, what good is my airship, on which I counted to save Britain? She is useless."

"Useless!" cried the general. "Why, good heavens, man, she is the most gigantic success ever imagined! No army could hope to have a more immense advantage than your airship will give ours, if you let her."

"Rather!" said Sam enthusiastically.

"No secret of the enemy's can remain hidden from our side," said the general, "with such a power of scouting as the Condor holds. You can map out every position, give every range, warn the army of every ambush. There are a hundred things such an airship as yours can do. You know how useless our wretched little gas-bags of balloons are. You can cross the whole field of action in a few hours. You know, I suppose, that the French are marching upon Germany, and tackling her from the south?"

Carfax had not known it, and, great as the news was, he paid little attention to it now, so great was his disappointment. His eyes shone dangerously, and it was plain he had more than a mind to rebel and carry things out in his own way. The fate of the war trembled in the balance.

"To withdraw my terms," he muttered, "to spare Berlin, when I hold her in the palm of my hand, and might treat her as I treated the Potsdam palace! To let the Condor back out of it all without striking a blow!"

"Are there not a thousand splendid services you can render with her?" cried the general. "Is dropping explosives and burning petrol upon cities and masses of defenceless people all she is fit for? You know better, Mr. Carfax. Don't bring this dishonour on your country. Such a victory is worse than defeat. Use her to win fairly, and back up the British Army. You can do it, and you only."

Carfax drew a deep breath, and raised his head.

"I must have time to think this over," he said heavily. "I must go away by myself, and decide which it is to be. You are asking a huge sacrifice of me. I shall make no promise."

He turned, and walked slowly away, till cut of sight beyond the further earthworks, his head sank deep on his chest. Those who remained looked at each other anxiously.

"Gad," muttered the general, biting his moustache, "we're trained to think for ourselves in the Service. But I shouldn't care to have the responsibility that man has on his shoulders, nor to have such a question to decide."

"I think he'll see it as you do, sir," said Sam. "And

though I'm one of his crew, an' stand by the Condor, I hope he will."

"Yes," joined in Stephen eagerly, "so do I. And I've even wished I was quit of her when we were waiting to destroy Berlin. For though it's the chief German city, an' they're our deadly enemies, I don't call that warfare. Burning a whole great town and its people, and they unable to as much as fire a shot in reply. It's too awful!"

"Carfax meant to do it, and he may yet," said Sam.

"I can understand his point of view," said Stephen. "We know the way he's been fooled about, and how the Government at home has made a mess of things, and the traitors who want to sell the Empire rather than go short of a meal or two. He means to save the Colonies at any cost. But I believe we can do that without breakin' the rules of war and shaming ourselves."

"Well said, lad!" returned the general. "My opinion's worth something, I suppose, and I hold that we can, now we have a sound footing in the enemy's country, and command of the sea. The whole Empire is rising to break Germany's pride. We shall carry the colours into Berlin yet, and by the strong arm—not by throwing petrol bombs, as if we were Anarchists. Carfax will see reason. He's too clever a man not to."

It was half an hour before the inventor returned. He was very pale, and he looked like a man who had passed through a tight ordeal. His jaw was set and rigid.

"I have decided," he said quietly. "My threat will not be carried out. I shall spare Berlin, and the Condor will hold by the law of nations. She shall serve Britain otherwise."

General Blake held out his hand swiftly, and gripped Carfax's in a warm grasp.

"I knew it!" he said. "Let me congratulate you, sir. You are not the man to use a great power badly. You will never regret it, nor will Britain."

"And so say I," echoed Sam and Stephen, both shaking hands with Carfax. "It's an honour to serve with you, sir."

The inventor sat down on a gun-carriage, looking strangely worn and tired.

"It is for the best. I feel it," he said. "Though what the Condor is to do now is another matter."

"She will be the very eyes and fingers of the British Army, sir," exclaimed the general. "No troops in the world ever had such an ally."

"As for my explosives and bombs," said Carfax, "they are no more use, and I may as well get rid of them."

The general thought rapidly.

"I shouldn't say that," he replied. "They may be of great use still. The rules of the game only declare that they must not be dropped from the skies." He glanced at Carfax thoughtfully. "I wonder, now, would it be possible for the Condor to land suddenly at a certain spot, without risk of capture, and use those explosives where they could do a great service?"

"Certainly she can," said Carfax, "provided she is not expected to land where artillery or machine-guns could at once blow her to pieces. I do not want to throw her away. But any risks, if necessary, I will take. You saw her wipe out the Hussars."

"See here, then," said the general. "I am placed here with a large force, in a strong position, and shall soon be stronger still. But I am not yet able to advance, and the German army is pouring its millions of men to meet me, by rail. I shall have all the better chance if you can destroy the railway at one or two points, and cut the troops off. Of course, the lines will be well guarded, and perhaps it is too risky to the Condor—"

Carfax leaped to his feet.

"It shall be done without an hour's delay," he said. "I will break the German lines in three places. We shall have to land someone who has the nerve and knowledge to fix the explosives and fuses."

"I volunteer for that," said Sam, "and so will Steve. We know that job well enough, sir."

"No time like the present," said Carfax, striding towards the Condor. "It's getting dark, and every hour brings more German troops to harry the general. Get aboard!"

