

A DOUBLE-LENGTH TOM MERRY STORY! (SEE SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT NEXT THURSDAY.)

Every

Thursday.



Complete Stories for All and Every Story a Gem!

“D’ARCY’S DOUBLE.”

A Splendid Long, Complete Tale of the Chums of St. Jim’s and their Rivals of the Grammar School.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.



Arthur Augustus D’Arcy, of St. Jim’s, face to face with his double of the Grammar School!

CHAPTER 1. Fairly Caught.

“**Q**UIET!”
“Weally, Blake—”
“Quiet, you ass!”
“I wefuse—”

Jack Blake’s hand closed forcibly over the mouth of Arthur Augustus D’Arcy, and the remark D’Arcy had been about to make died away in a faint gasp.

“Quiet, you fathead!” whispered Blake. “You’ll give the alarm! Quiet, you fellows! Don’t make a row, Tom Merry. Keep your feet still, Figgins, you ass! Don’t move, Lowther. Quiet!”

“Seems to me that you’re making more row than anybody else,” observed Tom Merry.

“Quiet, you ass! You’ll alarm the Grammar cads!”

Blake hissed out the words with intense earnestness. Arthur Augustus D’Arcy jerked his head away from Blake’s detaining hand, and glared in speechless indignation at his chum. The rest of the juniors were very quiet.

There were eight or nine of them in the party, under the heavy branches of Rylcombe Wood. Jack Blake and D’Arcy, of the Fourth, and Tom Merry, and Manners, and Lowther, of the Shell—the ornaments of the School House at St. Jim’s—and Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn, of the Fourth Form and the New House—deadly rivals of Tom Merry & Co., excepting when they united with them for the purpose of taking

Next Thursday:

“WHEN A BOY’S DOWN!” AND “DEEP SEA GOLD.”

the warpath against Rylcombe Grammar School—as they were doing on the present occasion.

"Weally, Blake—" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy burst out at last.

"Quiet!" said Tom Merry.

"Shut up, Tom Merry!" muttered Blake.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Better all shut up," suggested Kerr, who was famous for his practical common-sense. "Suppose we all keep quiet—especially Blake?"

"Yes, especially Blake," agreed Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah—especially Blake."

Blake snorted.

"Well, if you want the Grammarians to hear us—" he began resignedly.

"Blessed if I think there are any Grammarians in the wood at all," said Figgins. "I haven't seen an, for one."

"Bai Jove! No!"

"And I haven't heard any," said Tom Merry.

"I haven't, either."

"Blake has been having dreams," Monty Lowther suggested.

And the St. Jim's juniors chuckled, and Blake glared.

"I tell you I saw three of them sneaking into the wood, carrying bundles," he said. "They were Gordon Gay, the Cornstalk chap, and Frank Monk and Carboy."

"Sure?"

"Yes, ass."

"Going to have a feed, perhaps," Fatty Wynn remarked, smacking his lips. "I don't see what they could have in the bundles, excepting grub."

"You wouldn't," said Manners.

"Look here, you School House fathead—"

"Well, you New House porpoise—"

"I'll jolly well—"

"I'll—"

"That's it!" said Jack Blake sarcastically. "Start a House row now, with the Grammar School chaps in hearing! Go it!"

"Ordah!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, turning his eyes glass severely upon Fatty Wynn and Manners. "Ordah, deah boys!"

"I know jolly well what they had in the bundles," said Blake, with conviction. "You know Gordon Gay is always getting up some theatrical bizney or other. I believe they're out here for a rehearsal, and perhaps they're going to dress the parts. If we take care, we can take them by surprise—if you New House chaps don't jaw and alarm them."

"Look here—"

"There you go again! That's one thing I've always noticed about you New House chaps," Blake remarked, in a reflective sort of way. "You must jaw!"

"Peace, my sons!" said Tom Merry pacifically. "Peace in the wigwam! If the Grammar cads are here—"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Shut up! I can hear them! Listen!"

"To be or not to be, that is the question!
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
And by opposing, end them!"

The well-known lines, recited in a clear, boyish voice, came clearly through the trees. The St. Jim's juniors grinned at one another. Well they knew the voice of Gordon Gay, of the Fourth Form at Rylcombe Grammar School, the leader of the Grammarians in their frequent alarms and excursions against the "Saints."

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "That's Gordon Gay, right enough."

"Yes, rather."

"Come on," said Blake softly.

The incipient House row was forgotten already. School House and New House were like brothers when it was a question of raiding the Grammarians. With all the caution they had learned as Boy Scouts, the St. Jim's juniors trod softly through the wood in the direction of the ringing voice of Gordon Gay.

Jack Blake held up his hand as a sign to stop. In the glare before them, as they peered through the thicket, three strange figures were to be seen. Three ancient Danes, but of moderate size for Danes. Gordon Gay had the garb of Hamlet on, and Frank Monk was in the guise of Horatio, and Carboy was clad as Laertes. Horatio and Laertes were gazing very admiringly upon their leader as he spouted the famous soliloquy.

"Jolly good!" said Monk.

"Ripping!" said Carboy.

"Well, don't interrupt, then," said Gordon Gay.

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"THE BULLY'S CHANCE!"

is the title of the splendid, long, complete school tale of Harry Wharton & Co. appearing in this week's "MAGNET" Library. Now on Sale. Price One Penny.

"But that the dread of something after death,
That undiscovered country, from whose bourne
No traveller returns, puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear the ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of!"

"Oh, good!" murmured Blake. "But we'll give him something to stop all that! Come on, you fellows!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"We're ready!"

And with a shout the St. Jim's juniors rushed from the thicket, and Hamlet, Horatio, and Laertes were collared and rolled over in the grass.

CHAPTER 2.

Not Nice.



"W!"

"Oh!"

"St. Jim's cads! Ow!"

The Grammarian juniors yelled as they went down. But they had no chance. They struggled in vain in the grasp of many hands.

Each of them was deposited upon his back in the grass, and upon each chest a St. Jim's junior sat.

The three Grammarians gazed up at their grinning captors in boundless rage.

"Lemme gerrup!" roared Gordon Gay.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wats, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, turning his eyeglass upon Gordon Gay. "I wathah weckon we're not goin' to do anythin' of the sort, you know."

"No fear!" grinned Figgins.

Gordon Gay gasped.

"You—you bounders!" he exclaimed. "What do you mean by interrupting a peaceful rehearsal? Lemme gerrup! Take this fat beast off my chest!"

"Look here—" began Fatty Wynn.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wathah think you're done this time, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "As a mattah of fact, Gay, deah boy, I have nevah weally made it up to you for the time you had the feahful cheek to disguise yourself as me, and made me look wicidulous. Undah the circs—"

"Rats!" said Gay. "I never made you look ridiculous. Nature did that."

"Weally, Gay—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pway let Gordon Gay get up, Wynn, while I thwash him—"

"Hold on, Gussy!" said Blake. "Thrashings are off. We're going to confiscate their clothes, and send them home to the Grammar School in Shakespearian costume."

"Bai Jove! Ha, ha, ha!"

The Grammarians exchanged looks of dismay. They could imagine the howls of laughter that would greet them in the Grammar School, when they marched in at the school gates as Hamlet, Horatio, and Laertes.

"I say—" began Frank Monk.

"Rats!" said Blake, gathering up the garments the Grammarians had discarded. "We'll take charge of these. You shall have them back by parce's post to-morrow."

"Don't you dare to take our clothes away!" yelled Frank Monk.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We'll—we'll smash you!" roared Gordon Gay.

"Bai Jove! I don't see how you'll do the smashin', undah the circs," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "But you are welcome to twy, deah boys."

"Gimme my duds!" yelled Carboy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The discarded garments were carefully gathered up. Then the three Grammarians were rolled over in the grass, and tossed into a mass of bushes, and the St. Jim's fellows retreated, bearing the raided clothes with them.

The faint sound of a laugh floated back through the wood to the ears of the enraged Grammarians.

Gordon Gay scrambled out of the thicket. He rushed in the direction taken by Tom Merry & Co., and then he paused. It was not much use to pursue the Saints—three were not likely to be able to effect much against so many. The Grammarians would only be looking for a licking, and it was certainly impossible for them to get their clothes back unless the Saints chose to give them up. Which was not likely to happen.

Frank Monk and Carboy scrambled out of the hedge, looking considerably rumped. They looked furious, too.

"Are we going to let them get away with our togs?" demanded Monk furiously.

Gordon Gay burst into a laugh. "Well, I guess we are!" he said. "I don't see how we're to prevent it, anyway."

"Let's get after them, and—"

"Get licked?"

"Well, I suppose it's not much good," said Frank Monk, pausing.

"I suppose not!" said Gordon Gay. "Let's get back to school."

"Like this!" roared Monk and Carboy together.

Gordon Gay shrugged his shoulders.

"Not if you can think of any other way out of it," he said; "I can't."

Frank Monk and Carboy couldn't, either, when they thought it over. But to return to the Grammar School in Shakespearian costume! They raged for a few minutes; and then, making up their minds to it, they tramped away savagely through the wood.

As they came out into the lane that led to the Grammar School, two or three people caught sight of them, and there was a yell of laughter. It was not often that fellows were seen in the quiet lanes of Rylcombe in the costume of Shakespeare's heroes.

With very red faces, Gordon Gay & Co. tramped on to the Grammar School.

The great red-brick building burst upon their view, and they burst upon the view of a group of juniors in the gateway. Harry and Jack Wootton, and Lane, and Carpenter, and Tadpole, and several other fellows were there, and they all burst into hysterical laughter at the sight of the three unhappy rehearsers.

"Back up!" muttered Gay. "Run for it! We shall have to run the gauntlet till we get in."

And the three heroes ran.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Where are your duds?"

"Behold Hamlet!"

"To be or not to be, that is the question."

"Oh, my prophetic soul, Horatio!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The three rehearsers, crimson and furious, dashed across the quad. They reached the House, and on the steps ran almost full-tilt into Mr. Adams, the master of the Fourth. The Form-master stared at them blankly.

"Wh-wh-what is this?" he gasped.

"Ahem!" said Gordon Gay.

"H'm!" muttered Frank Monk.

"You see—" explained Carboy; but he got no further.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Mr. Adams. "What is the meaning of this ridiculous masquerade, Gay? Do you mean to say that you have actually been out of doors in that absurd costume?"

"You see, sir—"

"Ridiculous! You will take five hundred—"

"Somebody took our clothes, sir, while we were rehearsing Shakespeare in the wood, sir," Gordon Gay interposed hurriedly, before the word "hires" could come out.

Mr. Adams started; then a smile overspread his face.

"H'm! Very unfortunate for you," he exclaimed. "I hope you will recover your clothes."

"Ye-es, sir; I—I think we shall, sir," stammered Gay.

"Go and take those absurd things off at once."

"Yes, sir."

The victims of the little joke of Tom Merry & Co. hurried up to their dormitory. They glared at one another as they dragged off the costumes.

"Nice go this is—I don't think!" growled Frank Monk.

Gordon Gay chuckled.

"Well, they had us, fair and square!" he said.

"Rats! It's beastly!"

"Oh, be a sportsman, Monkey!"

"That's all very well," yelled the exasperated Monk, "but what will the fellows say? We shall never hear the end of this."

"Not till we've got level with the giddy Saints, I know," grinned Gordon Gay.

"And how are we going to do that?" growled Carboy.

Gordon Gay smiled serenely.

"You leave it to your uncle," he said.

To which Frank Monk and Carboy replied simultaneously: "Rats!"

But the Cornstalk junior only chuckled. Gordon Gay could take a joke as cheerfully as he could perpetrate one, which is saying a good deal. And already a scheme had been hatched in his fertile brain for scoring in his turn over the juniors of St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 3.

An Invitation for Gussy.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY chuckled. He was seated in the junior common-room, in the School House at St. Jim's, the same evening.

Preparation was over, and the juniors were chatting before going to bed. Tom Merry and Manners, of the Shell, were playing chess. Monty Lowther was looking on, giving advice to both players alternately, by which he was reducing both of them to a state almost of frenzy.

Blake and Digby and Herries, of the Fourth, were talking football. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had been apparently buried in reflection for some time, and he had emerged from his brown study with that sudden chuckle.

Jack Blake turned his head round to look at the swell of St. Jim's.

"Broken anything?" he asked.

"Weally, Blake—"

"I'm sure something went off," said Blake, cycling the swell of St. Jim's suspiciously. "Didn't you hear it, Dig?"

"Yes, rather!" said Digby.

"Didn't you, Herries?"

"Yes," said Herries. "It was a sound like a clock running down."

"You uttah asses!" said D'Arcy, turning his eyeglass indignantly upon his chums of the Fourth Form. "You know perfectly well that I was laughin'."

"Oh, were you?" said Blake. "I dare say you were, now you mention it. You are quite sure you haven't broken anything?"

"Pway don't be an ass, Blake! I was thinkin' of the wippin' way I have done the Gwammah cads to-day."

Blake stared at him.

"The ripping way you've done the Grammar cads!" he howled. "Well, of all the nerve! It was my idea from start to finish."

"Weally, Blake—"

"You nearly spoiled the whole thing by making a row," said Blake; "that was all that you had to do with it."

"Pway don't be an ass, deah boy! Of course, I was at the bottom of the whole thing. I—"

Blake turned excitedly to the Terrible Three.

"I say, you Shell chaps, whose idea was it to collar the Grammar cads in the wood?" he yelled.

"Mine!" said Tom Merry promptly.

"Eh?"

"Rook to king's second," said Tom Merry, addressing Manners. "I think that busts you, old man."

"I should have moved the bishop," said Lowther judiciously.

"I dare say you would," agreed Tom Merry, "but I'm playing chess."

"Look here—"

"The Gwammah cads will be awf'ly watty about it," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I don't know whethah I was a little too severe on them. Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you ass! You had nothing to do with it, except to nearly muck up the whole thing by jawing at the wrong moment," said Blake, with just indignation.

"Pway don't split your infinitives, deah boy!" said D'Arcy. "It wowsies me. I always did object stwongly to a split infinitive."

"Ass!"

"I wufuse to be called an ass. I wathah think that Gordon Gay will be feelin' inclined to kick himself, and us too," said D'Arcy, with another chuckle. "I must say you backed me up all wight, deah boys. I must say that."

"Well, my hat—"

"Letter for Master D'Arcy," said Toby, the School House page, putting his shock head into the common-room.

"Bwing it heah, deah boy," said D'Arcy. "Thank you vewy much. Give him a shillin', Blake, please."

"Haven't one," said Blake. "Will a ha'penny do?"

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NEXT
WEEK:

"WHEN A BOY'S DOWN."

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"Weally, Blake— Give him a shillin', Dig."
 "Only got twopence," said Digby cheerfully.
 "Give him a shillin', Hewwies."
 "Stony!" said Herries tersely.
 "Bai Jove! It's too bad! Now I shall have all the twouble of extwactin' money fivom my pocket," said D'Arcy; and he rose and groped in his trousers' pocket for a coin.
 Blake glared at him.
 "You—you nine kinds of an ass! Do you mean to say you've got money on you all the time?"
 "Yaas, wathah; but it's a feahful fag gettin' up, and I'm feelin' completely exhausted aftah my exertions this aftahnoon, in downin' the Gwammah cads. Here you are, Toby; and mind you don't spend it in wiotous livin'."
 "Thank you kindly, Master D'Arcy."

And Toby took the shilling and departed. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was always gorgeous in his tips. He was the only junior at St. Jim's who expended shillings in that princely way.

"Who's the letter from, ass?" asked Blake. "Quite sure it isn't for me? I'm expecting a remittance from my Aunt Jane."

"It's fivom Fwank Monk?"

"The Grammar bounder?"

"Yaas, wathah!" said Arthur Augustus, turning the letter over in his hands. "I wondah what the boundah can have to say to me? Pewwaps he wants me to let him down more lightly next time?"

"Fathhead!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Open the letter!" shrieked Blake. "That's the way to see what he wants."

"Yaas, that's wathah a good ideah."

Arthur Augustus slit the envelope with a little silver-handled penknife, and took out the letter. It was written in the big, bold handwriting of Frank Monk.

"Dear D'Arcy,—Will you come over and see us to-morrow, Wednesday afternoon? My sister Phyllis is coming to tea, and we particularly want her to see you. If you could get here immediately after dinner, we should take it as a great favour, and we would do our best to give you a good time. Always yours,
 F. MONK."

"Bai Jove! I wogard that as a nice lettah," said D'Arcy, "especially considewin' the way I waggid them to-day."

"The way I ragged them, you mean."

"Wats!"

"I suppose it's some jape," said Kangaroo.

Blake shook his head.

"Oh, no; Frank Monk wouldn't jape Gussy after getting him there on a friendly visit. Gussy will be safe enough personally. But Monkey must have some motive, all the same."

"Weally, Blake, his motive is quite plain enough. He wants some fellow of tact and judgment to help entahtain Phyllis."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, you fellows—"

"There's something else in it," said Tom Merry, who had turned round from the chess-table to hear the letter read—"something more than that. They won't jape Gussy, after invitin' him there; that wouldn't be cricket. But they've got something on, you can bet your best Sunday boots on that."

"I guess so," said Jerrold Lumley-Lumley. "But what's the little game?"

D'Arcy nodded thoughtfully.

"Yaas, it's quite poss.," he remarked. "Pewwaps they want to get me out of the way while they waid the school."

"What!" roared the juniors.

"My hat!" shrieked Tom Merry. "Why should they want to get you out of the way? What good would you be if you stayed?"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Of all the cheeky asses—"

"You chaps bein' left without a leadah, natuwally they would have an easy time waggin' you," said D'Arcy loftily. "I wecomend you to keep your eyes open, so as not to be done bdown while I am away."

The juniors glared at him. D'Arcy's opinion of himself was a very considerable one, but the idea that the Grammarians would take the trouble to entice him out of the way, while they raided St. Jim's, was a little too rich.

"Well, you chump!" said Blake, in measured tones.

"Weally, Blake—"

"Faith, and are you goin' to accept the invitation?" asked Reilly.

"Yaas, wathah! If Fwank Monk wants me to entahtain his sister, I should be wantin' in politeness to decline."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see anythin' whatever to gwain at," said D'Arcy, with a great deal of dignity. "I shall now pwocceed to wite a weply to Fwank Monk, acceptin'." Pway excuse me, deah

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boys, as I have to catch the post, or he won't get my weply in the mornin'."

And the swell of St. Jim's walked away.

He left the juniors grinning and busily discussing the letter. That there was something under that invitation everybody but D'Arcy suspected; but what it was they could not guess. Frank Monk & Co. would certainly not jape the guest within their gates. But what could be their motive for getting him away from St. Jim's. If they had intended any raid, D'Arcy's presence at St. Jim's would not have hindered them in any way. It was a puzzle, and Tom Merry tried in vain to solve it.

CHAPTER 4.

Gordon Gay's Little Scheme.

WEDNESDAY was a half-holiday at both the Grammar School and St. Jim's. Gordon Gay & Co., of the Grammar School, had intended to play St. Jim's juniors at footer that afternoon, but there had been too much rain of late. The ground was in no condition for play, and the match had been scratched.

As a rule, the scratching of a footer match would have made the heroes of the Grammar School look decidedly doleful. But on Wednesday morning Gordon Gay and Frank Monk and Carboy and Lane seemed to be in high spirits. They grinned to one another in the Form-room in the morning, and whispered to such an extent that Mr. Adams, the Form-master, was "down" upon them more than once.

"If there is any more talking in class I shall detain the boys concerned this afternoon," said Mr. Adams at last.

That was enough.

From that moment Gordon Gay & Co. were as silent as oysters. In spite of the fact that football was "off," they evidently had very strong reasons for not wishing to be detained that Wednesday afternoon.