The airship's crew obeyed with alacrity, and twenty seconds later, without waiting for further speech, she was swarming skywards at her best pace, and halted when a little over 1,000 feet up, while Carfax took a survey of the country through the gathering dusk.

"Thank goodness that's off our minds!" said Sam, with great relief, in an undertone to his brother. "Now, this is a kind of job I fancy ten times more. You'll bear a hand, Steve?"

"Rather!" said the younger scout.

"You'll have a fine opportunity of getting shot, both of you," said Carfax, sending the airship along again. "Remember that, my young fire-eaters. If it's a choice of losing the Condor or you, I shall have to lose you, for she is THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 92.

can't be spared. General Blake was right. They're pushing troop trains up from Hamburg way as fast as they can. We'll break up the southern line from Heide first."

"Show me how you fix those shells," said Sam to Kenneth. "I don't want to blow myself into smaller pieces than necessary."

Kenneth took him into the magazine, and skilfully fitted two or three of the larger picric acid shells with a time fuse, which he showed Sam and Stephen how to use.

"That'll smash up the metals—eh?" said Stephen.

"The metals! It'll wreck the whole permanent-way, and blow half the embankment to blazes," said Kenneth. "It's a pity we can't smash up a bridge or two; but they'll be too well guarded for us to land, and the chief doesn't want to do the Condor in just yet. These'll give any gang a day's work or more to repair, even on the straight track," he added.

The Condor, meanwhile, had risen far higher, and had made her way some ten miles southward. Carfax stopped her, and calculated his distance carefully.

"Are you ready?" he said to Sam and Stephen.

"Quite ready," replied the brothers.

Then came one of those tremendous swooping descents that the boys knew and did not much enjoy, for it made them feel as if their insides had been left somewhere up among the clouds. The ground came into view with amazing speed, and the Condor came to a standstill lightly as a feather, just clear of a double-tracked railway that ran along a low embankment.

The young scouts stepped overboard instantly, Sam placing his bomb against the near-side line, and Stephen against the farther one. The aeroplane held herself ready to dash away at once if any danger threatened.

The fuses were touched off, and the brothers sprang back aboard again. A mounted patrol came dashing along over the plain at full gallop, firing their carbines as they rode, and a few bullets whizzed harmlessly underneath the Condor as she swept upwards again. The patrol could be seen riding frantically towards the spot where she had been; but while they were still a hundred yards away, there was a huge puff of yellow smoke, a roaring explosion, and when it died away the railway embankment could be seen with a gap in it ten yards wide and right down to the base. It was fairly torn in half.

"Enough to hold up that line for thirty hours," said Carfax, watching through his glasses, "however big a gang they set to it. Now for number two."

Three miles were reeled off in as many minutes, and on a lonely heath beyond Hemme the railroad was again blown up, this time out of sight even of a patrol.

A troop-train approaching in the distance was seen to pull up at the gap as the Condor turned again. She did not wait to watch it, but made her way to the line running from Schleswig to Husum, and blew a huge gap in an unprotected part of that also. By this time troop-trains were "hung up" on both lines, and the Condor finished her excursion by passing over General Blake's position again, and cutting off the railway to the north.

"That's pretty complete, I think," said Carfax, with satisfaction. "Any troops that reinforce the Germans now will have to pad it on their feet. Now I think we might run down Hamburg way, and—"

Stephen, in sudden excitement, caught him by the arm and pointed southwards.

"What on earth's that, sir?" he exclaimed.

The boy's keen sight had detected a strange-looking object—appearing hardly larger than a bird as yet—which was visible in the sky a long distance off.

Everybody watched it keenly, the Condor remaining motionless, and presently it was seen to be moving at a good rate, and became rapidly more visible.

"It's an airship!" cried Sam.

"You're right!" said Carfax coolly, focussing his glasses. "It's the Parseval, and no other."

"The which? That's the name of the great German aeroplane, isn't it?" exclaimed Stephen.

"Aeroplane! Nonsense, lad! There are no flying aeroplanes in the world, except mine," replied Carfax. "The Parseval is a very different thing—a navigable balloon, with motors. See, you can make her out now."

The strange monster—for it was of huge size—resolved itself into a vast, elongated balloon, shaped like a torpedo, but much thicker in proportion, with a large, boat-shaped car beneath, in which were several men. Big rudders and fans projected from the car, and a whirring propeller drove the balloon steadily and swiftly toward Carfax's aeroplane. It was an impressive sight, as the two monsters of the sky gradually neared each other.

"I remember reading about her," exclaimed Sam. "She's a wonderful vessel of her sort. They say she can travel eighteen miles an hour against the wind. She must be doin' quite that now."

"They're fightin' us on our own ground at last!" cried Stephen excitedly. "A German airship against ours. It's a wonder they never sent her to England."

Carfax laughed scornfully.

"Don't they wish they could!" he said grimly. "She cannot travel sixty miles certain without landing, unless the wind favours. Don't call her an airship, my lad; she's lighter than air—a gas-bag with motors."

"I'll bet they think she's our superior at short distances, anyhow," said Kenneth.

"They've got some sort of a gun mounted!" cried Sam, his glasses to his eyes. "A light Maxim, I think. They're coming for us, right enough."

"By Jove, they must have lightened her well to carry that!" said Carfax.

As he spoke, a distant drumming rattle was heard from the approaching airship, and the first spurt of a rain of Maxim bullets sang round the Condor. Two pierced the engine-shed roof, and one grazed Carfax's wrist.

At the very first sound of it, however, the Condor sprang to her utmost speed, and went ringing up into the sky at a dizzy pace. To follow her at that rate was more than even the Maxim could do, and Carfax did not pause till he was directly above the Parseval, her cigar-shaped gas-bag showing like a gigantic bolster a hundred feet or so below him. The German airship increased her speed greatly, and began to rise also.

"By Jupiter," said Sam, "that Maxim 'd make short work of us if it got at us an' tickled up our magazine of bombs!"

"If," repeated Carfax coolly.

"I say," exclaimed Stephen, "this looks like a near thing! She's got a gun, and we haven't. And it's no good droppin' shells on to her gas-bag. Besides, we've sworn not to use 'em. Shall I try an' pick off her crew with my carbine, sir?"

"How can you?" said Carfax, pointing downwards. "Her car is hidden from sight. She cannot fire upwards without shooting her own gas-bag. While we keep above her we are safe. We are prepared for these little emergencies, moreover. Did you think," added Carfax scornfully, "that the Condor could be destroyed by a German gas-balloon?"

The Parseval made violent efforts to steer out from beneath the Condor and get her Maxim to bear, darting this way and that, but the aeroplane kept steadily above her without effort.

At the same time, Kenneth and Hugh, producing a long, formidable-looking steel blade, like a great scythe or sabre, some eight feet long, thrust it down through a bayonet-lock in the Condor's platform, so that it pointed straight towards the earth from below her keel, like a perpendicular spur.

"Now," said Carfax grimly, "the world has talked much of the Parseval as a marvellous airship, and at present our would-be destroyer. You shall see the Condor make short work of her."

With one rush the aeroplane showed herself for a moment clear of the Parseval, which swung her Maxim to try and bear on the British airship. The next moment the Condor, swooping like a hawk, sped straight along just over the silken envelope of the great balloon. The long scythe-blade under her keel ripped it from end to end with a tearing sound, there was a loud cry from below, and the German airship collapsed, and went hurtling downwards towards the earth.

The Captives.

As the Condor's steel spur ripped the great silken bag open a suffocating rush of gas poured out, making the crew of the aeroplane stagger.

Carfax swiftly sent the Condor darting ahead out of reach, lest the sparking of his petrol engines should set fire to the gas, and a great relief it was to Sam and Stephen. Once clear, and panting for breath, they saw the Parseval lurch and sink with dizzy speed through the air, her long, silk reservoir wilted and shrunk like a burst bladder.

"Poor brutes! That's the end of them, anyway!" gasped Stephen.

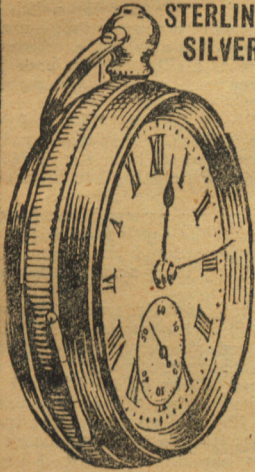
At first the Parseval seemed to drop like a stone, and went whizzing earthwards helplessly. She checked a little after a drop of a couple of hundred yards, however, as the remaining gas in the balloon was forced into the uncut end of the bag. It almost stopped her for three or four seconds, and the crew of three men, with pallid faces, could be seen frantically throwing out gun and ballast, in an endeavour to lessen the weight.

But it was useless. After a momentary check, the Parseval began to fall again, slower than before, it is true, but increasing speed every moment as she rushed towards the ground on a long downward slant, blown sideways by the

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wind. It could only end in the car being dashed to pieces a thousand feet beneath.

Used as they were to death in all shapes, the two young scouts shuddered. The glimpse they had caught of those pale, desperate men, hurtling helplessly downwards from the very skies, shook Stephen's usually cool nerves, and he winced and shut his eyes.

The next instant he opened them again with a thrill of apprehension, for the Condor herself was dropping so swiftly that he thought something had gone wrong, and that she was sharing the Parseval's fate. To his amazement, he found she was following the German airship, swooping down on a steep slant, and was within a few feet of the Parseval's car, which was up-ended.

The Germans were clinging desperately to the cords, and a rope with a weight at the end swung out over them from the Condor's platform. It all happened within a few seconds, as the two vessels went plunging towards the ground.

The Germans grabbed blindly at the Condor's rope, and the next thing Stephen knew he was helping to haul in over the platform-rail a white and half-fainting German in staff-officer's uniform. Two others, clinging to the rope, were rescued in the same way.

The shock and the extra weight made the Condor lurch and quiver. She stopped her downward rush, and hung motionless, her engines redoubling her efforts, and the wrecked Parseval went dropping away below like a stone. The three Germans seemed dazed, and only half-conscious, as Carfax's voice rang out:

"Blindfold them! Bind a cloth round their eyes, lads! They're the sort we mustn't allow to see too much!"