Gordon Gay breathed a sigh of relief when lessons were over, and the Fourth Form of the Grammar School crept out into the flagged passage.

"My only hat," Gay ejaculated. "Adams gave me quite a turn! Suppose we had been detained—"

"Horrible!" said Monk.

"All serene now though! Come up to my study."

"Can't get to bizney till after dinner," said Monk.

"No; but we can get the things ready."

"Right you are!"

And the four juniors tramped upstairs.

They were grinning gleefully when they came down to dinner.

Immediately that meal was disposed of they made for the staircase.

"Aren't you coming out, Gay?" asked Jack Wootton, stopping Gordon Gay on the stairs. "It's turning out beautifully fine, and we could get a cycle run."

Gay shook his head.

"Can't be did."

"Something on?" asked Jack Wootton.

"Yes, rather! Come and help."

"Oh, all right!"

Five juniors crowded into Gordon Gay's study. Tadpole of the Fourth, who was an amateur artist, had the window already blocked up with an easel and was painting away in wonderful reds and greens. Gordon Gay jerked the brush out of his hand, Monk took the palette, and Lane seized the easel, Wootton the canvas. Carboy grasped the artist himself. Artist and art were deposited in the passage. Tadpole sat there gasping and blinking.

"Dear me!" he ejaculated. "This—this must be a sudden attack of insanity! Gay—"

"It's all right, old son!" said the Coinstalk. "We want the study for a bit, that's all."

"But I was painting—"

"Never mind!"

"But I really do mind, Gay. It is too bad. Let us argue the point—"

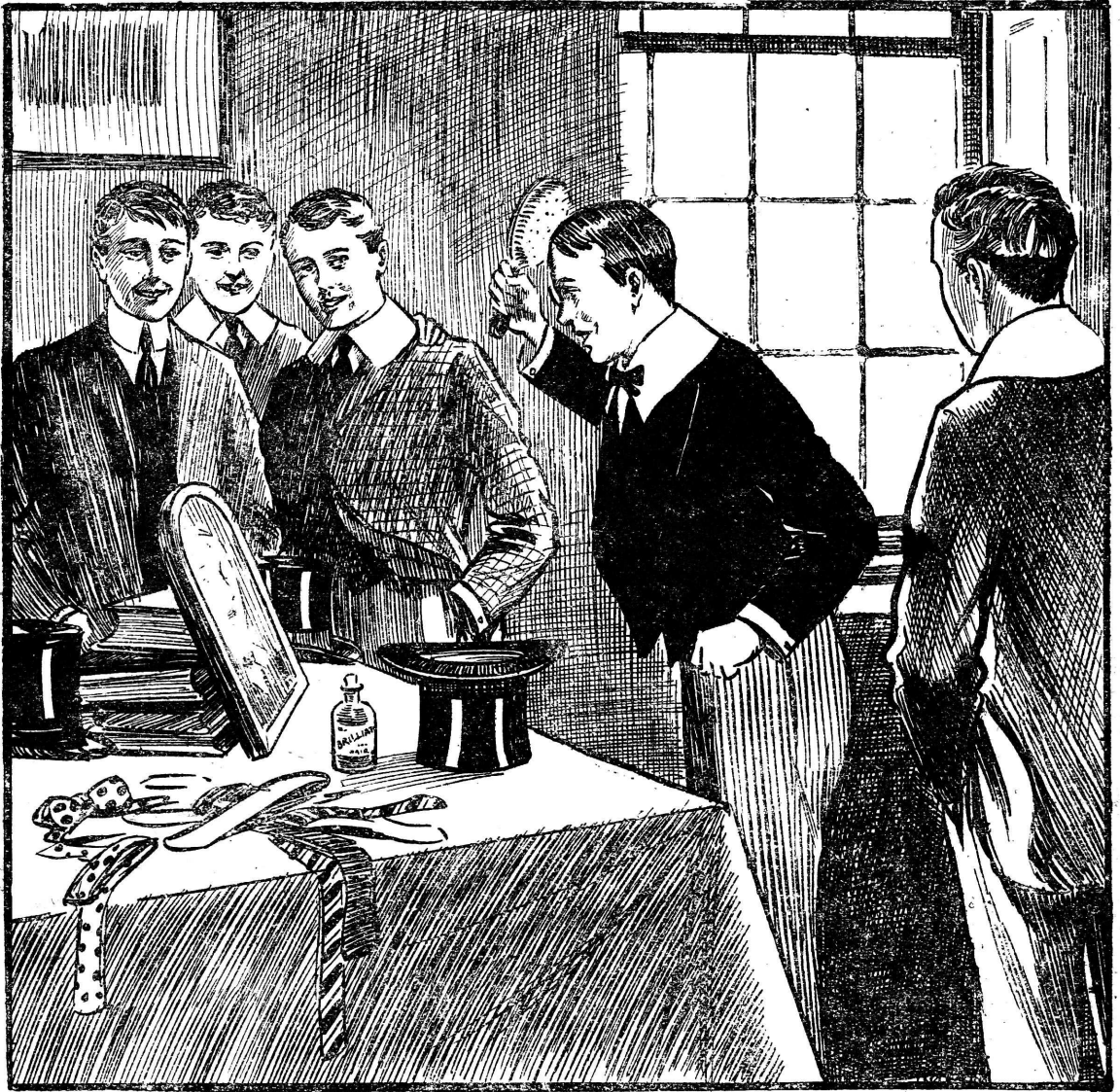
Slam!

The sudden and forcible closing of the study door put an end to Tadpole's expostulations. He rose to his feet, gathered up his various properties, and drifted sadly away. From within the study came the sound of many chuckles.

Gordon Gay was in great humour. Jack Wootton was mystified, especially when he saw his chum take out a box of make-up, and drag bundles of clothes out of the cupboard.

Gordon Gay was a born actor, and he frequently amused his Form-fellows by impersonations. He had the gift of imitating any voice, and in his make-up he had passed himself off as the most unlikely persons—once as Mr. Adams, the Form-master, once as the Head, and once, on a famous occasion as Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of St. Jim's.

"What's the joke?" asked Jack Wootton.



Gordon Gay stood before a glass and worked swiftly. He was very much of D'Arcy's build, and already he was the double of the Swell of St. Jim's. His chums grinned joyously as they looked at him. (See below.)

"It's a little jape on St. Jim's, my son," said Gordon Gay, with a chuckle, "in return for their little jape yesterday. Gussy's coming over for the afternoon, when Monk's sister is here—"

Wootton looked serious. "Hang it all, Gay, you're not thinking of japing a chap you've invited?" he exclaimed.

"Of course not, ass!"

"Then what's the game?"

"We're going to jape the other chaps at St. Jim's."

"A regular, ripping, royal jape!" chuckled Frank Monk.

"But how—"

"Do you remember my making up as Gussy once?"

Wootton laughed.

"Yes, rather!"

"Well, that's what I'm going to do now," grinned Gordon Gay. "While Gussy the First is here, Gussy the Second will be at St. Jim's—giving them a high old time."

"My hat!"

"Hand out the duds, Franky."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wootton.

"Gussy will be here, without a suspish.. as he would say in his wonderful language," said Gordon Gay. "I shall be

at St. Jim's as Gussy. And I reckon the fellows there won't have a suspish. either."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"They'll give it to you in the neck if they find you out," said Wootton.

"But they won't find me out."

Gordon Gay's hands were busy while he was talking.

He had taken off his outer garments, and he dressed himself afresh in a brand new Eton suit, fresh from the tailor, with a fancy waistcoat which would have put the celebrated coat of Joseph to shame.

Gay was very much of D'Arcy's build, and already, as far as form went, he was the double of the swell of St. Jim's—the fancy waistcoat, the delicate and brilliant shoes, the wonderfully-creased trousers all smacked of the St. Jim's swell.

Then his hands were busy with the make-up.

He stood before a glass and worked swiftly.

Frank Monk sorted out silk hats and ties and eyeglasses.

Gordon Gay had a very extensive wardrobe for the purpose of amateur theatricals, and he had everything that he needed for the impersonation of the aristocratic Fourth-Former of St. Jim's.

His chums grinned joyously as they helped.

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NEXT
WEEK:

"WHEN A BOY'S DOWN."

It was a huge jape—quite the biggest thing the chums of the Grammar School had ever undertaken—and if it succeeded it would be the biggest score they had ever made over the rival school. And Gordon Gay meant that it should succeed.

It was not only in make-up, but in the play of the features, of which the schoolboy-actor was a master, that he succeeded in his impersonations.

When he turned from the glass and jammed a monocle into his eye the Grammarians juniors shrieked.

It was D'Arcy's double that was looking at them!

"Gimme a topper!" grinned Gordon Gay.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My only hat! It's ripping!"

"Bai Jove!" said Gordon Gay, with a masterly imitation of the languid drawl of the swell of St. Jim's. "Bai Jove, deah boys, I wathlah weckon this will knock them. What?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pway give me a niceh tie than that, Monkey, deah boy. You weally do not imagine I can weah a tie with only seven colours in it, do you?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Where's my tiepin, you boundahs?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Gordon Gay was finished at last.

The change was wonderful.

His complexion was paler, his hair was nicely parted and brushed back, his eyebrows were darker, his mouth seemed a little smaller, and his whole expression was altered. The gold-rimmed monocle, upon a black cord, gleamed in his eye. The hat was stuck on his head at exactly the tilt of D'Arcy's topper. He encased his hands in lavender kid gloves, and flicked a speck of dust from his immaculate trousers.

"My only chapeau!" gasped Frank Monk. "If I didn't know it was Gay I should think it was Gussy or his ghost. Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Grammarians yelled with laughter.

"No time to lose," said Gordon Gay. "Gussy the First will be here in half an hour now, at the latest. Mind you fellows give him a good time."

"Yes, rather! Ha, ha, ha!"

"And mind he doesn't leave before six at the earliest," said Gordon Gay. "By that time I shall have made the Saints sit up, I think."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on!" said Monk. "The station cab's at the door, and you can get away without many of the chaps seeing you. This way!"

He unlocked the study door.

Gordon Gay & Co. descended. There was a shout from a group of juniors in the passage:

"St. Jim's cad!"

"Yah!"

Frank Monk held up his hand.

"Courtesy to visitors!" he said severely.

"Rats! Look here—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Gordon Gay. "My hat! Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors stared at him, stupefied.

"My word! Gordon Gay!" gasped Harry Wootton.

"Yes, rather! Ha, ha, ha! And if it takes you in it will take in the Saints!" chuckled Gordon Gay. "Not a word, mind! Keep it dark!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Rather!"

And Gordon Gay slipped downstairs into the waiting cab, and bowled away. He left a crowd of juniors roaring with laughter at the door of the Grammar School—and anticipating with great glee the arrival of the real and genuine Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

CHAPTER 5. Helping D'Arcy.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY, in cheerful ignorance of the plot that was working at the Grammar School, ate his dinner in the School House at St. Jim's, wearing a sunny smile the while.

Arthur Augustus was not in the least surprised at being invited to the Grammar School to assist in entertaining Miss Phyllis. D'Arcy was nothing if not a ladies' man, and it was perfectly clear to him that Frank Monk's little teaparty at the Grammar School could hardly be considered a success if he was not there. D'Arcy felt complimented, but he took the compliment as a matter of course.

His chums grinned as they regarded his cheerful face. That Frank Monk & Co. had some ulterior motive they were quite certain; but Arthur Augustus went on his lofty way regardless.

"Bai Jove, I shall have to huwwy, you know!" said
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"THE BULLY'S CHANCE!"

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Arthur Augustus, as he came out of the dining-hall with the rest of the Form. "Fwank Monk said I was to get there soon atfah dinnah, you know. I dare say Miss Phyllis is comin' early."

"Better start now," said Monty Lowther seriously. "Run all the way, and—"

"I shall have to dwess in a mannah becomin' the occasion, of course," said Arthur Augustus. "What kind of a tie would you advise, Blake?"

"A necktie," said Blake.

"Weally, Blake, you know perfectly well that I mean what kind of a necktie. Undah the cirss—"

"Spotted, with pink stripes and yellow bars," said Monty Lowther. "I think I should have some blue in it, and a shade of green, and a touch of red, and just a suspicion of brown, and—"

"Pway don't talk out of your hat, deah boy!"

"And a carriage and four to go in," said Lowther. "Miss Phyllis will expect you to arrive in style, you know."

"Wats!"

Arthur Augustus walked away with his chums. The expression upon his aristocratic countenance was very thoughtful.

"You chaps might help me to get weady," he remarked. "I weally haven't vewy much time to waste."

"We've got lines to do," said Blake. "Lathom was ratty this morning, simply because Digby and Herries talked to me. Lathom gets his little back up sometimes. We've got a hundred lines each to do."

"Yes. Rotten!" said Digby. "And it's turning out a ripping afternoon."

"I was going to take Towser for a run!" growled Herries. "I suppose you wouldn't like to drop Monk, and take Towser out instead, would you, Gussy?"

"Certainly not, Hewwies!"

"I will brush your hat if you like," said Blake. "And about your corsets—"

"Weally, Blake—"

"We'll all lend a hand with them," said Digby. "When it's a question of seeing Gussy start off in good style, I think we ought to be willing, all of us, to lend a hand with his corsets."

"You uttah ass!" shrieked D'Arcy. "You know perfectly well that I do not wear corsets!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

D'Arcy's eyes glinted through his eyeglass. He certainly had a most elegant figure, but it was a sheer libel to say that he wore corsets.

"I suppose I had bettah go up and change," he remarked. "I will come to the studay latah, and twy on the neckties, and ask your opinion, deah boys."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy made his way to the Fourth Form dormitory, to change into his best raiment for the important occasion, and Blake and Herries and Digby went up to Study No. 6 to do their lines.

D'Arcy spread out a variety of garments in the Fourth Form dormitory. He was busily engaged in selecting them when Monty Lowther looked in.

"Want any help?" asked the humorist of the Shell.

D'Arcy looked at him suspiciously. He had reason to be suspicious of offers of help from Monty Lowther.

"Thank you; no!" he replied.

"I don't mind lifting you into your trousers, to save the crease," said Lowther, "or I will lend a hand with the corsets—"

"That is an uttably wotten joke, Lowthah!"

"Of corset is!" agreed Lowther.

"Pway don't make any of your wotten puns, Lowthah! I am vewy busay! I shall be obliged if you will cleah out!" said Arthur Augustus, with dignity.

"Can I brush your hat for you?"

"My hat is in my studay, and you will kindly leave it alone, Lowthah! I wegard you as a pwactical-jokin' beast!"

Monty Lowther chuckled, and withdrew from the dormitory. He was determined to help Arthur Augustus to get ready for the state visit to the Grammar School, though whether the swell of St. Jim's would benefit by his aid was another question.

Skimpole, of the Shell, was in the passage as Monty Lowther went down. Skimpole had an enormous volume under his arm. Skimpole was a genius—genius looked out from his big, bumpy forehead and from his glinting spectacles and from his short-sighted eyes. He was going to spend his half-holiday in perusing the weighty volume of Professor Barmyrumptet, in which the professor clearly proved the most obvious things in the longest possible words.

Monty Lowther tapped him on the shoulder.

"Busy, Skimmy?" he asked.

CHAPTER 6.

Skimpole is too Kind.

Skimpole blinked at him.

"Not exactly busy, Lowther," he replied. "I am about to make a further study of the subject of Determinism. I—"

"Yes. Ahem!"

"I should be glad to read the book aloud to you, Lowther, if you like," said Skimpole generously. "Chapter two hundred and twenty-seven is splendid. Professor Barmy-crumpet proves that heredity and environment are the cause of everything that is produced by the combined action of environment and heredity. It is truly wonderful!"

"It must be," agreed Lowther. "If you're busy, it's all right; but if you weren't, you might have helped Gussy a little."

Skimpole beamed. He was always ready to help anybody.

"My dear Lowther, I shall be very pleased to help D'Arcy," he exclaimed. "Does he want me to explain the first principles of Determinism?"

"Oh, no!"

"Ah! He is interested in the question of Socialism—the sufferings of the downtrodden millions, and the only possible cure of social evils by the utterance of the greatest number of words in the shortest possible time—"

"Oh, no, no! He's going out to tea!"

"Oh!" said Skimpole.

"And he's in a hurry, and he'd be obliged if you'd brush his silk topper ready for him," said Monty Lowther blandly. Skimpole looked disappointed.

"Ah! I had hoped that D'Arcy's intellectual faculties were waking up at last," he said. "However, I shall be only too pleased to assist him. Where is his hat?"

"In his study."

"I will proceed there at once."

"Hold on! Have you got a brush?"

"Dear me!" said Skimpole. "I forgot that harmless and necessary implement! In the contemplation of the great truths of Determinism, one is apt to forget such little matters appertaining to everyday life."

"Quite so!" agreed Lowther. "Wait a minute, and I'll get you a hat-brush out of my study, Skimmy."

"You are very kind, Lowther!"

"Are we not enjoined, by the great principles of Determinism, to be kind to one another?" said Monty Lowther solemnly. "If I were not kind, I should be a different kind of fellow, and a different kind would not be so kind as the same kind!"

Skimpole looked puzzled.

"I do not quite follow you—" he began.

"No need to follow me!" said Lowther politely. "I can get the brush without your assistance!"

"I did not mean—"

"Wait here, Skimmy; I'll be back in a jiffy!"

And Monty Lowther went into his study.

Skimpole remained waiting in the passage, his mighty brow corrugated with the lines of thought. He did not understand Monty Lowther. However, he opened the great book of Professor Barmy-crumpet to while away the few minutes of waiting, and was soon deeply immersed in the wonderful truths of Determinism, and forgot all about Lowther and the hat-brush and D'Arcy's hat.

Monty Lowther, meanwhile, was busy in his study.

He selected a brush—belonging to Manners, as a matter of fact—and carefully poured gum into the hair of it, working the gum carefully in.

When this task was completed, he rejoined Skimpole in the passage. The genius of the Shell was poring over his big volume, and did not see or hear Lowther till the latter uttered a sudden terrific yell right in his ear.

"Oh!" gasped Skimpole.

He gave a jump, and the huge volume of Professor Barmy-crumpet fell with a crash to the floor—upon the big toe of the humorist of the Shell.

Monty Lowther gave a yell of agony, and hopped upon one foot.

"Oh! Ow! Yow! You ass!"

Skimpole blinked at him.

"Dear me!—I am sincerely sorry, Lowther! You startled me!"

Skimpole, for a moment, was dangerously near being massaged on the spot. Then Monty Lowther controlled himself, and smiled with painful politeness.

"It's all right, Skimmy. Here's the brush. Buck up; Gussy will be waiting! I'll look after your book."

"Thank you very much, Lowther!"

And the genius of the Shell took the hat-brush, and made his way to Study No. 6.

SKIMPOLE blinked into Study No. 6.

Blake, Herries, and Digby looked up. A grin overspread their countenances as they saw the bumpy forehead and large spectacles of the amateur scientist of the Shell.

"Hallo, Skimmy!" exclaimed Blake. "What's the game?"

"Nothing, thank you, Blake," replied Skimpole, blinking round the room inquisitively.

"Then close the door on the other side!" said Herries. "We don't want any scrubbing doing! Good-bye, little yellow bird!"

"Really, Herries—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What's the brush for?" asked Digby.

Skimpole stroked the brush he held in his hand nervously.

"As a matter of fact, I have come to brush D'Arcy's hat. I understand he is in a great hurry to go out," he said. "If you will have the goodness to show me where it is, I will begin without delay."

Blake, Herries, and Digby stared at him.

"Oh, is that all?" said Blake, with a humorous twinkle in his eyes. "You will find Gussy's hat in that wardrobe there."