The captives were swiftly and securely blindfolded with a cloth each knotted over their eyes; but before it was done Sam saw the German balloon, which now looked like a mere spot, so far had it fallen, strike the ground six hundred feet below, not far from a marching battalion of German infantry. There was a sudden violent explosion, the report of which came echoing up to the Condor, proving that the car held a freight which had blown up. The three prisoners, as soon as Kenneth and Hugh released them, sank helplessly down upon the platform, and, strong, hardy men though they were, all three were trembling violently.

"Great James!" exclaimed Sam. "Talk of rescues at sea, that beats anything I ever saw!"

"It was touch and go, but I thought we'd pull 'em out of it," said Carfax. "Hugh, turn on the two extra cylinders; we've all we can do to run this extra weight."

"Those beggars of Prussians below are gaping up at us like a gang of stuck pigs!" said Kenneth, who had taken a look downwards through his glasses.

"Don't wonder!" said Stephen, drawing a long breath. "So should I if I were down there." He glanced at his brother, and the same thought occurred to both—their opinion of Carfax went up more than ever. They had thought him a man of adamant, without pity; but here he had performed an amazing feat, and risked his airship to rescue the men who had tried to destroy him.

"You ought to get the Humane Society's medal, sir, if such a thing were given in warfare," said Sam, smiling.

"Bosh!" returned Carfax coolly. "I only did it for the credit of the Condor, to prove what she could do. The Parseval's crew might have broken their necks and welcome for all I cared. Kenneth, give the poor fellows a nip of brandy to pull them together. They're shaken clean out of themselves, and no wonder!"

It was nothing to the discredit of the three German aeronauts that they were unnerved by the experience they had gone through. The Condor, mounting another one thousand feet, shaped her course slowly back to Husum, while a small dose of cognac apiece, administered to the captives, brought the colour back to their cheeks. One was an officer of the German Aerial Corps, a newly-formed body, the second was an artificer of the same service, and the principal one wore the uniform of a staff-officer from headquarters.

"Why blindfold them?" whispered Stephen to Hugh.

"You didn't do it to the captain of the Kaiser Wilhelm."

"Different thing," said Hugh; "he was a sailor. These chaps are airship experts, and the Germans are advancing rapidly at this game, and experimenting with aeroplanes. The chief doesn't mean them to pick up any tips from the Condor, which they might easily do if they had the use of their eyes."

The German staff-officer sat up, and groped at the bandage knotted over his eyes in a bewildered way.

"Ich sehe nichts," he said, in a dazed voice, "bin ich auf den Condor?"

"Yes," replied Carfax, "you're on the Condor, which, it seems, you were sent to destroy. I'm afraid it was a job

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An extra long tale of Tom Merry & Co. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

NEXT THURSDAY:

"THE TERRIBLE THREE'S XMAS PARTY."

too heavy for the Parseval; but you made a gallant attempt, seeing how you were handicapped. I must ask you to leave that bandage on, Herr Colonel!"

The German brought his hand down.

"You have every right to command it," he said, "for we owe you our lives. I never dreamed you would attempt to save us, nor that it would be possible. Am I speaking to the Herr Carfax?"

"The same."

"Then," said the German stiffly, making an effort to rise, "if you are the man who intends destroying Berlin, and wrecking the German cities with this machine of yours, I would rather you had left me to perish than be saved by you!"

"You may make your mind easy," said Carfax grimly. "I have decided to spare Berlin, and Germany has no longer any cause to fear a bombardment from above through me. I have the honour to inform you of that fact."

"I am relieved to hear it," said the staff-officer, his face clearing. "I felt sure, from your humanity in rescuing us, that you are too gallant to do such a deed. Germany will at least honour you for your decision."

"I am glad that Britain has not the same disaster to fear from Germany," said Carfax, very drily, "for I think we should fare badly, law or no law, if your country owned a power like the Condor. Nor do I see that the destruction of Berlin by an airship is much worse than the bombardment of a defenceless city like London by German artillery. By the way, I notice, from the fate of your car when it struck the ground, that the Parseval carried a load of explosives. May I ask if she was intended to retaliate by attacking General Blake's invading force by dropping them on him?"

"I pass you my word as a German officer that she was not," replied the staff-colonel earnestly. "Our commander had no intention of justifying you in carrying out the threats you made. I was sent to seek out the Condor, and do my best to destroy her."

"And a very courageous attempt you made," said Carfax. "It is no discredit to you that a balloon like the Parseval failed to achieve it. You were given an impossible task, Herr Colonel. I have now only to transfer you to the care of General Blake, and I shall be most glad to have your parole, and that of your fellow-officer, if you care to give it."

"You have it, most certainly!" said the German.

"I regret being obliged to keep those bandages upon you till we land," said Carfax, "for there are points in this aeroplane which so highly-trained an officer would no doubt understand and appreciate, and which I am bound to keep secret."

"You are right to do so," replied the staff-colonel, "though I would give my left hand, quite apart from questions of war, to examine at close quarters this marvellous machine of yours. Some day, perhaps," he added, with a smile, "when our countries are at peace, you will grant me such a favour for the sake of old times."

"I shall look forward to that time, and you shall be among the first of my guests," said Carfax.

"My eye!" murmured Stephen. "All this is blessed polite, but if they had fetched us down with a lucky shot from that Maxim they'd have not merely killed the lot of us, but found out all there is to know about the Condor, as well."