Skimpole went to the wardrobe. As he did so expressive looks were exchanged between Blake, Herries, and Digby. Much entertainment was expected, evidently.

"I suppose this is it?" said Skimpole, producing one of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's best silk hats. "Which is the proper way to brush it, you fellows, do you know—to the right or left? I shouldn't like to spoil it, you know."

"Don't wear 'em, Skimmy," said Blake facetiously. "Better try both, I should say!"

"To be sure! How stupid of me!" said Skimpole.

And he forthwith began to brush D'Arcy's hat to the left. Blake, Herries, and Digby grinned. It was quite evidently the wrong way, but Skimpole was too shortsighted to see it.

As a matter of fact, there were many things that Skimpole was too shortsighted to see. Whole dictionaries would not have held what Skimpole knew upon such subjects as Evolution and Socialism, but in the practical matters of life, the genius of the Shell was very much wanting.

The brush Monty Lowther had gravenly presented to Skimpole had gum upon it. D'Arcy's hat soon had gum upon it, too.

Skimpole blinked at it in a perplexed way. He did not know very much about brushing hats, but he felt sure that the way D'Arcy's silk topper was going was not the right way.

"Dear me!" murmured Skimpole.

"Anything wrong?" asked Blake sympathetically.

"Stick to it, Skimmy!" said Digby.

"The brush appears to be sticking to it!" said Skimpole, blinking at the chums of the Fourth. "I fail to see, however, any reason why I should stick to it personally, Digby. I cannot comprehend how that would improve matters in any way."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I hope D'Arcy will be pleased," said Skimpole. "I am sure my intention is to assist D'Arcy, as he is in a hurry. But I have not had very much practice in brushing hats. I never brush my own. How does that look, Blake?"

"Oh, ripping!"

"First chop!" said Herries. "Go it!"

"Perhaps the nap will lie a little smoother if you brush it harder," Digby suggested. "Put some elbow-grease into it."

Skimpole brushed away harder, and the last state of that hat was worse than the first. But Skimmy was industrious. He did not mind how much trouble he took, so long as he did D'Arcy a real service.

Hurrying feet sounded in the passage outside. Jack Blake slipped quietly to the door and turned the key. Meanwhile, Skimpole was making great efforts to make the nap lie down. D'Arcy's hat began to resemble a cat's back that has been stroked the wrong way.

"I think it will be all right when it dries," said Skimpole, holding it up for Blake, Herries, and Digby's inspection.

"Rather! D'Arcy will be pleased!"

As though in direct contradiction, a heavy knocking sounded on the door, and Arthur Augustus's voice was heard in expostulation.

"In a hurry, Gussy?" asked Blake, grinning.

"Frightfully, dear boy! Pway open the door at once!" came the answer.

"Is it locked, Gussy?"

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A Splendid, New, Long, Complete School Tale of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

ANSWERS

NEXT
WEEK:

"WHEN A BOY'S DOWN."

"Of course it's locked, you gibbewin' ass! What do you think I'm knocking for?"

"Don't know. Exercise?"

"Weally, Blake—"

"I think it would be better not to open the door till I have finished his hat," observed Skimpole doubtfully.

The chums grinned. They thought so, too.

"I wufuse to wait till my beastlay hat's finished!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, catching Skimpole's words. "Pway open the door! I shall be late for my appointment."

"Just trim the rough edges down, Skimmy," said Blake.

"I wufuse to have the wough edges twimmed down, Blake—"

"He couldn't possibly go out with it like that," went on Blake.

"What are you doin' to my beastlay hat, Skimmy?" almost shouted the swell of the School House, hammering on the door.

"I must confess I don't know," murmured Skimpole.

"Making it pretty!" shouted Herries.

"I wufuse to have it made pwetty, as you call it, Hewwies—"

"But it's by your own request, D'Arcy," said Skimpole, going to the keyhole.

"Wats! I nevah wequsted anythin' of the sort."

"He forgets, you know," murmured Blake, loud enough to penetrate the door.

"You wottah, Blake! Pway open the door at once!"

"Can't be done!" said Digby. "Buck up, Skimmy!"

"Pway have the goodness to put my hat down, Skimmy!" shouted Arthur Augustus.

"But I haven't finished it, D'Arcy—"

"I don't want it finished, I shall give you a feahful thwashin', Skimmy, if you don't let me in at once!"

Skimpole looked round at the chums of Study No. 6 in a scared manner.

"Do you heah, Skimmy?" bellowed D'Arcy.

"Come back in ten minutes," said Digby pacifically.

"You've not allowed sufficient time for a good job."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The sound of other feet pattering in the passage told the chums that the noise D'Arcy was making had got him an audience.

"I see no cause for this wibald laughtah," said Arthur Augustus, with great dignity. "I am twyin' to wescue my pwpertay fwom beastlay ill-usage. Open the door, you wottahs!" he concluded, banging on the door again.

"You're not in a fit state to come in," said Blake. "We daren't risk it. It is our duty to protect Skimmy from a lunatic—"

"Weally, Blake—"

"I really think it will do now, you fellows," said Skimpole, blinking. "There's a few lumps on it yet, but I'm sare they'll dry down in the sun."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus heard the allusion to the lumps. His choler rose to boiling point.

"Pway lend a hand, you fellahs," he said, to the juniors in the passage.

And he threw himself against the study door with the idea of breaking it in. The juniors joined in for the fun of the thing. A little dust-up between the swell of the School House and Skimpole would have been just to their liking. But though the door creaked a little, it withstood all the pressure they could put on it easily.

Skimpole backed behind Blake, Herries, and Digby.

"Oh, dear!" he gasped. "I'm sorry I took the thing on now! Lowther ought to have known better. I'm not used to silk hats, you know, yet he assured me D'Arcy wanted me to do it, specially—"

"I nevah authowised Lowthah to do anythin' of the sort. It's a beastlay twick!" exclaimed D'Arcy indignantly.

"Open the door!"

"Not until you promise not to kill Skimmy," said Blake, in feigned terror.

"I wufuse to make conditions—"

"Then you might as well spend the afternoon on it, Skimmy."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You uttah wottah, Blake!"

"Say you'll be good, then—"

"Nevah! I will administtah a sevehal thwashin' where it is needed. I insist on summawy cowwecton for Skimmy." Blake could not reply for laughing.

"I think he would be pacified if he saw it now," said Skimpole, coming forward with the hat. "What are you laughing at, you fellows?"

Between the threats of D'Arcy from without and the indignant blinkings of Skimpole within, the chums of Study

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No. 6 could do nothing but laugh till the tears ran down their faces.

"Nothing," said Jack Blake. "But we can't stay here all day."

And turning the key in the lock he called to the chums and Skimpole to follow him.

"But—but D'Arcy appears to be very much excited," murmured Skimpole. "Perhaps it would be better to keep the study door locked, and—and leave by the window—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We'll save you, old son," said Blake encouragingly.

"Take his other arm, Herries. Now, then, all together!"

"Right-ho!"

Blake flung the door open. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was hammering on it with all his strength, and he staggered in the doorway as the door was suddenly opened.

"Bai Jove—"

"Run for it!" yelled Blake.

And the three chums, apparently in the wildest terror, dashed from the study, dragging the genius of the Shell with them.

There was a terrific collision outside the doorway.

Skimpole fell over the swell of St. Jim's, and the crowd of juniors outside were scattered by the rush of Blake & Co.

"Ow! Bai Jove! Yow!"

"Dear me! Yaroo!"

"Ow! Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Blake and Herries and Digby, almost hysterical with laughter, burst through the juniors and dashed down the passage. Skimpole was sprawling on the floor, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was sitting down in a dazed state.

The silk topper lay in the dust, of which it had collected a considerable quantity. Dust adhered very readily to the nap after the way the genius of the Shell had brushed it.

Blake & Co. paused for a moment at the end of the passage to look back, and let out a fresh yell of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Then they ran for their lives.

Arthur Augustus sat and stared after them, groping wildly for his eyeglass, and wondering whether an earthquake had occurred in the Fourth-Form passage in the old School House.

CHAPTER 7.

Arthur Augustus Pays a Visit.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY picked himself up in a somewhat dazed state. Skimpole sat on the linoleum blinking through his big spectacles. Skimpole's wits were widely scattered, and he could do nothing but blink. There was a yell of laughter from the fellows in the passage.

"Bai Jove! Ow!"

"Dear me!"

"Gweat Scott! What have you been doin' with my hat, you uttah wottah?"

"Really, D'Arcy—"

"You—you—you fwabjous ass—"

"I was only trying to help you," said Skimpole reproachfully. "Lowther said that you were pressed for time, and he kindly gave me the brush to brush your hat. I am sure that I only wanted to help you, D'Arcy."

D'Arcy picked up his hat. When he saw the wonderfully brushed nap and the gum adhering to it his feelings were too deep for words.

"You—you unutterable ass!" he exclaimed.

"Really, D'Arcy, I do not want to accuse you of ingratitude, but—"

"You—you—you—"

"I will retire," said Skimpole, with dignity, picking himself up. "As Lowther remarked, we are enjoined by the first principles of Determinism to be kind to one another, but I shall think very seriously before I attempt to oblige you again, D'Arcy."

And Skimpole walked away with great dignity, leaving Arthur Augustus D'Arcy staring at the damaged hat.

"Bai Jove!" said D'Arcy, at last. "Of course, it is all Lowthah's fault. It is one of his wotten jokes. I shall have to have a bwush down before I go now, and wear my second-best hat. I wegard it as uttally wotten."

There was a chuckle in the passage as the Terrible Three came along. D'Arcy jammed his eyeglass into his eye and gazed at them indignantly.

"You uttah wottahs—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I see no weason whatevah for wibald laughtah. I am goin' to give you a feahful thwashin', Montay Lowthah—"

"Won't that disarrange your beautiful clothes, just before going on a visit, too?" asked the Shell fellow blandly.

"Bai Jove, I nevah thought of that!" said D'Arcy. "I shall thwash you when I come back from the Gwammah School, Lowthah."

"All right!" said Lowther. "I shall have time to make my will, and take out a life insurance."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy declined to reply. He went into Study No. 6 and began to brush himself down, raising clouds of dust. Then he selected another hat. Fortunately, he had a large supply of them. Whatever straits Arthur Augustus D'Arcy might be reduced to, he was never likely to run short of silk toppers.

He surveyed himself in the glass when he had finished, and he really looked very nice. A contented smile irradiated his aristocratic countenance.

"Bai Jove! I think that's all wight!" he remarked.

"Why, it's ripping!" said Blake's voice at the door.

D'Arcy turned his eyeglass upon his chum.

"I weward you as a wottah, Blake!"

"My dear ass—"

"I wufuse to be called an ass. I am vewy doubtful whethah I can continue to weward you as a fwiend, Blake."

"Well, that's rotten," said Blake, "when I've just come back to apologise, as one gentleman to another."

D'Arcy's face cleared at once.

"If you put it that way, Blake—"

"Well, I do," said Blake. "You ain't deaf, are you?"

"Then I am willin' to ovahlook the whole mattah," said

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, with a noble wave of the hand. "I shall be vewy pleased if you will walk down to the gates with me."

"Right-ho!" said Blake. "I hope you'll have a pleasant afternoon."

"Thank you vewy much, deah boy!"

Blake and Herries and Digby walked down to the gates with the swell of St. Jim's. D'Arcy raised his silk hat very gracefully there, and left them, walking down the lane by himself.

The afternoon had turned out quite sunny and pleasant, and it was a pleasant walk. The swell of St. Jim's felt his spirits rise. He was really going to have a very ripping time, and he arrived at the Grammar School quite contented and cheerful.

Frank Monk & Co. were at the gates waiting for him. They all took off their caps very politely as D'Arcy came up. D'Arcy raised his topper in the graceful manner for which he was famous.

Frank Monk bowed low, and D'Arcy bowed. Monk bowed again, and the swell of St. Jim's, not to be outdone, bowed a second time most gracefully. A chuckle was heard somewhere, but when Arthur Augustus D'Arcy glanced round every face was perfectly sober.

"Jolly glad to see you, Gussy," said Monk.

"The pleasuah is on my side, deah boy."

"Ha, ha—I mean exactly—that is to say, not at all! Come in!"

"I twust you fellows have quite forgotten the way I downed you yesterday," said the swell of St. Jim's, as he walked in between Monk and Carboy. "Of course, we nevah beah malice on either side."

"Certainly not," said Monk.

"Of course, we shall down you some time," said Lane.

D'Arcy smiled.

"I wish you luck, deah boys," he replied. "You will find it wathah difficult to pull the wool ovah my eyes, I wathah think. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Monk & Co. very heartily.

"I don't think I am vewy easily taken in, you know."

"Oh, hardly! Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Grammarians marched D'Arcy into Monk's study in great state. The table was already laid for tea, and the supplies were certainly on a generous scale.

"Gordon Gay here?" asked D'Arcy.

Monk shook his head.

"No; he's unavoidably detained elsewhere," he said.

"Sorry! Did you want to see him?"

"Oh, it's all wight!"

"My sister will be here in good time for tea," said Monk.

"Vewy good."

Miss Phyllis, when she arrived, was very sweet to Arthur Augustus. The girl had not the faintest idea that D'Arcy had been enticed to the Grammar School for any special reason. Gordon Gay & Co. had kept their own counsel upon that matter.

But Miss Phil liked D'Arcy, and as D'Arcy liked Miss Phil quite as much, they got on very well together, so that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was booked for a very pleasant afternoon.

Frank Monk & Co., and Frank Monk's sister, did their

very best to entertain him; and the swell of St. Jim's was easily entertained.

The time passed very swiftly and pleasantly.

D'Arcy was in the greatest spirits.

But it is probable that he would not have been quite so easy in his mind if he had known what was passing at St. Jim's in those same moments.

CHAPTER 8.

A Fall for the Terrible Three.

TOM MERRY & CO. were lounging on the steps of the School House some little time after the departure of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy upon his visit to the Grammar School. They were debating the possibility of getting up a game, after all, on the footer ground.

"We might kick the ball about a bit, at all events," said Tom Merry. "Don't like wasting an afternoon."

"Let's go and have a row with the New House bounders," suggested Monty Lowther.

"I've got some negatives to develop," said Manners thoughtfully. "Perhaps you fellows would like to come down into the vault and help me. I believe you've got sense enough to hold the lamp, Lowther, if you try very hard."

"I dare say," assented Lowther. "I know I jolly well haven't got the inclination, though. Let's go and take Figgins's footer away."

Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn, of the New House, were punting a football about in the quad., and several times they had brought it very near the School House, as if to challenge Tom Merry & Co. to make a raid upon it. And the Terrible Three, of the Shell, were seldom slow to accept a challenge. "Good egg!" said Tom Merry. "Better than developing rotten negatives, anyway! Those Fourth-Form bounders are doing lines, ain't they?"

"Yes. I'll call Kangaroo and Clifton Dane, and—"

"Hallo!"

"What's the matter?"

"Look!"

Tom Merry pointed to the distant school gates.

"My hat! Gussy!"

An elegant figure had entered at the gates of St. Jim's. It needed only a glance at the elegant trousers and Eton coat, the glossy boots, the shining silk topper and the eyeglass, to tell who it was.

"Gussy—he's come back," said Manners. "Were the Grammarians only japing him, after all?"

"Perhaps he's come back to give Monty that fearful thrashing, after all," suggested Tom Merry, with a grin.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, Gussy! Is the tea-party off?"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy the Second strolled up to the School House. Whether it was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy or his double the keenest eyes could hardly have told, even if a suspicion had been aroused. And the chums of the Shell certainly had no suspicion.

The elegant junior paused on the steps of the School House, and jammed his eyeglass a little tighter into his eye.

As a matter of fact, his heart was beating very fast, though outwardly he did not show a sign of it.

Gordon Gay was undergoing his first severe test.

If he passed the eyes of the Terrible Three, he was quite safe from detection, and it was soon quite clear that the Terrible Three were unsuspecting.

"Hallo, deah boys!"

"What have you come back for?" asked Tom Merry. "Is the feed off?"

"Did they find that your face was likely to worry Miss Phyllis, Gussy?" asked Lowther.

"Weally, Lowthah—"

It was D'Arcy's voice to the life.

"What's up?" asked Tom Merry. "I hope nothing's gone wrong at the Grammar School, kid."

"Pway do not allude to me as a kid, deah boy."

"Well, goat, then, as you're growing up," amended Tom Merry.

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I have declined to wemain at the Gwammah School," said the elegant junior. "I do not feel inclined to entah into a discuss. of the mattah, howevah."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see any weason for wibald laughtah, howevah."

"I thought perhaps you had come back to give me that fearful thrashing," said Monty Lowther. "I was trembling. Ha, ha, ha!"

D'Arcy eyed him through his monocle.

"Yaas, wathah! Upon the whole, I think I had bettah give you a feahful thwashin'."

"Go it!"

"Vewy well!"

The eyeglass dropped to the end of its cord, and the elegant junior laid violent hands upon the humorist of the Shell. If Lowther had known that he was dealing with Gordon Gay, the champion athlete of the Grammar School, and a past-master of all the tricks of jiu-jitsu, he would have known what to expect. As it was, he was astonished.

He was dropped in a sitting posture on the steps, and slid down them to the ground, where he alighted in a puddle left by the recent rain. There was a splash.

"Oh!" roared Monty Lowther. "Oh! My bags!"

"You asked for it, deah boy."

"You—you bounder!"

Monty Lowther jumped up and rushed up the steps, and closed with the swell of the School House. In another moment, without knowing exactly how it had happened, he found himself sitting in the puddle again, and this time he was not so quick to rise.

"My hat!" he ejaculated.

Tom Merry and Manners stared at the elegant junior in amazement. They knew that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was something of an athlete, and he had sometimes astonished his chums by unexpected displays of strength and activity. But they had never dreamed that he could handle a Shell fellow in this way.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Why—hallo!—what's the joke? Hold on!"

"Pway follow youah friend, deah boy."

"But I—I—my hat!"

Tom Merry went whirling down the steps. He rolled over Lowther, who was just rising, and the two of them splashed into the puddle together.

"Ow!"

"Yaroo!"

"Mannahs, deah boy!"

"Here, you keep off!" roared Manners. "I—oh!"

Manners went rolling down to join Tom Merry and Lowther. There was another splash in the muddy puddle. D'Arcy the Second turned upon the steps, raised his silk-hat to the muddy and raging trio, and walked into the House.

Tom Merry struggled to his feet.

"Well, my only hat!" he ejaculated, in boundless astonishment.

And Manners and Lowther were silent. Words failed them!

CHAPTER 9.

A Surprise for Study No. 6.

DONE at last!" ejaculated Jack Blake. And in his relief he pitched his pen across the study, where it stuck into a beautiful picture belonging to Digby, and hung by the broken nib.

"You ass!" exclaimed Digby. "You've spoiled my picture. I gave two bob for that, and the man I bought it of said it was a real Rembrandt."

"Yes, it must have been at the price," agreed Blake. "I'm done. If Latham gives me any more lines on a half-holiday, I'll—I'll—"

"You'll what?" sniffed Herries.

"Write them," said Blake blandly. "You two duffers done? I'm sick of sticking indoors. Let's go and have a row with the New House fellows, if we can't get any footer."

"Right-ho! I'm finished," said Herries. "I was thinking of taking Towser for a little run."

"Oh, blow Towser!"

"I wonder how Gussy's getting on," said Digby, as he laid down his pen, and blotted the last sheet he had written.

"My hat, talk of angels!"

The study door opened, and an elegant figure lounged in. A silk-hat was carefully deposited on the table, and an eyeglass was turned upon the chums of the Fourth.

"Hallo, deah boys!"