Sam nodded and grinned.

"Shows how careful the chief has got to be that the Germans may never catch us napping," he said seriously. "It'd be no joke if the Germans copied her and used her power against us. Precious little chance our invadin' forces would have then!"

"She just holds the balance right, now," said Stephen, "and gives our side a nailing good chance. You're wanted on the bridge, Sam."

The Condor had slowed down, and about two thousand feet below her the long line of German forces facing General Blake could be seen. A sharp attack on the British left front was in progress, and many changes had been made in the German arrangements.

Carfax asked Sam to use his scouting and military knowledge to make a quick and thorough plan of the German forces, of which he had a perfect view, and of their hidden reserves, and all that could be of service to General Blake. Sam, well practised in such work, did it rapidly and thoroughly, while the Condor cruised to and fro, according to his needs, at a great height.

Only a couple of shells were fired at her by the German batteries, which had now learned better than to waste their ammunition in such vain attempts. When the report was drawn up, the Condor forged ahead again, and, circling over the British position, just as the German attack failed and drew off, she lightly descended to the ground in her old place, and was visited immediately afterwards by the general and two of his staff.

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NEXT THURSDAY:

GRAND CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER.

On the Lone Trail.

"You ought to rank as the eighth wonder of the world, Mr. Carfax!" exclaimed the old warrior, as he greeted the aeronaut. "And, by gad, sir, you beat the other seven to nothing! We saw you meet that German airship, and we were in a rare stew for fear she would make an end of you. It was the famous Parseval, wasn't it?"

"Yes," said Carfax; "but you paid my vessel a poor compliment if you thought an antique gas-bag like that could harm her!"

"I apologise!" said the general. "We saw you polish her off through our glasses. Some sort of a spur you fixed underneath, wasn't it? You've unshipped it now, I see. Amazing sight, a fight in mid-air like that! Hallo! Whom have you got there?" he added, in a lower tone, as he caught sight of the prisoners.

"The crew of the Parseval," said Carfax. "I was forced to blindfold them, for obvious reasons. They're on parole, though. You didn't see us take them off their car, then?"

"Good heavens! No. We saw you chasing her down after wrecking her."

"I'll bring them round behind the ammunition-waggons, if I may," said Carfax, and he led the captives to a spot out of sight of the Condor, where he ordered their eyes to be freed of the bandages, and, asking their names, introduced them to the general.

Mutual salutes were exchanged, and General Blake, with a few civil words, treating them as his guests, turned them over to the charge of a subaltern, whom they accompanied to the staff mess-tent which had been erected.

"And you actually took those fellows off her?" said the general to Carfax, after they had gone. "They look pretty shaken up. I'll send them to England on one of our transports, for there's no doubt they'll have to be prisoners till the war's over; but that's no hardship. Plenty of berths for them aboard on the way back," he added, pointing seawards, where several large ships and another escort of cruisers could be seen approaching. "These are more of my reinforcements, you see."

"By Jove," said Sam, "you'll have a fine, strong column then, sir! Great thing, holding the command of the sea," he added; "and there's no German Navy now. The Prussians didn't get any change out of us in that last attack, sir."

"No," said the general, smiling at the young scout's somewhat breezy manner. Perhaps so much cruising in the clouds had made Sam airier than usual, but the Greyfriars pair were allowed a good deal of freedom. "We beat them off without any difficulty, and I owe a great deal of our present security to Mr. Carfax's services in cutting off the railways, as I believe he must have successfully done, for the German arrangements seem thoroughly thrown out of gear, and not half the troops I expected have arrived to attack us. Did you succeed, Mr. Carfax?"

"Yes; we blew up all three lines in several places," said Carfax. "It was these two youngsters who did the actual work."

"As usual," said the general, laughing. "But you've shown us what a splendid weapon the Condor is, sir, without dropping bombs. By the way, I believe there's another message for you. The two gunboats have gone, but a light-draught cruiser came in behind the island an hour ago, bringing me some mounted naval guns for use here. That's her lieutenant coming ashore now, I think."

A sealed despatch was brought to Carfax a few moments later from the gunboat, together with a letter, which he read quickly.

"This is better," he said, in a pleased tone. "They're treating me as I would wish to be treated. This is from the War Office—I won't tell you the exact sender—and asks me, as a service, to get these despatches into the hands of the French Commander-in-Chief at the time when he crosses the Alsace frontier."

"Phew!" whistled Stephen. "Has it come to that?"

"Evidently. Now, the sender of this is a man I respect, and not one of the chattering brigade, or the fools in Parliament. I'll do it, though we're pretty well dead-beat."

"You'll take the Condor across Germany to France?"

"Yes; and be back here to-morrow, or wherever I'm wanted," said Carfax. "We can stand watch and watch. We'll start at once, and we shall have to lighten the Condor considerably to get her there in time." He glanced at Sam doubtfully. "Are you two very keen on coming?"

"If you mean you'll be better without us, sir, of course, we won't hamper you," said Sam.

"Very well; I'll leave you behind this once, then, for every pound will tell. It won't be a very interesting journey, only carrying a message. You'll not miss much. And you'll be glad of a rest. Wish I could take you, but there's really nothing for you to do."

"We'll be here when you come back, sir," said Stephen.