"Hallo!" said Blake. "You're back early. Couldn't the Grammar chaps stand you any longer?"

"Weally, Blake—"

"I suppose he's been singing a tenor solo to them," said Digby. "Any casualties, Gussy?"

"Weally, Digby—"

"My hat, he's changed his necktie while he's been out!" said Herries, looking at the elegant junior. "Did you borrow that tie from Gordon Gay?"

"It certainly belongs to Gordon Gay, Hewwies."

"Dear me!" said Blake reflectively. "Now, we're going to have Gussy worrying us for the rest of the afternoon. It's too beastly!"

"If you are lookin' for a thick eah, Blake—"

"My hat, what's that row?" demanded Herries.

There was a rush of footsteps in the passage.

The Terrible Three, muddy and furious, rushed into Study No. 6.

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"Where is he?" roared Tom Merry.

"Where's the bounder?"

"Where's the fathead?"

"Bai Jove, stand by me, deah boys!"

"What-ho!" was the simultaneous reply of Blake & Co.

The Terrible Three rushed right at Arthur Augustus. Blake, Herries, and Digby rushed to his aid. Whatever the swell of St. Jim's had done, Fourth-Formers were bound to stand by one another in their own studies against Shell fellows.

In a moment a wild and whirling fight was raging in Study No. 6.

Blake closed with Tom Merry, and they crashed against the table, and sent it flying, and with it the newly finished impositions and the inkpot, and the state of those impositions was such that Mr. Latham would have been shocked if they had been presented to him.

Blake and Tom Merry fell over the upturned table, and Lowther and Digby fell over them, and Manners and Herries added themselves to the heap, and there was a wild mass of waving arms and legs amid the ruins.

The elegant junior had dodged round the table and avoided the rush of the Terrible Three, and as the other fellows were one to one, he was left unattacked.

But he did not remain idle.

He caught up an ink-bottle from the mantelpiece, and scattered its contents with wide waves of the hand with equal impartiality over Shell fellows and Fourth-Formers.

Then he collared the ashpans from the grate, and upset it over Tom Merry, and, incidentally, over Blake as well.

"Ow!" roared Tom Merry.

"Groo-ugh!" gasped Blake.

"Go it, deah boys! Go it! Huwway!"

"You chump!"

"You frightful ass!"

"Huwway!" roared the swell of St. Jim's II., seizing an armful of books from the bookcase, and hurling them in a shower over the excited combatants. "Huwway! Go it!"

"Stop, you ass!"

"Oh, you fathead!"

"Huwway! Huwway!"

The elegant junior, apparently in wild excitement, dragged out the crockery from the cupboard, and it crashed upon the floor. Then he jerked over the bookcase, and the end of it jammed through the study window.

Then he dashed out of the study, caught the key from the lock, and slammed the door. There was a click outside.

The study was a wreck.

Blake & Co. and the Terrible Three left off fighting, by mutual agreement. The wild excitement shown by Arthur Augustus D'Arcy puzzled and alarmed them.

"My hat!" gasped Tom Merry, caressing a swollen nose. "This place looks a picture. Has Gussy gone mad?"

Blake groaned as he gouged ashes from his eyes and nose. "I don't know. I think you fellows have. What did you rush in like a gang of prize lunatics for?"

"That frabjous ass rolled us down the steps!" roared Manners. "We'll slay him!"

"Ow! My eye!"

"Ow! My nose!"

"Yow! Ow!"

"Pax!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "There's something wrong with Gussy. We thought he was on the warpath, and we came here to slay him, but it looks to me as if he's off his rocker. Where has he gone?"

"Blessed if I know!"

"It isn't like Gussy to dodge a fight," said Digby, mopping ink from his face with his handkerchief. "Ow! I'm smothered, you fatheads!"

"It was Gussy clucked the ink about."

"And the ashes."

"And biffed the bookcase through the window."

"He's dotty!"

Tom Merry dabbed a red stream from his nose with his handkerchief, and ran to the door. He was really alarmed for the swell of St. Jim's. He dragged at the door, but it would not come open. He realised that it must be locked on the outside.

"We're locked in!" he roared.

"What!"

"Great Scott!"

"He's locked the door on the outside!"

"My only chapeau!"

Blake tried the door, but it was evidently locked. He looked through the keyhole, but the keyhole was empty; the key had been taken away. Even if anyone passed along the passage, which was unlikely on a half-holiday, the juniors could not be released.

They stared at one another in dismay. Blake's wrath rose.

"This is a jape on us in return for Skimmy brushing his hat with a gummy brush," he exclaimed.



Bully Bolsover looked round his study with a white face and wild eyes. The insulting placards plastered all over the room were only telling the truth. He had earned every title that was inscribed on them—he had disgraced the Remove and disgraced himself. (An incident from "THE BULLY'S CHANCE," the splendid, complete school tale of Harry Wharton & Co., by Frank Richards, contained in this week's issue of "THE MAGNET" Library. Now on Sale Price One Penny.)

"But—but——"
 Blake hammered on the door.
 "Help!" he roared. "Come and open this door! Help!"
 "My hat, you'll have the prefects here!" exclaimed Manners. "Draw it mild!"
 "But we've got to get out!" said Blake excitedly. "We'll slay that chump! This is one of his ghastly japes. I'll scalp him!"
 "He's off his rocker!" said Herries.
 "Rats! He's taken his hat with him," said Blake. "He was cool enough. It's just a rotten jape on the lot of us, and we'll scalp him!"
 "Yes, rather!"
 "We've got to get this door open."
 "But we can't," said Digby. "Since we had the new lock put on there's not another key in the passage that will fit it."
 "Phew!" said Tom Merry.
 "If this is the Fourth-Form brand of humour, I'm fed up with it," said Monty Lowther. "I'll make an example of that ass."
 "Look at our study!" groaned Blake. "Everything busted! My word!"
 "It's rather thick, I must say. Never heard of a fellow busting up his own study in this way," said Manners.
 Blake panted.
 "I'll scalp him!" he said. "I'll break him into small instalments! I'll—I'll—oh, wait till I claw him, that's all!"
 "But how are we to get out?"
 "Goodness knows! Look at my impot!"
 "Oh, blow your impot! How are we to get out of this rotten study?" roared Tom Merry.

"You shouldn't have come in, ass! I don't care a rap how you're to get out. The question is, how am I to get out?"
 "Look here, Blake——"
 "Rats!"
 "If you want a thick ear——"
 "Gr-r-r-r!"
 "I'm jolly well——"
 "No, you won't!"
 "Yes, I will!"
 No more was said. Fourth Form and Shell were equally excited and exasperated, and in a moment more they were fighting, and the locked door was forgotten as the juniors trampled and rolled in deadly combat amid the wreckage of the study.

CHAPTER 10.
 Well Done!

GORDON GAY chuckled softly. His campaign in the School House at St. Jim's had opened well. As he went down the passage he heard the renewed sounds of conflict in Study No. 6. The chums of the Fourth and the Terrible Three were "going it" strong. While the Terrible Three were thus engaged, it was certain that they would not be able to look after their own quarters. Gordon Gay, who had paid many a visit, friendly and otherwise, to St. Jim's, knew the lay of the land well enough. He coolly opened the door of Tom Merry's study, and walked in. Skimpole, of the Shell, was there. Skimpole had come

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there to borrow a dictionary, to look out the meaning of a word of eight syllables which occurred in the luminous pages of Professor Barmyrumptet. Skimpole was a long-word merchant himself; but that special long word was a "corker," as Blake would have put it, and for once in a way Skimpole was driven to have recourse to a dictionary. He was blinking over the pages of the "dic." when the supposed Arthur Augustus came in.

"Hallo, Skimmay, deah boy!"

"Ah, it is you, D'Arcy!" said Skimpole, blinking through his spectacles at the elegant junior. "You have returned, then? Is it possible that you have decided, after all, to allow me to make an attempt to cultivate your mental faculties, instead of wasting your time with a number of riotous youths?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"I am truly glad to hear you say so. Shall we take the subject of Determinism, or the equally interesting and important subject of Evolution?" asked the genius of the Shell, with a beaming smile. "Shall I give you a lecture upon the entrancingly interesting topic of the origin of species, tracing the descent of man from a rotten apple floating in a sea of mud in the glare of the sun of a geological age?"

"Ugh!"

"My dear D'Arcy, the subject is of intense interest and importance. I know that a large number of people of ordinary intellect contrive to live very comfortably without knowing whether the human race dates back six thousand or six million years; but consider— Dear me! What are you doing, D'Arcy?"

D'Arcy II. grasped Skimpole by the shoulders and plumped him into Tom Merry's armchair. Then he jerked the curtains down from the window, and proceeded to tie the genius of the Shell there. Skimpole was too astounded to resist.

"D'Arcy—my dear D'Arcy——"

"It's all wight, deah boy. I believe that ewevythin' is the wuslet of hewdity or environment. Isn't it?"

"Yes, certainly; but——"

"Well, deah boy, I am enviwoned by a howlin' idiot, and my hewdity makes me tie him up. It's all wight!"

"But really——"

"Pway don't wesist, deah boy, or I shall punch you on the nappah, and I might hurt my knuckles, you know."

Skimpole could only gasp. The curtains were twisted round him and knotted, and then he was a helpless prisoner. He blinked at D'Arcy II. through his big spectacles, like one mesmerised.

The actions of the elegant junior were certainly peculiar.

He turned the table over, recklessly upsetting papers and books and ink, and then pitched out the contents of the bookcase upon the heap.

To this he added the mantel ornaments, and then the catables out of the cupboard, standing the jam and honey jars upside down so that their contents would trickle over the rest of the things in the heap.

"Dear me!" gasped Skimpole. "I really do not understand the reason of these proceedings, my dear D'Arcy, unless you have suddenly taken leave of your senses."

"It's all wight, deah boy!"

"But really——"

"Good-bye!"

"You— you are not going to leave me like this?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy II. walked out of the study, and closed the door. He strolled away down the passage, calling in at a few of the studies in passing, to upset the tables and disarrange the furniture generally.

He had a clear field, for as it was a half-holiday and a fine afternoon, the juniors were all out of doors.

The disguised Grammarian descended the stairs, and as he entered the lower passage a disagreeable voice shouted to him.

"D'Arcy! D'Arcy!"

Gordon Gay turned his head.

Knox, of the Sixth, was on the lower stairs, waving his hand to him. The junior hesitated. He knew Knox, of the Sixth Form of St. Jim's. Knox was a senior and a prefect, and the worst bully in the School House. It was a favourite trick of the Sixth Form bully to fag juniors on a half-holiday, at a time when, of course, fagging was especially irksome.

"Come here!" shouted Knox.

"Yaas, deah boy. What do you want?"

"I want a fag!" said Knox.

"Oh, wats!"

"Are you comin'?"

Gordon Gay looked round. But there was no escape from the Sixth-Former, and he submitted to the inevitable, with

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the best grace he could. But it occurred to him that his fagging would not benefit Knox very much.

"Come to my study!" said Knox. "You've got to get tea for me and two others, and mind you do it well!"

"All wight, deah boy."

"Don't call me deah boy!" said the prefect sharply.

"All wight, deah boy—I mean——"

"Get a move on you!"

D'Arcy II. followed the bullying prefect into his study. There was a bundle of groceries on the table, and Knox pointed to it.

"Unfasten that bundle!" he said.

"Yaas, wathah!"

D'Arcy II. unfastened the bundle and turned out groceries of all kinds—a large bag of eggs, rashers of bacon, and other things. Knox evidently intended to "do" himself very well that afternoon.

"You're to cook those, and have them ready in exactly half an hour," said Knox impressively. "I'm going to fetch Sefton and Bolter, and we shall see how you are getting on when we come in. Mind you do well!"

"Weally, Knox——"

"Don't talk to me, you cub!"

"Undah the circs.——"

"Hold your tongue!"

And Knox left the study.

Gordon Gay chuckled quietly. He imagined that the bullying prefect would be surprised when he returned. The Grammarian set to work at once.

He lighted the fire, and proceeded to cook the bacon. He cooked it in a way that would certainly not have pleased Knox. He piled the bacon upon the fire, and it was soon burning and frizzling away merrily. The study was filled with the odour of cooking and burning bacon.

Then Gay deposited bread, and butter, and cake, and jam, on the fire, building them up so that they added to it.

He surveyed his handiwork with considerable satisfaction. The bag of eggs he kept—he had other uses for that.

There was a sound of footsteps in the passage, and an angry voice.

"My hat! That young hound's burning the bacon!"

It was Knox's voice. Gordon Gay drew a sharp breath. He stepped quickly behind the study door, with the bag of eggs in his hand. He felt for the key in the door, but there was none. He would have to depend upon his legs for safety when the pinch came. The study door, which opened inwards, completely concealed him from sight.

Three seniors rushed into the study—Knox, and Bolter, and Sefton, of the New House. They halted, staring in amazement and rage at the sight of the materials for the feed blazing away merrily upon the fire. Knox went quite pale with fury.

"The—the young hound!" he gasped. "Where is he?"

Sefton grinned.

"He's gone," he said. "He wouldn't be likely to stay here after that, I should think."

"I—I—I!"

"There he is, behind the door!" roared Bolter.

Gordon Gay jumped out.

The three seniors made a rush for him. The lithe junior skipped into the passage. An egg was in his hand, and Gordon Gay, in the cricket season, was the best bowler in the Grammar School junior team.

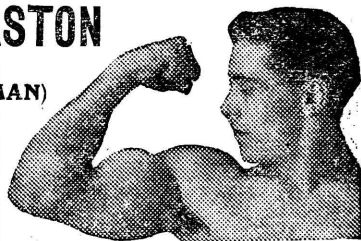
Squelch!

The egg caught Knox under the chin, and burst, and the

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prefect staggered back with a wild yell. Biff! Squash! Another egg, and then another, whizzed through the air, and Bolter and Sefton caught them, one with his eye, and one with his nose.

Then Gordon Gay sprinted down the passage.

Three seniors, yelling with rage, and with broken eggs streaming over them, rushed madly in pursuit.

But they were not likely to catch the fleet-footed Cornstalk.

Gordon Gay dashed out of the School House and fled for his life.

In a twinkling he had disappeared round the school buildings, and Knox & Co. halted, panting outside the School House, dabbing their faces with their handkerchiefs. Yells of laughter greeted them from the other fellows in the quadrangle.

They returned into the house breathing fury.

"I—I—I'll squash him for this!" hissed Knox. "I'll have him up before the Head! I'll teach him to pelt a prefect! I'll go and complain to the Head now."

And he did!

CHAPTER 11.

Quite a Run.

GORDON GAY halted, breathing hard, behind the School House. He had escaped the pursuit of the prefects, and for the moment he was content to rest upon his laurels, and recover his breath. Taggles, the school porter of St. Jim's, came round on his way to the stables, and stopped and looked at the disguised junior.

"Nice goings hon!" said Taggles severely. "Nice goings hon, Master D'Arcy! I saw yer!"

"Go hon!"

"Which you'll be flogged for this," said Taggles, "and a good thing, I says. All boys oughter be drowded, that's wot I say. Ho!"

Gordon Gay laughed.

"Weally, Taggles—"

"Wot ave you got in that bag, Master D'Arcy?" asked Taggles suspiciously.

"Eggs!"

"Heggs!" repeated Taggles.

"No," said Gordon Gay blandly. "Eggs!"

"Don't you start a-throwin' of them heggs at me," said Taggles. "I'll report yer!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Taggles gave him another suspicious look. Taggles's opinion was that all boys ought to be sentenced to instant execution, as painfully as possible. Naturally, Gordon Gay considered that Taggles ought to be punished for holding such opinions; and Fate had delivered the offender into his hands.

Crash! Squelch!

Taggles gave a roar.

An egg had broken on the back of his neck and as he turned his head, another squelched in his ear.

"Yow!" roared Taggles. "Ow! Grooooh! Ugh! Oh! You young rip! Ow! I'll report yer!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll report yer! Ow! Ow!"

Squelch! Squelch!

Taggles fairly ran, with eggs smashing all over him. He was in a decidedly eggy condition when he escaped. Gordon Gay, with only half a dozen eggs left, sauntered away in the direction of the New House. He took a cautious look round the corner of the building; but Knox & Co. were not in sight.

"Hallo, Gussy! You've come home, then!"

Gordon Gay looked up.

Figgins & Co. were at their study window looking out. They favoured him with a grin. They had not the slightest doubt that it was the real and genuine Arthur Augustus D'Arcy whom they were gazing upon.

"Hallo, deah boys! Would you like some eggs?"

"Eggs!" repeated Fatty Wynn. "Are they good?"

"Quite good."

"Do you mean to say that you're giving them away?"

"Yes."

"For nothing?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"I'll have them, then— Ooooooh!"

"Here you are!" said Gordon Gay blandly.

Fatty Wynn had the egg, certainly, but not as he had thought of having it. It caught him under the chin, and burst over his neck and collar and tie.

"Yaroo!" roared Fatty.

"Look here!" howled Figgins. "I— Oh! Yah!"

An egg burst on Figgins's nose. Then another squelched

on Kerr's ear. The three heroes of the New House disappeared from their window in an amazingly short space of time.

There was a shout from the doorway of the New House. Monteith, the head prefect of the House, had seen D'Arcy's action, with blank amazement. That a junior should venture to play such a prank under his very eyes, amazed the prefect.

"D'Arcy!" he shouted.

"Hallo, deah boy!"

"Come here, you young rascal!" exclaimed Monteith, striding towards him. "I— Oh!"

Squelch!

An egg deftly aimed, burst just on the end of Monteith's rather long and pointed nose.

He staggered back, choked and gasping. Gordon Gay hurled his last egg, and caught the prefect under the chin. Then he fled! It was time, for Figgins & Co. were pelting down the stairs inside to take summary vengeance upon him.

The disguised junior disappeared past the elms.

"I rather reckon I'd better leave the house; alone for a bit!" murmured Gordon Gay, with a chuckle.

He dropped into a walk, and strolled upon the footer field. There were no matches on, but some of the Fifth had turned out for practice in spite of the state of the ground. Lefevre, of the Fifth, and several more were punting a ball about.

The disguised junior strolled upon the footer-field, with his hands in his pockets, and his silk hat on the back of his head. He was certainly not in the garb for footer, but he meant to take a hand in the game, all the same.

Lefevre lifted the ball with a powerful kick, and it dropped near Gordon Gay. In a flash the Grammarian's hands were out of his pockets, and he was on the ball.

"This way!" shouted Lefevre, thinking that the junior was intending to return the ball to him from a desire to make himself useful.

But D'Arcy II. had no intention of returning the ball. He kicked it away towards the edge of the ground, and then followed it, and dribbled the leather away in great style. Lefevre looked after him in blank amazement, and so did the rest of the Fifth players.

"Bring that ball back!" roared Lefevre. "That's what I say! Bring that ball back!"

There was no reply.

The elegant junior dribbled the ball away, taking a devious course towards the gates of St. Jim's. Gordon Gay realised that it was time that his campaign there came to a close. He had woke up both the New House and the School House like nests of hornets, and it was time he beat a retreat. It would put the finishing touch to his exploits to carry off the footer from the Fifth Formers.

Figgins & Co. had rushed out of the New House, and they caught sight of the junior in the distance, and raced towards him. Lefevre and the other Fifth fellows were rushing in pursuit. From the School House came Knox, and Sefton, and Bolter. They had seen D'Arcy II. from a window. After them came a crowd of juniors—Tom Merry & Co., who had succeeded at last in getting out of Study No. 6. The half-dozen juniors looked very much the worse for wear, and they were all utterly exasperated. If they had arrived within hitting distance of the elusive junior, it would have gone hard with him. Gordon Gay realised his danger, and he made directly for the school gates, still dribbling the footer.