"I shall want you for my next cruise badly. And now to work!" said Carfax.

Fifteen minutes later the boys stood at the back of the earthworks, and saw the Condor mount into the sky. Her crew waved to the brothers as she went up, and when a mere speck in the clouds she turned south-eastwards, and sped away like a swallow.

Sam and Stephen stood looking after her, wishing they could have gone with her; but the wish was not very strong.

They were too weary to feel much desire for anything but sleep, having spent a full forty hours without a wink since they left England.

Indeed, they would have collapsed among the sandhills, and slumbered where they lay, had not a young subaltern of artillery taken them each by the arm and marched them off cheerfully to the back of the ammunition-waggons behind the earthworks, where they dropped off to sleep without asking any questions.

It was dark when Sam awoke, feeling greatly refreshed, but with a raging hunger. He turned his watch to what light there was, and looked at it.

"Close on midnight!" he exclaimed, as Stephen opened his eyes beside him. "We've slept a solid eight hours, old chap. How d'you feel?"

"Fit as they make 'em," said Stephen, for both boys were in the hardest condition. "Ready for anything, if I can get some grub."

Their last meal had been aboard the Condor, consisting chiefly of bully-beef and biscuit, which was exactly the fare they got in General Blake's camp also.

The whole bivouac was waking and alert as they made their way to the centre, for the general had expected a night attack.

It did not come, however; and the boys were making for the regimental mess-kids when the artillery subaltern who had taken them to a safe sleeping-place turned up.

"Hallo!" he said. "Had a good snooze? Come and mess with my battery. We're getting some grub while we've the chance."

The brothers were glad of the offer, for the gunners' mess had more time to attend to their meal than the others, it being impossible to work the guns in the dark, and they only needing guarding.

Together with six other subalterns, Sam and Stephen made a very cheery meal, beginning with hot tinned soup as a "warm-up," for, being in touch with the transports, tolerable food could be had.

"That's better," said Stephen, with a sigh of relief. A short rest followed the meal. "What's the time—nearly one? I can't turn in again to-night—can you?"

"No; not after an eight-hours' snooze," said Sam. "We shall have to kick our heels till the Condor returns, I suppose, some time to-morrow."

"Rather sickly that. I feel fresh and fit. Don't you? Let's browse round the camp, an' see if there isn't something doing."

The whole bivouac was still busy with its earthworks and defences. General Blake was not ready to move ahead until his communications were secured, and he was making the peninsula next to Husum the base for the campaign.

The boys came upon him, wakeful and alert, giving orders to a number of his staff at the entrance to the headquarters tent.

"Well, my lads," said the general, as the staff-officer departed, "making the most of your rest—eh? We must get it while we can these days."

"We've had ours, sir," said Sam. "I suppose there's nothing we could do?" he added diffidently. "We'd be glad to make ourselves useful. We're quite fit for work."

"The deuce you are!" The general pondered a moment.

"Well, I don't know. I'm rather troubled to find some adequate scouts for a ticklish job. We've none who are quite up to your record, Lieutenant Villiers. You're not acquainted with this country, I suppose, though?"

"Not like Essex, sir, where I knew every copse and dell in the country, sir," said Sam; "but we were at school at Schleswig three years, learning German, before we went to Greyfriars, and I know the general lie of the country."

"You do? Well, what I want is some information from the neighbourhood of the hamlet of Essen, some miles to the south of us. You know the place?"

"Yes, sir."

"I have reason to believe the Germans are mining the bridges there, and possibly laying other mines. If so, they are doing it under cover of the darkness. One of my columns will have to advance that way when we move out of this, so, you understand, I want to know what the Germans are doing there."

"Yes, sir; certainly!" said Sam.

"But it is an undertaking of such danger and difficulty for any scout to get through the German lines and make his

way there, that I fear those I have sent have failed. Now, how would you set about reaching Essen?"

"I should take a boat, sir, and make my way up the coast in the sheltered water inside the sandbanks," said Sam, "and then scull quietly up one of the creeks behind the islands leading within half a mile of Essen. There are so many creeks that they can't be all guarded. Then I should land, and do a quiet stalk up towards the bridges."

"Ah!" said the general. "Now, none of my fellows were up to that. They tried to go overland. They don't know those tidal creeks, or boatwork is beyond them, good men though they are. Of course, I can hardly ask you to go, after the strain you've just been through."

"We're thoroughly rested, sir; and we'll tackle it at once if you'll give us the job," said Sam eagerly.

"Good! Then do your best, and if you can get me that information it will be of very great service. But I haven't much hopes of it."

Sam and his brother started off without any further parley, and only stopped to get a tin case of emergency rations apiece. That done, they passed the sentries at the rear, and went down to the shore.

There were plenty of boats, left there by the Husum fishermen. The best had been commandeered by the troops for landing stores, but Sam did not want an up-to-date or conspicuous one. He chose an old, shallow, puntlike galley with a flat floor, and soon the two boys were well out from the shore in her, pulling along southwards, parallel with the land. They were in fairly smooth water, for the islands and sandbanks lying off the coast broke the force of the sea.