"Stop him!"

"Bring that ball back!"

"Stop!"

"After him!"

Quite a crowd raced on the track of the fleeing junior.

But Gordon Gay had a good start, and he was wonderfully swift. Right through the old gateway of St. Jim's he dribbled the Fifth-Form ball, at a speed the pursuers could not beat. He dashed out into the road, and ran on towards the village, with the ball still merrily speeding before him.

"He must be dotty!" gasped Blake. "Where is he going?"

"Off his rocker!" said Monty Lowther.

"He must be caught!"

The crowd dashed out of the school gates. Gordon Gay was already a great distance down the road. Seniors and juniors dashed frantically towards him. Gordon Gay turned round in the lane, and set the silk topper more firmly on his head. He allowed the ball to rest, calculated the distance, and kicked. The footer sailed through the air, and dropped in the midst of the St. Jim's crowd. It was wet and muddy, and it plumped full upon the chin of Knox, the prefect, and bounced off, grazing Sefton's nose. Then it dropped to the ground, and Monty Lowther stumbled over it and fell, and Tom Merry fell over him.

There was a laugh from Gordon Gay in the distance.

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NEXT WEEK:

"WHEN A BOY'S DOWN."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"After him!" shrieked Blake.

But Gordon Gay was running again at a speed few could equal. He dodged into a bylane, and cut across a field, wound through the wood, and soon threw his pursuers off the track. As they had no suspicion of his real identity, they did not know that he intended to make for the Grammar School. When Gay came out into the road again, near the gates of the Grammar School, there was not a single St. Jim's junior in sight.

The junior chuckled.

He tramped on towards the Grammar School, while at a distance, hidden by the trees and the windings of the lanes, the St. Jim's fellows returned to St. Jim's. They were in a state of utter amazement.

What had come over D'Arcy that afternoon? Where was he gone? The full extent of the damage he had done was revealed when the fellows returned to St. Jim's and compared notes. The Terrible Three found Skimpole in their study, tied to the chair with the curtains, and the place a wreck. Half the studies in the Shell and the Fourth had been upset. Knox, the prefect, was raging, and he had already complained to the Head, and Dr. Holmes had directed that D'Arcy should be sent to him at once.

"He'll be expelled for this!" said Gore, of the Shell.

"My hat!"

"He must have gone dotty!"

"Right off his rocker!"

"But where has he gone now?" Tom Merry exclaimed, completely puzzled. "He can't intend to stay away from St. Jim's."

"Blessed if I know!" said Blake. "I suppose he'll come back. We shall have to wait till he does, and then——"

"Then we'll squash him!" said Manners.

And the St. Jim's fellows waited for D'Arcy to come back.

CHAPTER 12.

D'Arcy's Double.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY, the genuine, had in the meantime thoroughly enjoyed his afternoon at the Grammar School. Frank Monk & Co. and Phyllis Monk did their best to entertain him, and they succeeded. After tea D'Arcy sang a tenor solo, and the Grammarians listened to it with perfect gravity. When the time came to part, Arthur Augustus was feeling very jolly and contented. The whole crowd of Grammarians accompanied him to the school gates to bid him good-bye. They had kept him at the school till half-past five, which was the time agreed upon with Gordon Gay. D'Arcy shook hands affably with the Grammar crowd, and raised his silk hat in his graceful way to Miss Phyllis.

"I trust we shall see you chaps ovan at St. Jim's soon," he said.

Frank Monk grinned.

After what had happened at the rival school that afternoon, he did not think that Grammar juniors were likely to be popular there for some time.

"Thanks very much," he said. "We'll come with pleasure."

"And Miss Phyllis, I trust?"

"Certainly," said the girl, with a bright smile.

And D'Arcy took his leave.

He walked gracefully away down the road, and turned into Rylcombe Lane, sauntering on towards St. Jim's.

"A jolly wippin' aftahnoon!" he murmured to himself. "Miss Phyllis is a wippin' gal, and those Gwammah boundahs are not so bad. Frank Monk seems to have quite a taste for music. I'm wathah sowsy Gordon Gay wasn't there—he is a musical chap, and I think he would have enjoyed that solo. Bai Jove!"

D'Arcy uttered that exclamation suddenly.

He had caught sight of a figure in the lane, coming towards him, and the sight almost took his breath away.

For the stranger was an exact reproduction of himself. The same elegant clothes, the same fancy waistcoat, the same gold-rimmed monocle, and the same features, to all appearance.

The newcomer caught sight of him at the same moment, and paused, and raised his silk hat in a graceful way.

Arthur Augustus mechanically raised his hat in return.

He jammed his eyeglass a little more tightly into his eye, and gazed at him.

"Bai Jove!" ejaculated D'Arcy again.

"Good-aftahnoon!" said the stranger affably.

"G-g-g-good-aftahnoon!" stammered D'Arcy.

"Wippin' wathah, considewin'," the stranger went on.

"Bai Jove!"

"Nice weathah for a beastly walk, don't you know?"

"Gweat Scott!"

"Does your mothah know you're out, deah boy?"

"Look here!" exclaimed D'Arcy. "Who are you?"

"I wégard that as a wude question."

"Who are you, you boundah?"

"Undah the cires, I wefuse to weply."

"You uttah ass——"

"You shwiekin' fathead——"

"Bai Jove——"

"Bai Jove!"

"I know you now!" shouted D'Arcy. "You are Gordon Gay! You have been playin' some of your wotten twicks."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Gordon Gay.

"You uttah wottah——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! You have been disguisin' yourself as me again!" exclaimed the swell of St. Jim's. "I'll give you a feahful thwashin'——"

Gordon Gay grinned and dodged past him.

"Good-bye, little yellow bird!" he said. "Good-bye, Bluebell!"

And he sprinted on towards the Grammar School.

Arthur Augustus dashed in pursuit. But at the speed Gordon Gay was going it was clear that D'Arcy would not overtake him until the school was reached; and that made the swell of St. Jim's pause. He did not wish to rush back in warlike guise into the school where he had just been entertained as an honoured guest.

He paused in the lane, and shook his gloved fist after the retreating form of the disguised Grammarian.

"You uttah wottah——" he shouted.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come back and be thwashed, you wascal!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Vewy well, Gordon Gay, I will thwash you anothah time——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus gave it up. He swung round and continued his walk towards St. Jim's in a considerably ruffled state of mind.

He could not help wondering what Gordon Gay might have been doing in that disguise. The direction he came from indicated that he had been to St. Jim's. What had he done there? He had undoubtedly taken in Tom Merry & Co. in some way.

That reflection brought a smile to D'Arcy's face.

He had warned Tom Merry & Co. that the Grammarians would "down" them if he—D'Arcy—were absent. And if they had been japed by the disguised Grammarian junior, it only bore out D'Arcy's warning. It was a clear proof to Tom Merry & Co. that when the swell of St. Jim's was absent they were no good.

D'Arcy arrived in sight of the old school. A group of juniors stood in the gathering dusk in the gateway, evidently waiting for him.

There was a shout as the swell of St. Jim's came in sight.

"Here he is!"

"Here's Gussy!"

"Yaas, wathah, deah boys, here I am!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, in surprise.

"Are you waitin' for me? Anythin' gone w'ong?"

"You rotter!"

Next
Thursday!

"WHEN A BOY'S DOWN."

A Splendid, New, Long, Complete Tale of
Tom Merry & Co. and Figgins
of the New House.

By

MARTIN CLIFFORD.

Order
Early.



"Pway open the door!" called Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I shall give you a fearful thwashin', Skimmy, if you don't let me in at once! Bai Jove—"

"Come on!" said Kildare, dropping his hand upon the shoulder of the swell of St. Jim's. "I am to take you at once, you silly young duffer!"

"Weally, Kildare! W-w-what am I to see the Head for?"

"Knox has complained about your burning the food in his study, and pelting him with eggs," said the St. Jim's captain.

"Bai Jove!"

"I should, think you were out of your senses, to treat a prefect in that way," said Kildare, knitting his brows, "and you might have the excuse that Knox ragged you; but there's no excuse of that sort in the case of Monteith. You pelted him with eggs, too, and he has laid the matter before the Head."

"Bai Jove!"

"What did you do it for?" demanded Kildare.

"I—I—I didn't!"

"What?" shouted Kildare angrily.

"I didn't do it, deah boy!"

Kildare's grasp tightened upon the shoulder of the elegant junior. He was very angry. He had no suspicion of the real facts of the case, and D'Arcy's statement seemed to him to be a merely impudently untruthful denial.

"Come with me at once!" he said harshly.

"But weally—"

"Come!"

And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was marched off to the Head's study

"You wrecker!"

"You chump!"

"You ass!"

"You frightful chump!"

D'Arcy stared in amazement at the excited crowd of juniors

"Weally, deah boys!" he began.

"You dangerous ass!"

"You escaped lunatic—"

"You burbling duffer—"

D'Arcy's eye gleamed with indignation through his monocle.

"I refuse to listen to these oppwobvious expressions!" he exclaimed. "What is the mattah? Are you all off your silly weckahs?"

"You're off yours, I think!" growled Blake. "What did you wreck our study for?"

"Blake—"

"What did you wreck my study for?" yelled Tom Merry.

"Weally, deah boy—"

"And tie Skimmy in the chair with the curtains?" shouted Manners.

"Weally, Mannahs—"

"And all the studies along the passage," shouted Gore; "what did you wreck them for, you burbling idiot?"

"Bai Jove!"

"And Knox, too—"

"And Figgins—"

"And Bolter—"

"You burbling jabberwock—"

"You farseine ass—"

A light broke upon D'Arcy. He understood now what Gordon Gay had been doing in disguise at St. Jim's.

"Bai Jove! That Gwannah wotah!" he ejaculated.

Kildare of the Sixth, the captain of St. Jim's, came striding through the crowd.

"Is that D'Arcy?" he asked brusquely. The captain of the school was looking very grim.

"Yaas, wathah, Kildare!"

"You are to come to the Head at once."

D'Arcy started back in dismay.

"The—the Head?" he stammered.

"Yes, immediately!"

"B-b-but—"

CHAPTER 13.
The Sentence.

DR. HOLMES was sitting in his study with a stern frown upon his brow. The Head, as a rule, did not take any notice of junior escapades. The Form-masters and the prefects dealt with them. But the present case was quite out of the common.

Knox had complained, and Monteith had complained, and the Head had to take notice of the matter. And as he knew that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was, as a rule, a quiet and well-conducted youth, he had investigated the matter carefully already, before D'Arcy's return



The three chums made a sudden dash from the study, dragging the genius of the Shell with them, and there was a terrific collision in the passage as the crowd of juniors outside the door were scattered by the rush. (See Chapter 6.)

Knox had told him that the junior had wrecked a whole passage, and the Head had himself paid a visit to the Shell and the Fourth-Form quarters, to ascertain the extent of the damage that had been done.

The extent of it amazed him.

There was no doubt that D'Arcy had done it. The juniors were far from wishing to tell tales, but there was no concealing the fact that the raiding had been done by the swell of St. Jim's. The Head's anger rose. Japes were all very well, and excusable in a thoughtless junior, but this was going altogether too far. And attacks upon prefects—that was unpardonable.

Dr. Holmes waited for D'Arcy in a very grim humour.

Kildare tapped at his door at last, and brought the swell of St. Jim's in. The Head fixed his eyes upon D'Arcy.

Arthur Augustus stood silent.

He knew, of course, that all the damage done at St. Jim's had been done by the Grammarian disguised as himself. It had occurred to him at first that his way out of the scrape was quite easy: he had only to state the facts.

But upon second thoughts, Arthur Augustus realised that he could not state the facts. For that would be merely to transfer the blame from his shoulders to Gordon Gay's. The Head would certainly not overlook such a raid on the part of the Grammarian.

He would make a formal complaint to Dr. Monk, the Head of the Rylcombe Grammar School. Gordon Gay would certainly be severely punished.

The reckless junior had carried out the jape, apparently without a single thought as to the probable consequences. He had certainly not intended to get D'Arcy into trouble with the Head.

But that was what had happened. Either D'Arcy had to take the consequences of all Gordon Gay's erratic action, or he had to betray the Grammarian.

And that was impossible!

Many things were permitted by a schoolboy's code of honour, but if there was one thing that was severely barred it was "sneaking."

And the statement of the culprit's true identity, and the inevitable punishment of Gordon Gay to follow, would undoubtedly come under the head of sneaking.

D'Arcy, with all his little foibles, would have been cut to pieces before he would have done anything dishonourable.

He could not "sneak." It followed that he was bound to keep silent. He had to take the consequences of what Gordon Gay had done. He braced himself to face the "music."

The Head regarded him with a frown. He thought to himself that one never really does know of what a boy is capable. He would never, certainly, have suspected the swell of St. Jim's of the wild freaks he had been guilty of that afternoon.

"D'Arcy," he said at last.

"Yaas, sir."

"Have you any explanation to offer?"

"No, sir."

"You have acted in an utterly outrageous way this afternoon, D'Arcy."

The Fourth-Former was silent.

"You have done a great deal of damage, and you have treated the prefects with utter disrespect," said the Head.

"Oh, sir!"

"And you have no excuse to offer?"

"No, sir."

"No explanation to make?"

"No, sir."

"I hardly understand this, D'Arcy. Are you ill?" exclaimed the Head, looking at him keenly over his glasses.

"No, sir."

"Very well. You understand, D'Arcy, that outrageous freaks of this kind cannot be allowed to pass unpunished!" exclaimed Dr. Holmes sternly.

"Yaas, sir."

"I hardly know how to deal with you," said Dr. Holmes slowly. "You have always borne a good reputation in your Form, D'Arcy, and Mr. Lathom speaks very highly of you."

"Thank you, sir!"

"I hesitate, therefore, to sentence you to a public flogging, which I should certainly inflict upon any boy who had done as you have done, if his record had not been so good."

Arthur Augustus shuddered.

The picture floated in his mind for a moment—of himself hoisted upon the back of the school-porter, of the birch descending, of the sea of faces surrounding, and he shuddered. But even if that had been his sentence, he would not have faltered. He would not betray Gordon Gay.

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"I shall not flog you," said the Head. "and I cannot expel you for this; it is hardly serious enough for that, serious as it is. Lines, however, will not meet the case; neither will a caning."

D'Arcy brightened up. The Head had run through the various forms of punishment, and as there remained none that D'Arcy knew of, he began to hope that he would escape with a lecture. But Dr. Holmes's next words nipped that hope in the bud.

"I have decided what to do, D'Arcy," went on the Head. "You have acted outrageously—inexcusably! I shall send you home."

D'Arcy started.

"Oh, sir!"

"I shall not expel you from the school," said the Head. "But I shall send you home for a time, to consider yourself. You will remain away from the school for some weeks, and I shall write a full explanation to your father of the reasons for my action."

"Oh, sir!"

"Before you are allowed to return, you will be expected to write a full apology to both of the prefects whom you have treated with disrespect."

D'Arcy was silent. He was always ready to apologise when he was in the wrong, and his graceful apologies on the slightest occasions had become a standing joke in the Lower School at St. Jim's; but to apologise for something that he had not done at all was a peculiar duty.

"You may go now," said the Head. "I shall write to your father immediately, and Lord Eastwood will expect you home to-morrow morning."

"When—when am I to leave St. Jim's, sir?" faltered D'Arcy.

"You will leave the school to-morrow morning, immediately after breakfast. If you have any preparations to make, you can make them to-day."

"Thank you, sir!"

"I am sorry for this, D'Arcy. I am surprised and shocked at your conduct, and I hope that, at home, you will reflect upon what you have done, and realise that your punishment has been very lenient. You may go."

D'Arcy went, with drooping head.

His punishment, certainly, had been very lenient, in comparison with what it might have been. But it hit the swell of St. Jim's very hard, all the same. He was banished from school—banished from his old associates and his old associations.

To go home in the holidays when everybody was holiday-making, was one thing; but to go home by himself, when all others were at work, was quite another.

To mope about at Eastwood while his old comrades were in class, or playing footer, or skating at St. Jim's—that was a hard punishment.

D'Arcy's face was very gloomy as he left the Head's study.

His friends were waiting for him in the passage. They surrounded him as he came out. The resentment of Tom Merry & Co. had quite subsided now. Now that D'Arcy had been taken before the Head, they felt only sympathy, though they were still at a loss to account for his strange actions of the afternoon.

Blake clapped his elegant chum upon the shoulder.

"Well, what's the verdict?"

"I'm bein' sent home."

Jack Blake's face fell.

"Not—not sacked!" he gasped.

"Oh, no; sent home for a few weeks, as a punishment!"

"Banished, by Jove!" said Monty Lowther.

"Yaas."

"That's rough, old chap!" said Digby sympathetically.

"But what on earth did you want to play those mad tricks for to-day?"

"Oh, wats!" said D'Arcy peevishly.

"You wrecked your own study, and mine, too," said Tom Merry. "Blessed if I can understand what you did it for!"

"Oh, wot!"

"Pelting Figgins & Co. with eggs was all right," said Blake. "But what did you want to pelt Monteith for? You know that you musn't handle prefects that way."

"Weally, Blake—"

"Were you off your rocker?" asked Kangaroo.

"Wats!"

And that was all the explanation D'Arcy vouchsafed to the juniors. He did not intend to tell them the facts. Something might leak out, and D'Arcy would never have it that the Grammarians should say that he had sneaked. The swell of St. Jim's kept his own counsel, and Tom Merry & Co. were left to wonder.

CHAPTER 14.

D'Arcy is Downhearted.

BANISHED from school!

D'Arcy's sentence was soon known all over St. Jim's.

Most of the fellows were sorry. Even those whose studies had been wrecked, apparently without provocation, were sorry to hear that D'Arcy was to leave St. Jim's.

His chums of Study No. 6 were doleful. They might chip D'Arcy, they might rag him, they might make fun of his little weaknesses; but they liked him all the same, and they knew very well that with all his foibles, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's nature was full of noble qualities.

The rag of that afternoon could only be accounted for by supposing that D'Arcy had lost his head. Perhaps that something had happened at the Grammar School to exasperate him, and that he had wreaked it upon the juniors at home.

But no one bore resentment now.

Knox, the prefect, was gleeful; but he was the only one. Monteith, of the New House, had reported the junior's conduct to the Head, but he was sorry now that he had mentioned it. Kildare would have licked him, and said nothing about it.

There were glum faces in the School House that evening. Tom Merry & Co. helped D'Arcy to pack. It was not known how long he was to be away, or whether he would return that term at all, and he had to take all his belongings with him. And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had many belongings.

His boxes, trunks, bags, and hat-boxes were innumerable. He packed box after box, and trunk after trunk, with the assistance of the chums of the School House.

The swell of St. Jim's had already telephoned for a motor-car to take him away in the morning. The station cab was not quite gorgeous enough for D'Arcy. And the luggage would need a separate vehicle to itself, too.

After the packing was done Arthur Augustus returned into Study No. 6, with a gloomy expression upon his aristocratic face.

He glanced round his old quarters through his eyeglass. Study No. 6 had many drawbacks, no doubt: but D'Arcy had spent many a happy hour there, and he was sorry to go.

Blake, Herries, and Digby were equally glum. They had their preparation to do, but they were not doing it. They had no heart for work that evening.

"Oh, it's rotten!" said Blake at last.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Why did you do it, old man?"

Arthur Augustus was silent.

"I say, old chap," said Herries hesitatingly. "It's beastly for you to go like this. I—I—I'll let you have Towser, if you like, to take with you. He'll remind you of St. Jim's."

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"You can have him," said Herries heroically. "Of course, I shall miss him. But I know you'll take good care of him, Gussy."

Herries spoke earnestly. To possess Towser, the bulldog, seemed to his owner the height of human happiness. Mahomet tells us of seven heavens, each more delectable than the preceding one; but Herries could have told Mahomet of an eighth—the possession of that remarkable bulldog, Towser. Parting with Towser was to Herries like parting with a tooth. But he was a true chum. He would have parted with Towser with a heavy heart but cheerful face, to comfort D'Arcy in his banishment.

But D'Arcy shook his head.

He did not mean to inflict that pain upon Herries. And, as a matter of fact, nothing would have induced him to take charge of that dreadful bulidog.

"Not at all, Hewwies, deah boy," he said hastily. "I wouldn't wob you like that."

"You can have him, Gussy—"

"No, no!"

"Yes, yes! I insist!" said Herries bravely.

"I weally could not take him, Hewwies. It would be too wuff on you, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus. "I will take the will for the deed. Hewwies, old man."

There was a knock at the door, and Skimpole, of the Shell, tilted into Study No. 6.

His eyes lighted upon D'Arcy.

"Ah, you are here!" he exclaimed. "I have been looking for you, D'Arcy. I hear that you are leaving the school."

"Yaas, Skimmy, deah boy."

"I quite forgive you for your exceedingly rough conduct this afternoon," said Skimpole gently. "You were doubtless driven to it by the combined influence of your heredity and environment. I wish to make you a farewell present, D'Arcy, if you will accept it."

"You're vevy kind, Skimmay—"

"I mean to be kind, D'Arcy," said Skimpole, beaming through his spectacles. "I wish you to accept this volume."

And he held out the famous volume of Professor Barmy-crumpet, that eminent authority upon Evolution, Determinism, and several other "tions" and "isms."

Arthur Augustus looked at it in dismay. He would almost rather have had Herries's bulldog.

"Weally, Skimmay—" he began.

"It will do for you to read while you are at home," said Skimpole. "In the hours of solitude you may open this book and study the important question of the evolution of the human race. You will learn, by the study of this volume, that there is not a single reasonable argument in favour of the theory of evolution, which will show you how wonderful a brain it must have been that invented the theory. You will learn—"

"My dear Skimmay—"

"Pray take the volume, my dear D'Arcy. It is somewhat heavy—"

"My word, it is!" murmured Digby.

"But it contains wonderful wisdom. Professor Barmy-crumpet clearly proves, in chapter 357, that the human race developed from a lower type, of which no trace remains to be discovered upon the earth. Traces have been discovered of every other organic being; but no trace of the missing link between man and the lower animals, which might indicate to a common mind that there never was any such link. But not to a scientific mind, my dear D'Arcy. The total absence of evidence is regarded as a conclusive proof of the truth of a theory by a mind which has a truly scientific training."

"Weally—"

"By the study of this volume you will learn—"

"I couldn't wob you of it, Skimmay. Pway keep the volume. It is much better suited to your intellect, deah boy, than to mine."

"But—"

The Terrible Three came into the study, and Skimpole was interrupted. Monty Lowther seized the amateur scientist of the Shell by the collar and jerked him into the passage, and tossed the great volume of Professor Barmy-crumpet after him.

"Run away and play!" he said.

"Oh, really, Lowther—"

Monty Lowther closed the door of the study. Skimpole picked up his wonderful volume and wandered down the passage.

"Anything we can do for you, Gussy?" asked Tom Merry.

"Blessed if I don't feel quite downhearted at your going!"

"Thank you vevy much, deah boy."

"It's beastly!" said Manners. "But why did you do it, Gussy?"

"Oh, wats!"

"Can I help you?" asked Lowther. "Brush your hat, or anything?"

"Weally, Lowthah—"

There was a knock at the door. Figgins & Co. of the New House came in. Blake reached towards a ruler. But Figgins held up his hand pacifically.

"Pax!" he exclaimed. "We've come to see Gussy. Gussy, old man, we don't mind that pelting a bit. We wish you weren't going."

"Yes, rather!" said Kerr. "It's rotten!"

"Beastly!" said Fatty Wynn. "You gave me an egg in the eye, you ass; but I don't mind a bit. Look here, we've got up a bit of a farewell feed—"

"And we want you all to come," said Figgins.

D'Arcy was quite moved.

"You are vevy good!" he faltered. "I don't feel much inclined for a feed now, deah boys. I'm feelin' wathah down in the mouth, you know; but I'll come, with pleasure."

"Oh, we'll come!" said Tom Merry.

And the juniors walked over to the New House, with Arthur Augustus D'Arcy in their midst.

They crowded into Figgins's study. The study looked very bright and cheerful, with a good fire burning, and the gaslight glimmering on a white cloth and glimmering crockery.

Fatty Wynn had prepared a really handsome feed. Fatty Wynn could always be relied upon to do well in that line.

It was a good feed, and the juniors did the best they could to appear cheerful. But a cloud hung over them all.

"Oh, it's rotten!" said Blake, at last. "We shall miss you frightfully, Gussy."

"Yaas, deah boy. And I shall miss all of you."

"Why did you do it?" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Blessed if I can understand it now! It was so unlike you, Gussy."

D'Arcy hesitated.

"Look here, we're all fiends here," he said, looking round, "if you will pwomise, on your word of honah, not to breathe a syllable about it, I will explain."

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A Splendid, New, Long, Complete School Tale of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

NEXT WEEK:

"WHEN A BOY'S DOWN."

"Honour bright!" said the juniors all together.

"Vewy well! I didn't do it at all."

"What?"

Blake looked at his chum anxiously. For a moment he thought that his chum's brain was wandering.

"I didn't do it at all, deah boys."

"What on earth do you mean?" said Figgins uneasily.

"Why, we saw you!"

"You didn't see me, deah boy. I was at the Gwammah School all the aftahnoon," said Arthur Augustus.

"What?"

"Gussy!"

"It's a fact, deah boys! You've been done!"

"Done!" ejaculated Tom Merry. "What do you mean?"

Done by whom?"

"The Gwammawians!"

"What?"

"It was Gordon Gay!"

"Gordon Gay?"

"Yaas, wathah! Don't you wemembah that he disguised himself as me once before, and took you all in, and the Gweyfwiahs chaps, too? It was Gordon Gay; and I nevah knew till I met him in the lane, as I was comin' back."

There was a dead silence in Figgy's study.

"My only hat!" said Tom Merry at last.

"That accounts!" said Blake slowly. "My hat!"

"Well, Gussy, you image—"

"Why didn't you tell the Head?"

"Weally, deah boys, if you wect for a moment, you will see that it was quite imposs. for me to tell the Head, and get Gordon Gay into a feahful wov."

"Oh!"

The juniors sat silent. They understood now.

"And—and you're keeping it dark to shield Gordon Gay!" burst out Tom Merry at last.

"There's nothin' else to be done. Dr. Holmes would complain to the Head of the Gwammah School, and Gay would get it in the neck. They've done us, deah boys; but we can't allow them to say that St. Jim's sneaked."

"By Jove, no!"

"No, that wouldn't do," said Kerr thoughtfully. "But—"

"But if Gordon Gay knew the trouble you'd got into he'd own up like a shot!" exclaimed Blake.

"Yaas, wathah! But we can't tell him; it would be as bad as sneakin'."

"I—I suppose so."

"I've explained to you, deah boys, so that you will know the facts, and not think that I was waggin' you," said Arthur Augustus. "I felt that I owed it to you to explain, aftah all. But not a word, mind! Not a whispah outside this studay!"

Blake drew a deep breath.

"It's rotten hard on you, Gussy!"

"Yaas. But it can't be helped, deah boys. I shall have to stand it."

"He's a giddy hero!" said Blake. "A giddy hero! I—"

"Oh, wats!"

But the juniors persisted in regarding Arthur Augustus D'Arcy as a hero. And a hero undoubtedly he was.

CHAPTER 15.

Good-bye to St. Jim's.

THE clang of the rising-bell awoke the juniors of St. Jim's in the morning, and they turned out in much less than their usual spirits.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was looking very serious, but quite calm and firm.

He did not repent of the resolution he had taken. He was bound to act as he had done, by his code of honour, and he did it without flinching.

Breakfast was a doleful meal for the chums of the School House.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was to depart before morning lessons commenced, and a crowd of fellows meant to see him off.

There was a buzz when the motor, ordered by telephone over night, was seen to drive up to the School House, with a most imposing chauffeur and a liveried footman.

"My only hat!" said Gore. "Gussy is going in style, and no mistake!"

A cart followed the motor. That was for the luggage. Both drew up outside the School House.

Taggles, the school porter, began to carry out the trunks. Some of the fellows lent him a hand. D'Arcy's luggage was somewhat bulky for one man to negotiate.

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Arthur Augustus D'Arcy stood on the steps of the School House, with his monocle jammed into his eye, superintending the removal of the luggage.

Some of the masters were at their study windows. Everybody at St. Jim's was interested in the departure of the ornament of the Fourth Form. What would the Fourth be like without the one and only Augustus? That was what Blake said, and many of the juniors echoed his sentiments. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy would certainly be missed.

"I've a jolly good mind to send a wire to Gordon Gay!" muttered Jack Blake.

Arthur Augustus turned a severe glance upon him.

"Weally, Blake—"

"Go it!" said Herries.

"It is my pwewogative to say what shall be done in the mattah," said Arthur Augustus, with considerable dignity. "I decline to allow anythin' of the sort."

"You're a blessed quixotic ass!" murmured Blake, as the swell of St. Jim's descended the steps and approached the waiting motor. And he followed Arthur Augustus, to make one more appeal to the elegant junior.

D'Arcy stepped into the car. His usually pleasant face wore a stern expression. There was no sign of wavering.

The chums gathered round the gates could see that he was determined to go through with what he had undertaken.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Monty Lowther approached the car.

"I'm sorry you're going, old kid!" said Tom Merry sympathetically.

"So am I, deah boy, but—"

"I shall jolly well lay the facts before the Head myself!" burst out Jack Blake.

"Weally, Blake—"

"Rats!"

"I insist on you keepin' quiet, Blake!" retorted Arthur Augustus, with some asperity.

"Why should he?" demanded Herries.

D'Arcy turned a withering gaze upon Herries over the back of the car's hood, which was down. His bearing was very dignified.

"Because it is my pwewogative, Hewwies," he said. "I am convinced I am actin' for the best."

Jack Blake snorted. Arthur Augustus glanced at him.

"I wish to part fwends, Blake," he went on. "But if you wottahs don't altah your wotten mannaahs I shall dwive off without sayin' good-bye!"

Digby took out his handkerchief and pretended to wipe his eyes. The crowd of prefects who were watching the proceedings seemed to be enjoying it—Knox especially. Monteith was wearing a puzzled look.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy stood it for a moment only.

"Dwive off, dwirah!" he ordered indignantly.

"Am I to go without the luggage, sir?"

"Bai Jove, I had forgotten that!"

"I shouldn't bother, Gussy!" said Monty Lowther, with a grin.

D'Arcy, apparently, did not hear the joker of the Shell's remark. His monocle jammed hard in his eye, he was regarding the roof of the car intently.

"I fail uttably to see how all my luggage can be cawwied on the wovf, dwirah," he said.

"You might carry it on your knee, Gussy."

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I should vewy much wegwet to have to thwash you, Lowthah, before I go—"

"Ass! Can't you see the cart for the luggage behind here?"

"Bai Jove!"

For the first time, Arthur Augustus saw the cart that was to carry his luggage standing behind. The vision seemed to afford him infinite pleasure. For one gloomy moment he had had visions of piled-up boxes around him in the body of the car.

The juniors grinned as he turned in their direction again. Both sides were equally at some loss what to say. Tom Merry felt very sorry that D'Arcy was going. Jack Blake would have liked to drag Arthur Augustus forcibly from the car, and detain him, whether he liked it or not. Herries and Digby probably understood what was passing in Blake's mind, and could have been counted on to assist. But the masters were all watching at the windows. The thing was impossible. Kildare would be about too, they might depend, and would soon put a stop to such a proceeding.

A gloomy silence fell on all the juniors. Monty Lowther came to the rescue.

"You'll write home, Gussy?" he said.

"I twust I shall nevah forget St. Jim's, deah boys," replied Arthur Augustus, with feeling.

"Ha, ha, ha! I'll bet he won't!"

D'Arcy turned his monocle full glare on Knox for a moment. He and the other juniors were glad to see that very few of the prefects shared Knox's sentiments.

"My beastly luggage is a long time comin', deah boys," remarked D'Arcy, as if nothing had happened. "I wendah what Taggles is doin'."

And as though Blake might be Taggles's special custodian, Arthur Augustus turned his monocle on the Fourth-Former. The juniors grinned.

"What are you looking at me like that for?" growled Blake.

"Weally, Blake—"

Crash!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Taggles had suddenly appeared at the door. Evidence of Taggles's proximity would perhaps be more correct, for a large trunk came through the doorway at that moment, and fell to the floor.

"An' I ses as it's busted 'eavy!" came the voice of the porter in explanation.

"You howwid wuffian, Taggles! How dare you thwow my twunk about like that?"

"Look here, Master D'Arcy," began Taggles, vainly trying to lift the heavy trunk, "you can't kid me there's on'y socks and shirts in this."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, deah boys—"

"Lend a hand, kids!" cried Tom Merry.

And in half a jiffy, as the saying is, D'Arcy's trunk was on the luggage cart, while numerous hat-boxes and portmanteaux were piled on the roof of the car.

"It's not damaged in any way, Gussy."

"Thank you, Tom Mewwy! Pway be more careful, Taggles, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus.

Taggles looked very sympathetically at the swell of St. Jim's. In common with most people at the school, he was sorry that D'Arcy was going. He was a strong pillar in Taggles's sources of income. Before he started on D'Arcy's luggage he had helped himself to copious draughts of gin-and-water, "to give 'im 'cart," as Taggles would have said. His eyes already had a tendency to disagree with one another, and he shed a desolating odour of gin all around him. He took his cap off and mopped his forehead before going into the School House again.

"I'm sorry you're goin', Master D'Arcy," he said hesitatingly. "I shall miss you verry much, Master D'Arcy. It's the like's of you that makes a place worth keepin'; an' if you on'y saw how sorry the missis is too, you'd—"

"Back up with the rest of the trunks, wouldn't you, Taggy?" suggested Herries.

"My honny 'at, yes!" said Taggles. "I beg pardon, Master D'Arcy!"

And the St. Jim's school-porter disappeared into the School House. D'Arcy was about to recall him for a tip, when Tom Merry came forward to speak to him.

"Is there really no other way than this, Gussy?" he asked.

"None, deah boy, as far as I can see—"

"And that's not very far," interrupted Jack Blake disgustedly.

"Chuck it, Blake!" said Tom Merry. "It's no use getting your hair off about it, anyway."

"Well, tell me, did you ever see such a blithering idiot?" asked Blake.

The juniors could not help grinning. But the monocle dropped quickly from Arthur Augustus's eye, and he was tugging at the door-handle in a moment.

"You leave me no alternative but to administrah a severah thawashin', Blake," he said. "Pwepare to defend yourself, deah boy."

Blake watched the swell of the School House as he vainly tried to open the car door. It resisted all his efforts.

"How stwange!" he murmured. "I can't open the beastly door!"

"I'm holding it, you see," explained Tom Merry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Make it pax," suggested Manners.

"I wefuse—"

"What's the matter with the trunks, then?"

The point of Monty Lowther's remark was made plain by Taggles reappearing at the School House door staggering under another trunk. D'Arcy's grievance with Blake was forgotten in concern for his property. Taggles groaned like Sisyphus.

"Packs or trunks is all the same if y'ask me, Master Lowther," he panted. "All as I know is that I'd swop places with that old feller Hatlas willin'ly, if this here wasn't for Master D'Arcy. Talk to me—"

D'Arcy looked concerned as his second trunk nearly had a nasty side-slip.

"Begg'in' your pardon, Mastcr D'Arcy," said Taggles,

after Tom Merry & Co. had assisted him again; "that's the last 'eavy one, I think."

"Vewy good, Taggles."

"Thank you kindly, Master D'Arcy!" said Taggles, as a generous tip was slipped into his hand. "Which you're a gentleman, sir."

Jack Blake grasped the hand of Arthur Augustus. There was a suspicious moisture on Blake's eyelashes.

"I'm sorry, old son!" he muttered. "I—I know you can't do anything else but what you're doing, but—but it's rotten, that's all. Don't mind what I said."

"Of course I don't, Blake, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus, giving his chum's hand an affectionate grip. "It's all wright. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye, old chap!"

The car moved off. Arthur Augustus raised his silk hat to the crowd outside the School House. There was a cheer from Tom Merry & Co., and ringing good-byes from the whole crowd, as the car rolled out at the gates of St. Jim's. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the swell of St. Jim's, was gone!

CHAPTER 16.

No Gussy!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY was gone!

Jack Blake, when the Fourth Form were in class, looked at the vacant place formerly occupied by the elegant figure of the swell of St. Jim's, and a dark cloud came over his face.

D'Arcy was gone—banished from school!

The Grammarians, doubtless, were chuckling over the success of their jape upon St. Jim's, but they had, of course, no suspicion of its disastrous results to D'Arcy. If Gordon Gay had known that, he would not have hesitated for a moment to own up. But he did not know, and the juniors of St. Jim's could not tell him. They were bound to play the game.

The chums of the Fourth looked very downcast that morning, and they were careless enough with their lessons. But Mr. Lathom was very patient. He understood what they were feeling like, and he was considerate.

When the Fourth Form came out, Blake & Co. escaped without lines, though they had certainly earned them ever and over again.

It was bright and sunny in the quadrangle, but the faces of the chums of the School House were not bright. Blake glanced up at the clock-tower.

"Gussy's home by this time," he remarked.

"And facing the noble lord, his governor," Digby remarked.

"Poor old Gussy!"

Blake made a restless movement.

"Oh, it's rotten!" he said. "I hate to hang about the place. I expect Gussy to come down the passage every minute, or to hear him jaw in the study. Let's get out."

And the chums of Study No. 6 strolled out of the school gates. Blake, as a matter of fact, had some hope that they would fall in with the Grammarians. It would be some comfort to pummel Gordon Gay & Co.

Blake's wish was granted. Three Grammar School caps came in sight in the lane, and in a moment more Blake & Co. were face to face with Gordon Gay, Frank Monk, and Carboy. The juniors halted.

Gordon Gay and his comrades burst into a laugh. As a matter of fact, they had been looking for the Saints.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Blake frowned.

"Well, what are you cackling at?" he demanded.

"Who's been down brown?" roared Gordon Gay.

"St. Jim's have!" yelled Carboy and Monk.

"Ha, ha, ha! Hear us grin!"

And the "grin" of the Grammarians could have been heard for a considerable distance across the fields.

"You chumps!" said Blake.

"Did Gussy tell you he'd had a nice afternoon?" grinned Frank Monk. "We did our best to entertain him, and he seemed pleased. Was he just as pleased when he got back?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Do you think I did it well?" asked Gordon Gay blandly.

"Where is Gussy now?"

"Find out!"

"Did the chaps sly him for what I did in the afternoon?" chuckled Gay. "I can just imagine you chaps piling on him before he had time to explain."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Have you untied Skinny yet? Has Figgins got the savour of eggs out of his nose? Ha, ha, ha!"

Blake could stand no more. He rushed straight at the Grammarians, and in a moment his arms were locked round Gordon Gay's neck, and he was rolling in the dust with the hero of the Grammar School.

Digby and Herries tackled Monk and Carboy at once, and

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three fights were quickly in progress. There was a cloud of dust in the lane.

"Yah! St. Jim's cads!"
 "You Grammar School rotters!"
 "Go it!"
 "Give 'em socks!"

The fight was terrific. When the juniors separated at last, they were all looking very dusty and damaged. Gordon Gay dropped his hands and stepped back.