"It's a perfectly easy job this," said Sam, "for our sort of work. There'll be no trouble about slipping up those marshy creeks in the dark, and it'd be like a game of blind-man's buff to try an' catch us. The difficulty'll be gettin' back again by daylight after we've done the job. That'll be impossible another tune, an' precious risky. It might be impossible."

"If so, we'll have to lie up in hiding somewhere till night falls again," said Stephen.

"We don't want to do that, or we might miss Carfax and the Condor. That'd never do. He'll be back some time to-morrow, I should say. Pull away, an' let's try an' save the darkness back. We've got four hours."

The time was not sufficient, however, as Sam discovered. They made their way without incident to the marshy delta where the creeks and inlets ran into the land—a place too watery to guard except by means of boats, and too shallow for any armed enemy to navigate. Consequently, the Germans feared little from it, and the boys were able to scull some distance inland, with muffled rowlocks, and without seeing a soul, save a distant sentry on the sea-wall.

Once landed, a long stalk began, and not a very quick one, for Sam did not know the country at all thoroughly. So good a scout was he naturally that he made very good travelling of it, however, and Stephen followed in his wake. Several pickets and outposts were passed, and after much creeping through ditches and copses, and one or two moves in the wrong direction, Sam presently found himself in a hedge within touch of the place he wanted to reach.

An hour's cautious waiting and watching showed him that the Germans were undoubtedly mining both the bridges General Blake had mentioned, and were also laying several other mines, and making various preparations. What they did need not be told here in detail, for it was purely military information that only a commanding officer could turn to account. It was what Sam had been sent to report on, however, and, knowing its importance, he noted every detail in his head, having a perfect memory.

What he saw surprised him, and he knew it would surprise General Blake if they got safely back with the news. So engrossed was he with watching, as he lay in his hiding-place, that he took no note of the time till Stephen touched his arm.

In Full Chase.

"I say, the dawn's breaking," whispered Stephen; "it'll be daylight in half an hour."

"By Jove!" muttered Sam. "So soon? You're right, we must get out of this. I've got pretty well all the news I want. We shall have to be extra careful how we go back."

The clear notes of a bugle were heard not far away, sounding the German reveille, and several others sounded their notes far beyond. The two young scouts commenced their return journey, while already many engineers and transport-service men were about, making progress more risky.

A stealthy creep down a hedge and through a field of late corn took the boys away from the neighbourhood of the bridges, but they were still a long way from the creeks and the boat, and several pickets had to be passed first. Stephen

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NEXT THURSDAY:

"THE TERRIBLE THREE'S XMAS PARTY."

halted as they reached the end of the cornfield, and peered ahead.

"What's that?" he whispered, pointing through the gloom.

Something that looked like a giant orange could be seen over the next hedge, showing against the still dark sky.

"Captive balloon," said Sam; "they must have inflated it since we passed—it wasn't showing before. Going to send it up at daybreak, I suppose, to reconnoitre the British position from. We shall have to pass close by it."

They saw more of the balloon than they expected, for in passing down the opposite side of the hedge which was nearest it, they were nearly surprised by a file of German sappers coming down the field, and the boys had to squeeze into the thick of the hedge and lie there motionless. The sappers passed, but other German soldiers turned up, and made it impossible to go forward.

"We shall have to lie here till the coast's clear," said Sam, "confound them!"

The brothers, by peeping through the leaves, had a view of both fields, and while waiting, the balloon attracted their attention. There was a tent close by it, and three members of the Aerial Corps were there. The balloon itself was fastened down by a number of cords, and one very large pile of thicker rope lay beneath the basket-car.

"Out-of-date-lookin' machine, after the Condor, isn't it?" whispered Stephen. "The thing can only drift about where the wind takes it."

"It won't drift. It's a captive," said Sam. "That long rope'll keep it anchored. They'll only send it up a few hundred feet."

The men in charge of the balloon, one of them an officer, moved away to the tent.

"I say," whispered Stephen eagerly, "it's only a short crawl out to her, an' it's all long grass. What a score to cut the rope half through, so she'll break loose when she goes up, eh? She'll be blown miles off in this breeze, an' they'll have to let the gas out to get her down!"

"Better not," said Sam. "I don't see it'll do much good, an' we've our hands full enough to get out of this."

Before he had finished speaking, however, Stephen was away on his errand. Creeping through the long grass like a snake, he disappeared in the direction of the balloon. Meanwhile, the other field cleared of the Germans who were in the way, and Sam awaited his brother's return impatiently.

"Done it!" whispered Stephen, reappearing noiselessly. "Cut the rope all but the last strand. Don't think they'll see it. She'll break adrift as soon as they let go the holding-down ropes."

"Come on," replied Sam, "it's getting beastly light."

They left the hedge and hurried down the field, pausing for a moment to take a survey ahead before entering the next. And then it was that one of those accidents happened which cause the end of the smartest scout, because quite unexpected. A German sapper, who had no business to be where he was, and had remained there for no earthly reason, suddenly started up out of a ditch close by, caught sight of the boys, and squibbed off his carbine with a shout of warning.

At the shot and the shout, five or six others came bursting through the other hedge in a twinkling. To attempt to hide was useless.

"Run for it!" muttered Sam, darting through the hedge next him and into a little spinney beyond, followed by half a dozen rifle-bullets that tore through the undergrowth. The two boys ran through the corner of the spinney, were sighted there by another party of German infantrymen, who raised small paddock beyond, a shout, and the brothers darted back and crossed again. They reached a clear of men, and dashed through it and down a cart-track, at the end of which was a larger field. Hearing the sound of more men

ahead, the boys dived into some bushes that were close at hand, and lay there panting.

"The whole country-side's roused now, confound it!" said Sam ruefully. "They all know there are a couple of British scouts out, and they'll scour every inch of ground. I wish you hadn't stopped to mess about with that balloon!"

"We'll get a chance to nip out clear yet," murmured Stephen hopefully.

"We've got to take the first that offers, that's all, however risky. Every blue-coated beggar in the neighbourhood'll be prancin' round lookin' for two chaps in khaki."

"Lucky we're in our uniforms. They won't—"

"It's a wall an' a firing-party for us if we're spotted, you know that jolly well. The Greys' scouts won't be shown any more mercy here than they would have in England. Keep a sharp look-out that side."

There was no getting out ahead as yet, for several Germans were about, all on the alert, and a troop of Uhlan lancers went cantering across. The horsemen disappeared, greatly to the relief of the boys, but at the same time a whole company of infantry came down the field from the other direction, scattered here and there, moving towards the boys, and searching every bush and bramble with fixed bayonets. They were doing the thing thoroughly.

"That lot's after us, and it's a sure finish if they find us here," said Sam, eyeing the approaching Germans; "we've got to make a run for that next hedge and chance being seen. It's no go, I'm afraid, old chap!"

"I'm ready to try it. Come on!"

"Plug away with your revolver till they get you down, if it comes to a capture. We shall be given no chance, anyhow, should they get hold of us. Now, then, sprint for it!"

In the growing light the boys left the bushes, and, keeping bent double, streaked out across the field, trusting to chance and the shadow of the bushes, not to be seen.

It looked as though fortune favoured them. They reached the hedge, but were seen just as they got to it, and broke through to the other side as the Germans started in hot pursuit. The boys sprinted for their lives across the next field, their hopes now at zero.

"Look out!" cried Stephen suddenly. "The balloon! Behind you!"

Something came driving over the tall hedge like a great bird, sweeping downwards towards the ground. It was the balloon sure enough. A fathom of cut rope dangled under it, showing it had just broken away, and the strong northerly breeze was whirling it away rapidly. A single occupant was in the car—an officer of the Aerial Corps—and he was tugging at the valve-cord, causing the balloon to drop rapidly.

It came sweeping along just clear of the ground, and was upon Sam before he could get out of the way, just as the riflemen came bursting through the hedge. The car struck the young scout, and he clung to it with all his might.

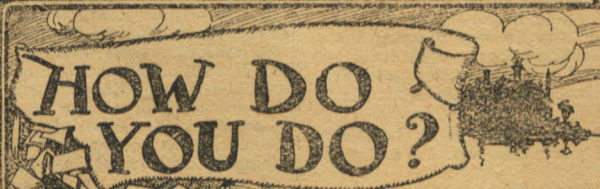
The sudden weight brought the balloon to the ground, and it went bumping and bouncing along heavily. Stephen made a wild grab and caught hold of the basket-ropes.

There was a sharp shout, and the German in the car, seeing he had to do with an enemy, whipped out his revolver. Sam's was out first, however, the shot cracked an instant before the German's pistol was levelled, and as the balloonist officer collapsed and fell backwards, Sam heaved himself into the bumping car.

"Quick!" he cried hoarsely to Stephen, who was scrambling in after him. "Out with all weight!"

The boys thrust the inert form of the German officer out of the car with all possible haste; but though the valve had closed, the balloon was double-weighted, and only drove along helplessly, dragging along the ground without rising. The German infantrymen, with harsh cries of rage, were rushing in pursuit and coming up fast.

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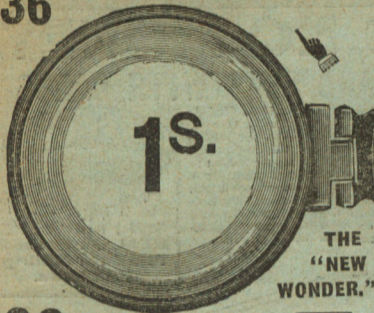
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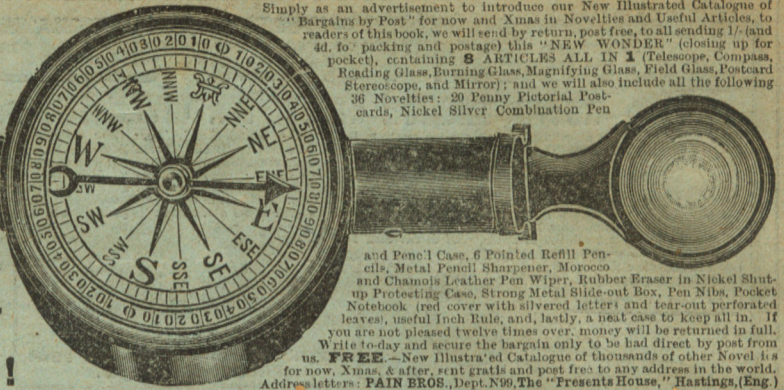
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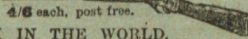


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