"Nuff's as good as a feast," he said. "I think we can call it a draw."

"Oh, I'm going to lick you!" said Blake.
 "But what's the row?" said Gay. "It isn't like you to bear malice because you've been japed, Jacky."

Blake hesitated.
 "It's because of Gussy," he said. "But—but you're right. Never mind; I'm off."

And he swung away, followed by Herries and Digby. Gordon Gay rubbed a discoloured eye, and looked after them very thoughtfully.

"Something's upset them," he said; "it's not only the jape. Can they have gone for Gussy and damaged him before he had time to explain? It would be like some of those St. Jim's asses. I wonder—"

"Don't see that it matters," yawned Carboy.
 But Gordon Gay looked very thoughtful as he walked away with his chums. They stopped at the fountain in the village to bathe their injuries, with the aid of their pocket-handkerchiefs. The encounter had been an unusually severe one.

And Gordon Gay was still thinking. It occurred to him that, after all, he had done a great deal of damage at St. Jim's which would not come under the head of junior ragging.

If Knox or Monteith had cut up rusty, matters might be made very unpleasant for Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Taggles, the school porter of St. Jim's, was coming down the village street, and Gordon Gay caught sight of him. He waved his hand to Taggles.

"Stop a minute!" he exclaimed.
 Taggles was quite willing to stop a minute. He was near the entrance of the Red Cow, and if he could by any possibility extract a tip from Gordon Gay, he could revisit that ancient hostelry. As a matter of fact, Taggles's walk was a little unsteady. He had been expending D'Arcy's parting tips in reckless profusion at the Red Cow, and it was already appearing to Taggles that the road he was walking on was most unaccountably jumpy. He had not noticed it about the road before, but certainly it had developed a way of rising and bumping against his feet which was really very remarkable.

"Good harternoon, Master Gay!" said Taggles, touching his hat.

"Dry weather!" suggested Gordon Gay.
 "Which you're right, Master Gay."

Gordon Gay fumbled in his pocket, and Taggles watched the motion of his hand with fascinated eyes.

"Any news at St. Jim's, Taggy?" he asked.
 "Only that Master D'Arcy's gone, sir."

Gordon Gay jumped. Monk and Carboy uttered sharp exclamations.

"D'Arcy gone!"
 "Yes, sir. He went this morning," said Taggles. "As you says, sir, it is dry."

Gordon Gay dropped a shilling into Taggles's willing palm.

"Gone on a holiday, I suppose?" he asked.
 "Ho, no, sir! Gone 'ome."

"Somebody ill?"
 "Ho, no, sir! He's been sent 'ome!"

"Not expelled?" exclaimed Gordon Gay.
 "Sent 'ome, sir, which is much the same thing," said Taggles. "Sent 'ome in disgrace, sir. I would never have believed it of Master D'Arcy, sir, if I hadn't seen it—such carryings-on! He pelted me with heggs, Master Gay—me—with heggs!"

Gordon Gay could not help laughing. He still had in his mind's eye the picture of the St. Jim's porter tearing round the house, with the eggs whizzing after him.

"Did he really, Taggy?"
 "E did," said Taggles, with asperity. "And 'e pelted Master Monteith and Master Knox, which they is both prefects. And the damage he did—my only hat, sir! You'd never believe it. Thank you kindly, sir. I don't drink, as a rule, but I'll drink your 'ealth for once, young gentlemen, breakin' my rule."

"Sent home in disgrace!" said Gordon Gay, as Taggles stumped away towards the Red Cow. "And he can't have explained, then, that it was I all the time?"

Frank Monk looked perplexed.

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"That accounts for Blake being so ratty," he said. "But why didn't Gussy explain?"

Gordon Gay shook his head.
 "What should we have called him if he had given me away?" he said.

"H'm! Sneak, I suppose."
 "And Gussy never was a sneak!" said Gordon Gay.

"But it's rather thick being sent home in disgrace!" said Carboy.

"It's rotten!" said Gordon Gay. "I never thought; but if I'd known, I wouldn't have had it. But it's not too late now."

"What are you going to do?" exclaimed his two chums together. "Where are you going, Gay, you ass?"

"I'm going to St. Jim's. You can excuse me to old Adams if I'm not back in time," said Gordon Gay.

And, without another word, the hero of the Grammar School strode away.

CHAPTER 17.

Gordon Gay to the Rescue.

"MY only hat!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"What—"
 "Look there! What cheek!"

"Grammar cad!"
 "Yah!"

The juniors of St. Jim's had reason to be astonished. After what had happened, Gordon Gay might have been expected to give St. Jim's a wide berth. But there he was, walking in at the gates with as much coolness as if the whole school belonged to him.

"Grammar cad! Yah!"
 Gordon Gay grinned.

A dozen fellows rushed up to collar the presumptuous Grammarian, and bump him hard for his temerity. But Gay held up his hand.

"Pax!" he exclaimed.
 "That's all very well!" exclaimed Blake wrathfully.

"You didn't want any pax yesterday afternoon, you bouncer. Look here—"

"Bump him!"
 "Collar the cad!"

"Hold on!" said Tom Merry. "Let's see what he's come for. What do you want, Gay?"

"I want to see the Head."
 "The Head!" exclaimed Monty Lowther.

"Yes."
 The astonished juniors allowed the Grammarian to pass. Gordon Gay mounted the steps of the School House. He rang, and when Toby the page appeared he tapped that astonished youth on the shoulder.

"Take me in to the Head," he said.
 "I'll take your name in, sir," said Toby.

"Tell him it's very important—in connection with Master D'Arcy."
 "Very well, sir."

Toby departed, leaving Gordon Gay standing in the hall. A crowd of juniors gathered round him in a few minutes. Most of the fellows were surprised to see a Grammarian there, and more astonished at his asking to see the Head. A suspicion of his errand occurred to Tom Merry. If Gordon Gay had learned of D'Arcy's plight, it was the most natural thing in the world for him to come there.

"What do you want to see the Head for, Gay?"
 "Business."

"About Gussy?"
 "Yes."

"Then you know?"
 "I got it from Taggles," said Gordon Gay.

Toby returned.
 "The 'Ead will see you, Master Gay," he said. "This way."

Gordon Gay followed the School House page to the Head's study. Dr. Holmes was not alone there. Mr. Railton, the Housemaster of the School House, was in the room. Both of the masters looked curiously at Gordon Gay as he entered, his cap in his hand.

"You wish to see me?" said Dr. Holmes. "You are from Rylcombe Grammar School, I believe?"

"Yes, sir. I'm Gay, of the Fourth Form there."
 "What is your business with me?"

"It's about Gussy, sir—D'Arcy, I mean," said Gordon Gay, colouring. "I—I've heard to-day, sir, that he's been sent home in disgrace for what happened yesterday."

Dr. Holmes nodded.
 "I've come here to own up and clear him, sir," said the Cornstalk junior.

The Head looked puzzled. Mr. Railton fastened a very

keen glance upon the Grammarian junior. Gordon Gay met their eyes firmly.

"I do not understand, I confess," said the Head. "There is no doubt that D'Arcy was the culprit. He did not deny it."

"Besides, he was seen," said Mr. Railton.

"Excuse me, sir—he wasn't!" said Gordon Gay. "I was seen!"

"You?"

"Yes, sir. It was I who japed the fellows here. I was made up as Gussy, sir," said Gordon Gay. "It was just a jape, sir."

The Head of St. Jim's looked blankly at Gordon Gay.

"Do you mean seriously to tell me, Gay, that you made yourself up to impersonate D'Arcy, and that you played those absurd tricks in this school?" he exclaimed. "Impossible!"

"It's true, sir!"

"But—but—"

"Then where was D'Arcy all the time, Gay?" asked Mr. Railton quietly, his eyes never leaving the junior's face.

"He was at the Grammar School, sir. Monk and the fellows had him to tea, to keep him out of the way while I japed the other chaps."

"This is—extraordinary!" exclaimed the Head. "It is very difficult to believe that a boy of your age could have so much skill in impersonation."

Gordon Gay smiled.

"I've impersonated lots of people, sir," he said. "The other fellows here have seen me made up as Gussy before, and they never spotted me. They'll bear witness if you like, sir."

"I suppose your schoolfellows will attest that D'Arcy was really at the Grammar School yesterday afternoon?" said Mr. Railton.

"Certainly, sir. And Monk's sister Phyllis, too. She was there."

"It is extraordinary!" murmured the Head.

"I have heard of this boy before, and his peculiar gifts," said Mr. Railton. "There is a boy in the New House here—Kerr—who is very much the same way. I believe that this boy's word may be relied upon, sir."

"But it—it is amazing!" gasped the Head. "Then D'Arcy did not know that you were playing those pranks, Gay?"

The Grammarian junior burst into an involuntary chuckle.

"Excuse me, sir—no! If he had known, he would have hammered me."

"Ahem! And you say that you came here disguised as D'Arcy, and perpetrated those unheard-of pranks?" exclaimed the Head. "And why?"

"Oh, it was a jape, sir! We're always japing one another. Perhaps I went a bit too far this time," said Gordon Gay thoughtfully.

"Upon my word! I should say you did!" said Dr. Holmes, smiling, in spite of himself. "But if this simple explanation would have cleared up the matter, Gay, why should D'Arcy have refused to make it? That is very extraordinary."

"He wouldn't give me away, sir. Gussy is a good little ass—ahem! I mean Gussy is the soul of honour, sir, and he wouldn't do anything to get another chap into trouble."

"H'm! That is straining a point of honour a little too far, I think," said the Head. "However, I do not blame D'Arcy. Better for a boy to be too honourable than not honourable at all. But—but this is all very extraordinary. I suppose I must take your word, Gay—especially as you offer me evidence of it."

"The chaps at the Grammar School will bear out all I've said, sir—and the fellows here have seen me made up as D'Arcy," said Gordon Gay.

"Very well, I accept your assurance. But why have you come here and told me this? You must know that you will be severely punished for perpetrating such an outrageous prank in a school you do not belong to!" the Head exclaimed, his voice rising.

"I—I suppose so, sir."

"I shall certainly report your conduct to Dr. Monk, and I trust that he will flog you severely!" said the Head.

"Very well, sir," said Gordon Gay meekly.

"You surely admit that you deserve a severe punishment?"

"I suppose I do, sir."

"And you will receive it. You may go!"

"Thank you, sir!"

"One moment, if you will excuse me, sir," said Mr. Railton. "You wished Gay to explain why he came here to tell you this."

"Yes, indeed," said the Head, fixing his eyes upon Gay. "You knew that by clearing D'Arcy, Gay, you would be taking the punishment upon yourself. It is surely not mere

impertinence that has led you to come and make this statement to me."

Gordon Gay flushed.

"Oh, sir!"

"Well—well, I believe it was not," said the Head. "But what was your motive?"

"I couldn't let poor old Gussy be sacked because of what I had done, sir," said Gordon Gay simply. "I simply had to come and own up. As for the punishment, I can stand it. I'm not afraid of a flogging."

Dr. Holmes hesitated.

"When did you learn about D'Arcy being sent away?" he asked.

"Half an hour ago, sir. I met Taggles in the village, and he told me."

"And you came directly here, then?"

"Yes, sir."

"You have acted in a manly way, Gay. Upon the whole"—the Head paused—"upon the whole, Gay, I do not see the necessity of inflicting any further punishment in this affair at all. I shall not report your action to Dr. Monk."

"Oh, sir!" exclaimed Gordon Gay gratefully.

"You may go, Gay."

"Thank you, sir! You are very kind!" faltered Gordon Gay. "I hope you'll believe, sir, that I—I never meant to cheek you in any way by coming here yesterday. I suppose it was all jolly thoughtless; but if I had thought about you being displeased, sir, I wouldn't have done it."

"Very well, Gay," said the Head good-humouredly, "we will say no more about it."

And Gordon Gay left the study, feeling considerably lighter-hearted than when he had entered it. Tom Merry & Co. met him in the hall.

"Well?" they demanded with one voice.

"I've owned up."

"And—"

"And—nothing!" said Gordon Gay cheerfully. "Your headmaster's a brick—simply a ripping, first-class brick! He's going to overlook it."

"Jolly lucky for you," said Tom Merry. "If you hadn't come here on Gussy's account, we'd bump you for your cheek!"

"What—ho!"

"As it is," said Tom Merry, "we'll invite you to the feed when Gussy gets back. He'll come back at once now. I suppose, and we shall celebrate. And you can come; but come in your own proper person this time. We've had enough of D'Arcy II."

And Gordon Gay grinned, and said that he would.

Needless to say the banishment of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy from his old haunts at St. Jim's did not continue.

His silence might be considered quixotic, but he certainly was not to be punished, as he had done nothing to merit punishment. And the same day a telegram arrived at Eastwood from the Head of St. Jim's.

"All explained. Return to school at once.—HOLMES."

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, showing the telegram to Lord Eastwood. "Bai Jove, dad! Look at that!"

Lord Eastwood read the telegram, and looked grimly at his son.

"Well," he said, "perhaps you will kindly explain."

"Certainly, dad. I was sent home yesterday because I was supposed to have done somethin' which I hadn't done—"

"Well?"

"And the chap who had done it didn't know about it, so he couldn't own up, and I couldn't give him away. It would not have been becoming to a D'Arcy to act in such a mannish, sir!" said Arthur Augustus, with dignity.

"Quite so, Arthur. But now—"

"I suppose Gordon Gay has heard of it, and owned up," said the swell of St. Jim's thoughtfully. "I'm to go back. Pewwaps, aftah all, I needn't have brought so much luggage away with me, but I can take it back all right."

The following morning Arthur Augustus D'Arcy arrived at St. Jim's in great state, luggage and all, and he was given a tremendous welcome.

And the feed, which took place in Tom Merry's study, under the skilful superintendence of Fatty Wynn, was first-rate; and Gordon Gay & Co., who came over to join in it, had a really good time. And for the time the rival juniors forgot that they were rivals, and joined heartily in celebrating the return of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy from his banishment.

THE END.

(Next week's grand long, complete tale of Tom Merry & Co., and Figgins & Co., is entitled, "WHEN A BOY'S DOWN," by Martin Clifford. Order your copy of "THE GEM" Library in advance. Price 1d.)

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A Splendid, New, Long, Complete School Tale of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

NEXT WEEK:

"WHEN A BOY'S DOWN."

DEEP SEA GOLD!

A WONDERFUL NEW STORY OF AMAZING ADVENTURE IN A SUBMARINE MOTOR CAR.

By REGINALD WRAY.

A Perilous Expedition.

With a gesture, the boy waved him aside; then, turning to the trembling gatekeeper, said:

"Your life is forfeited, but I give you the chance of meeting it like a man instead of being shot like a dog. Get your arms, and fall in."

The man would have poured out his gratitude for the reprieve, but Dick sternly motioned him to be silent, then issued orders which sent the little party hurrying in all directions to order every able-bodied male inhabitant to muster in the cave by the sea.

Not that there was any danger of invasion for the only means of communication between the Island of Lost Hopes and the Island of Rest, was the drawbridge, now safely drawn up, and the passage under the sea, which could only be passed by men wearing diving-helmets.

But within one of the caves with which the Island of Lost Hopes was honeycombed, was a submarine vessel larger, and built more like a caravan, than the Octopus.

This strange craft was nearing completion, and Dick feared lest the rebels should seize it, and, rallying forth, either bring destruction upon the island, or, what was even more to be dreaded, set forth on a voyage of piracy and murder on their own account.

It had often struck Dick what a terrible weapon a submarine car like the Octopus would be in the hands of unscrupulous men.

It was therefore his obvious duty to prevent the mutineers seizing the Red Terror, with which ominous name Captain Flame had already christened his second car.

Besides, there was another reason which made it imperative that Dick Dauntless should enter the Island of the Lost at once.

There had been twenty warders scattered amongst the various work-room caverns; eight had escaped, five were known to have been killed, leaving seven as yet unaccounted for, who, if still living, must not be allowed to fall victims to the baffled hate of the mutineers.

Telling off some of them, who joined him in the cave by the sea, to remove the launch from its precarious position, load it with the necessary chemicals, and prepare it for their return journey, he put himself at the head of twenty picked men.

Bidding these latter don their helmets, he was about to give the order to march, when he chanced to glance towards Jack Orde.

Though the boy's eyes shone with the brave light of an unconquerable spirit, he was deathly pale, and the hand which rested on his sword-hilt trembled perceptibly.

Dick blamed himself for having forgotten the recent illness which had rendered his friend incapable of bearing the danger and excitement through which he had just passed.

Turning to his chum, he said:

"By the bye, Jack, you'd better stop in the cave. See that the launch is properly loaded, and as the storm seems passing off, take her into the lagoon ready to start directly I return."

Jack looked in blank dismay at his chum.

"But, Dick, I—" he began, when Dauntless turned with pretended anger upon him.

"I am in command here, Mr. Orde. You will kindly do what I order."

A look of dull resentment flashed for a moment into Jack Orde's heavy eyes, then his hand flew in salute to his forehead, and, with a heavy heart, he turned to obey his superior's orders.

But a few minutes' reflection seemed to banish all feeling of resentment against Dick, for he guessed the reason of the order, and could but admit that he felt far from fit for further exertion just then.

Turning, he waved a farewell to Dick Dauntless, who, sword in hand, was leading his helmeted little troop into the water.

Once more Dick Dauntless threaded his way through the



The Opening Chapters of "DEEP SEA GOLD," specially re-written for this number of "THE GEM" LIBRARY.

Dick Dauntless and Jack Orde, chums of Weltsea College, are bathing in the sea early one morning, when they are suddenly seized by enormous octopus-like tentacles and dragged swiftly down beneath the surface of the water. The chums are almost at their last gasp, when a dark trap-door appears before them, and they are pulled aboard a strange submarine craft, the like of which they have never seen before. It is, in fact, a submarine motor-car, and the boys are soon introduced to Captain Flame, the captain of the Octopus, as the strange craft is named.

The crew consists entirely of boys, with whom Dick Dauntless and Jack Orde are soon on good terms.

The chums learn that Captain Flame is bound for the Pacific with the express intention of searching for Dick Dauntless's millionaire father, who was a friend of his, and whose yacht the Morning Star, has long been reported missing.

A chance paragraph in a newspaper gives the adventurers a clue, and they make for that dreaded mass of floating weeds known as the Sargasso Sea. There, stuck fast in the midst of the weeds, they find both the Morning Star and a tug which had been sent to aid her.

Captain Flame, with a small party of his boys, set out in a launch to investigate. When the party return to the Octopus they find that it is being attacked by the fearful monsters of the deep.

These are eventually driven off, and the Octopus is repaired. Just as the repairs are finished, however, a body of Tankas, huge men who dwell in the crater of an extinct volcano, are seen advancing to attack the ship. The leader is captured, and the Octopus makes for an island, where the repairs can be properly attended to. Dick Dauntless and Jack Orde are sent, in the launch, to the Island of Rest for chemicals, but on arriving at their destination they find that the prisoners of the Island of Lost Hopes have rebelled. Together with the guards, they manage to beat them off, and some of the warders are rescued from the hands of the rebels. The gatekeeper, whose absence had seriously imperilled the lives of the warders, returns, and the sergeant immediately points his revolver at the keeper's head, for by the rules of the islands any act which imperils the safety of others is punishable by immediate death.

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beautiful land of vari-coloured coral, rich with sea anemones, that lay beneath the waters dividing the two islands.

But the fairylike scene did not appeal to Dick just then.

His thoughts were on the work before him.

He could not hide from himself that the lives of himself and those with him hung on a thread.

With the small force at his command, he was about to face hundreds of desperate men.

About half-way between the two islands Dick came to an abrupt halt.

Something had whizzed past his head, and, striking a mass of coral immediately behind him, had fallen to the ground.

Signing his men to halt, Dick picked up the missile.

It was a flattened bullet of a kind similar to those in the cartridges he carried in his own bandolier.

A quick order, and his men scattered in all directions.

Advancing in skirmishing order, they searched every bunch of weeds, every overhanging branch of coral in the direction from whence the shot had come.

But without avail; and, deeming it likely that his unseen foe had fled directly he had fired, Dick resumed his advance.

But the episode gave him food for thought.

It was plain that at least one of the mutineers possessed a diving-helmet and a rifle.

He would have been more uneasy still had he known that, just as his men breasted the slope leading to the entrance to the Island of the Lost, a helmeted figure, bearing a rifle in one hand, a heavy bar of iron in the other, had crept from out a coral cave, the entrance to which had been efficiently screened by falling masses of seaweed.

Rising to his feet, the man looked with a sneering smile on his pale face after the departing forms.

Then, creeping from coral stem to coral stem, hiding behind rocks, wriggling like some loathsome reptile through masses of seaweed, he made his way towards the Island of Rest.

Presently he reached the Cave by the Sea to find a small party whom Dick had ordered to remain on guard there, drawn up on the beach.

Stretched at full length upon the sand, the stranger dragged himself, slowly and cautiously, to the furthestmost end of the cavern.

Taking advantage of every inequality in the ground, he had soon worked his way to the wide tunnel which led to the well-wooded, open ground above.

Men were constantly passing to and fro, from the sea.

A dozen times ere the outer air was reached, had the unknown been in danger of discovery.

Yet fortune, and the fancied security from attack which those on the Island of Rest felt, saved him from discovery.

Within half an hour of leaving the water, he rose to his feet in a cove of tropical shrubs.

Removing his helmet, he allowed a low, mirthless, evil laugh to escape his lips.

Creeping through the undergrowth, watching his opportunity and rushing unseen across the open spaces he encountered on his way, the rebel rapidly approaching the drawbridge.

From beneath a mass of flaming scarlet blossom, he peered at the gatekeeper, who, his rifle resting in the crook of his arm, paced up and down before the gates, all unconscious of the slinking form which was watching him with blood-shot, murderous eyes.

Presently the rebel drew a cartridge from his bandolier, and, leaning cautiously forward, waited until the sentry was almost within arm's length, then flung the missile with all his force at the drawbridge.

As the metal case struck against the iron bridge, the sentry, alarmed by the sound, turned swiftly round.

It was his last move on earth.

Rising noiselessly to his feet, the rebel swung the heavy bar in the air, and brought it down with crushing force upon the sentry's unprotected head.

With a hollow moan, the man dropped lifeless to the ground.

Sinking back into the mass of trailing vines from which he had risen, the rebel looked cautiously around him.

There was no one in sight.

No mortal eye had witnessed the foul deed.

Again rising, he approached the drawbridge, and, thrusting his face close to the grating, sent the wild cry of a sea-hawk hurtling through the air.

An evil-looking face was thrust from behind a rock alongside the pier, and bared his jagged, discoloured teeth in a snarling grin, as he saw the murderer's face looking at him through the grating by the side of the drawbridge.

The next moment the man on the pier had disappeared.

Keeping his eyes fixed anxiously upon the path leading from the valley to the drawbridge, the rebel crouched within the shadow of the arch.

But not for long. A low whistle soon brought him swiftly to his feet.

Glancing across the chasm, he saw the dark tunnel leading to the stone pier crammed with crouching, evil-faced figures.

The next moment he had worked the lever.

The drawbridge dropped gently to its resting-place on the opposite side, and a crowd of stalwart, ragged men, each grasping a stout iron bar, or blacksmith's hammer in his hand, stole like stalking wolves over the bridge.

The Tanka King's Escape.

Let us return to the island on which we left the Octopus.

Glad to work, rest, and sleep in the open air once more, the boys, under Captain Flame's directions, worked hard on the hull of their ocean home, the Octopus.

With one of the boys, armed with a rifle, on guard over him, the Tanka king strode moodily about, or, seated on a rock or the trunk of a fallen tree, surveyed the busy party with scowling hate-laden eyes.

Captain Flame spent every moment he could spare from the work on the car in his captive's company.

At first the chief maintained a sullen silence. But after a time he yielded sufficiently to utter a few words, which, to his delight, Captain Flame recognized as similar to the language spoken by the Maoris of New Zealand.

Captain Flame was one of those born linguists to whom a strange language presents little difficulty, and, thanks to his previous knowledge of the Maori tongue, was soon able to understand what his prisoner said, and to make himself understood in return.

But in vain he questioned him about the strange land from whence he came.

All he could get out of the chief was that it was "taboo," or, forbidden, to speak of the land beneath the earth to anyone outside his own race.

Nor was the inventor more successful in discovering what became of the many prisoners who, in the course of years, must have fallen into the hands of these strange people.

Yet, from one or two remarks the Tanka let fall, he believed that his friend Mr. Dauntless still lived, and was not ill-treated.

Of the fishermen the chief spoke freely, but with the utmost contempt. Evidently he looked upon them as little better than animals.

These strange beings, Captain Flame gathered, were slaves of the larger race, who used them to till the fields beneath the sea, to secure the ships which became entrapped in the Sargasso, and to carry off those of the crew who were not devoured at nightfall by the horrible monsters, of which the adventurers had seen so many.

More than this the chief refused to disclose, relapsing into sullen silence when the inventor pressed his questions home.

The sixth day found the Octopus ready to resume her explorations, directly Dick Dauntless and Jack Orde returned. Indeed, she could have started at once, for, amongst the stores in the flooded stern of the Octopus had been discovered sufficient chemicals, in air-tight metal cases, to carry the submarine car many thousands of miles.

Throughout the afternoon of the sixth day Captain Flame repeatedly scanned the distant horizon, hoping to see the rays of the sun reflected on the highly-polished hull of the launch. But he looked in vain.

Yet it was not until the sun had risen and set on the seventh day, and Dick Dauntless had not returned, that he began to feel uneasy about him.

There was yet another cause for uneasiness. That morning Captain Flame had mounted the hill, to obtain a wider view of the ocean lest the missing boys should have got out of their course, and be approaching the island from another direction, when he happened to glance in the direction of the burning mountain.

Suddenly his frame stiffened, and he remained for nearly ten minutes with his glass glued to his eyes, as he surveyed the bare cone of the volcano, from which clouds of flame-tinted smoke were rising in a mighty column.

Moving amongst the scorched and blackened boulders which dotted the summit of the cone, were a number of dark specks. Figs would never have mounted to so great a height, and monkeys there were none on the island. Yet it seemed impossible for the objects to be men. What would men be doing on that lifeless cone?

Presently he saw the specks climb to the top of the crater, then disappear as though they had hurled themselves into its flaming mouth.

Replacing his binoculars in their case, he descended the hill, and reached the Octopus, to find the boys in a state of great excitement. Their prisoner had escaped.

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"Who was guarding him?" asked Captain Flame, his white face growing black with anger.

"Karl Munchen," was the reply.

"Bring him to me!" ordered the inventor, in a voice of thunder.

A minute later the culprit stood before him.

The German's face was pale, but there was a sullen, defiant look on his face, which showed anything but contrition.

"How did you come to let your prisoner escape?" demanded Captain Flame.

"I couldn't help it. I did not take my eyes off him more than a second, and he was gone," growled Munchen, his shifty eyes wandering from the boys to the Octopus, from the Octopus to the sea, from the sea to the forest of palms behind them.

Every now and again his hand would steal half-way to his breast, then sink swiftly back to his side.

"You have been false to your trust, and your punishment shall fit your crime," announced Captain Flame. "Fool, had you forgotten that there are already many minor offences recorded against you?"

Karl Munchen turned pale, then his hand stole almost to his breast once more, and something like a dawning smile crossed his lips.

Captain Flame had turned partly away, but he caught the expression on the culprit's face. Wheeling swiftly round, he seized Munchen's shoulder in a grip that drew a cry of pain from the boy's lips.

"What price did the chief pay you for his liberty?" he demanded, in such awful tones that the boys instinctively shrank back.

With a wail of terror Karl Munchen dropped on his knees.

"Pay me!" he stammered. "I swear——"

"No lies, boy!" thundered Captain Flame.

With a single movement of his right hand the enraged captain tore open the German's coat, then, plunging his hand into his breast-pocket, drew out the enormous uncut diamond the Tanka king had worn above his forehead.

A wild, despairing cry of terror burst from Munchen's lips. The dumbfounded boys watched the scene with blanched faces. All eyes were fixed upon Captain Flame. His face was convulsed with rage. His eyes seemed literally to flash with livid fire. Shifting his grasp from the boy's shoulder to his throat, he snatched a stout, iron crowbar from the ground. Fiercely he towered over the gasping boy.

The spectators held their breaths. Not a boy present but deemed Munchen's very moments numbered. Suddenly the iron grip which circled the German's throat relaxed, and the boy fell half unconscious to the ground.

Captain Flame looked down upon him with a glance full of withering contempt.

"Bah! You are not worthy even of death!" he cried.

Then he added, as he pointed to the Octopus:

"Go! Your punishment shall commence in the engine-room, which you shall only leave to be transferred to the living death of the Island of the Lost!"

With a wailing cry of terror, Karl Munchen flung himself at Captain Flame's feet. The inventor spurned him aside as though he was some unclean beast.

"To arms, lads!" he cried, in his usual clear, ringing tones. "We may yet be in time to undo the harm yonder traitor has done!"

As though awakened from a fearful dream, the boys rushed to the submarine motor-car, from which they soon emerged each with a rifle in his hand, and hastily buckling on sword-belt and bandolier.

The Fight on the Plain.

Scattered in extended order, the boys from the Octopus followed Captain Flame towards the interior of the island. But though they covered as wide a front as their slender numbers would allow, Captain Flame had warned them not to lose touch with each other.

The fugitive was unarmed, it is true, but his enormous stature and great strength would render him a formidable opponent at close quarters. Besides, would not his first care be to provide himself with the fallen branch of a tree with which to defend himself?

However, there was little need for them to wander far. Evidently the savage had never found it necessary to cover up his tracks, for he left a well-defined "spoor" behind him, which the pursuers could not well miss.

As they marched inland, a thoughtful frown gathered on Captain Flame's brow. The Tanka had wandered neither to right nor left, but was making a bee-line for the volcano, as one following a well-defined plan, with a certain goal ahead.

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He remembered also the moving specks, which might have been men, that he had seen moving about the cone-shaped summit of the volcano.

For half an hour the pursuit was maintained. Not once had their quarry been sighted. Even when they reached the edge of a large plain that divided the palms growing near the sea from the thickly-timbered foot of the volcano, they saw nothing of the huge form they sought. But for the unmistakable track they were following, they might have thought that the chief had concealed himself in the thick undergrowth through which they had just passed, and was laughing at them in his sleeve.

Half-way across the plain, Captain Flame beckoned Will Avery, who, in Dick Dauntless' absence, was second in command, to approach.

"Call the boys in, Avery. We will continue the advance in close order!" he commanded.

Saluting, Avery obeyed.

It was well he did so. Barely had the little force formed up in rear of their captain, with Will Avery on their right flank, than all were startled by a loud, threatening shout, that came from amidst the trees towards which they were advancing.

The next minute fifty enormous Tankas, gay in their strange shell armour, bearing enormous broad-bladed spears in their hands, and large, gaily-embazoned shields on their arms, burst from the shelter of the wood. At their head strode Captain Flame's late prisoner.

Moving with a precision which spoke of the excellent discipline that obtained in their ranks, they advanced at the double towards the little party.

At the first sight of the foe Captain Flame had halted the boys.

"Steady, lads! Remember, we have firearms; they have not!" he cried; adding, as his practised eyes judged the distance between themselves and their foes: "Kneel!"

As one, the boys knelt in the long grass.

"At seven hundred yards!"

Steadily the boys adjusted their sights.

"Ready!"

Each boy grasped his rifle, and eagerly awaited the next order.

"Present!"

Every rifle sprang to its owner's shoulder.

"Fire!"

With what might easily have been taken for a single report, the five rifles rang out their message of death, and an irrepressible cheer burst from the boys' lips when they saw five men stagger, and fall, from out the advancing ranks.

"Steady, lads! Don't throw a shot away! Independent firing!" ordered Captain Flame.

Well did the four boys repay the care and attention their chief had given to their shooting whenever an opportunity offered.

Almost every bullet found its billet, until at last the Tankas, who had shown signs of confusion when the first volley struck their ranks, came to a halt some three hundred yards from the kneeling boys, and gazed, irresolutely, across the intervening space.

Captain Flame knelt by the little Chinaman's side.

"Hasten back to the Octopus as fast as your legs can carry you, Mopsa. Tell Mr. MacIntyre to bring the car to our assistance without a moment's delay," he ordered.

Nodding his comprehension, Mopsa sank down in the long grass, and glided away so quietly that none except his master and Will Avery saw his going.

"Cease firing! Retreat by half sections! Do not fire unless the Tankas advance!" was Captain Flame's next order.

Stepping into Mopsa's place, he remained behind with little Charlie Steele, who, though small, was not wanting in pluck.

As soon as the foe saw that the Britishers were retreating they prepared to follow, but, loading and firing as quickly as they could thrust cartridges into the breeches of their rifles, Charlie and Captain Flame greeted them with so deadly a shower of bullets that they again halted.

Fifty yards in the rear of their comrades, Tom Allstraw and Harry Monston halted, and knelt with rifles ready to cover the retreat of their companions.

But there was no need to fire, for the Tankas were standing irresolutely around their chief.

Hope rose high in the boys' hearts.

It seemed as though the foe would allow them to retreat without attempting to molest them.

Indeed, the savages had been taught a fairly severe lesson. Nearly half their number were stretched, dead or wounded, on the grass.

At that moment a new factor appeared on the scene.



The castle clock was striking eleven as Dick Dauntless was lowered by a rope from the battlements. "Goodbye, my lad!" was the colonel's farewell. "You're Dauntless by name and dauntless by nature. Take care of yourself!" (See p. 27.)

From the wood immediately behind the Tankas arose the loud, shrill notes of a trumpet.

Immediately a man stepped forth from the attackers' ranks and answered the call in a series of rapid notes, evidently of alarm.

Steadily our little party continued their retreat.

Anxious glances were cast in the direction from whence the first trumpet call had come.

Nor was it long ere their worst fears were realised.

Covering the ground in long leaping strides, two strong columns of shell-armoured warriors emerged from the wood.

Captain Flame glanced in the direction from whence he hoped to see the Octopus hastening on the scene.

Well might anxiety tear his heart.

The reinforcement that had reached the first body of their foes could not have numbered less than five hundred stalwart, well-drilled warriors.

The Octopus Turns the Scale.

Blankly the boys looked at each other, then into Captain Flame's calm, emotionless face, and were comforted.

No matter what the odds against them, they felt convinced that the inventor would somehow or other extricate them from the peril that menaced them.

Nor was their confidence misplaced.

As with a loud shout that sounded in the distance like some majestic chant, and the beating of their spear heads on their long shields, the Tankas greeted their king, Captain Flame ordered the boys to retreat on the double, towards where a small, round hill would give them some slight advantage over their enemies.

Barely had they reached the hill than the Tankas commenced their final advance.

It was a splendid sight that of those five hundred gaily-accounted warriors advancing in all the grandeur and panoply

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of war across the plain. Not a man out of step, no hurry, no confusion.

They advanced in double line, their spears lowered, the plumes on their shell helmets nodding in unison.

In vain the boys plied their rifles with a rapidity trained soldiers could not have beaten.

The foe fell fast.

But as each Tanka fell, the ranks closed up, and the advance continued unchecked.

All that dauntless Britons could do the gallant representatives of the greatest race the world has ever seen did that day.

But from the first the fight was hopeless.

What could four Britishers, three of whom were but boys, do against five hundred?

Nearer and nearer came the long, unwavering line. And now but a hundred yards intervened between attackers and attacked.

Encouraged by the calm, cool voice of their captain, the Britons' fire increased, until it seemed difficult to believe that four rifles could pour such a shower of lead upon their foes.

Suddenly the king raised his spear, and thrust it forward in the direction of the hill.

For the first time the Tankas broke silence.

A loud, hoarse, deep-chested roar burst from every lip, as with their spears at the charge they charged headlong up the hill.

The little party gave themselves up for lost.

Yet not for a moment did their steady fire relax.

Suddenly every heart was quickened by a deep, loud, formidable bellow, that they recognised and greeted with a cheer.

It was the Octopus's syren bellowing forth defiance to her foes, deliverance to her friends.

Never before had the car's hooter been pronounced musical.

But just then it was more welcome than the sweetest music to the hard-pressed little party.

Her long, steel tentacles beating down all that stood in her path as her huge wheels urged her through their ranks, the Octopus swept from one end of the long line to the other, then turned to repeat her charge.

But there was no need.

Brave though they were, the Tankas could not face this moving mass of hardened steel.

Their triumphant shouts turned to yells of terror, and they broke and fled back to the shelter of the woods at the foot of the volcano from which they had emerged.

As with a last fearful blast of her syren, the Octopus came to rest alongside the hill, the top of the conning-tower flew back and Mopsa emerged.

Striking a heroic attitude, he pointed to the fleeing Tankas, crying:

"Alone I did it!"

He slapped his chest with a force that made him cough.

"I, Mopsa, the brave, the invincible, looked upon the foes of my friends, and behold their hearts are turned to milk within their bosoms, and shrieking they fly!" he cried, in glorious tones.

Again he slapped his chest, more gently this time.

"Who like Mopsa? Who so good, so noble, so great, so brave, so—"

His vauntings ceased.

He cast one terrific glance at a gigantic Tanka, who, recovering from the shock of the Octopus' charge, was rushing with upraised spear at the wildly gesticulating Chinaman.

Mopsa saw him coming.

Saw his arm drawn back in the act of hurling his spear, then he dived head foremost through the conning-tower.

But quick though he was, the spear flew quicker, and ejaculations of horror arose from the boys as they saw the keen weapon pass clean through the Chinaman's voluminous garments, to clatter on to the roof of the car beyond him.

A wild, triumphant shout at the success of his shot burst from the warrior's throat.

Chanting a wild war-song, he disengaged a huge battle-axe from over his shoulder, and was rushing at the car when a well-directed shot from Harry Monston stretched him lifeless on the plain.

Whilst the above was taking place, Captain Flame was standing on the summit of the hill.

His arms were folded.

A dark frown hung like a thundercloud over his brow, as he gazed towards where, far away on the extreme left of where they had halted, a tiny speck was running hastily after the fleeing Tankas.

Suddenly he turned, and, beckoning to the boys, led the way into the Octopus through the side door, at which Mr. MacIntyre was standing to welcome them.

"Where is Munchen?" demanded Captain Flame, waving aside the engineer's congratulations.

"I do not know. He did not come to me in the engine."

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room as you commanded, but plunged into the palms," was the reply.

Captain Flame led the way into the conning-tower.

"Yonder goes the traitor! Fleeing to our enemies for protection!" he cried, pointing to the swiftly moving speck, which had occupied his attention when standing on the mound. "But he shall not escape me. I will recapture him, though five thousand and not five hundred, gigantic savages barred my path!"

Mr. MacIntyre made no reply.

He saw that Captain Flame's "black hour" was approaching, and knew that at such times the great inventor was best left alone.

Silently he retraced his steps to the engine-room.

As he did so he had to pass through the general room, where he found Mopsa trying vainly to persuade the boys that he had not fled from the Tankas' attack, but had fallen accidentally through the door of the conning-tower.

The little Chinaman had escaped serious injury from the Tankas' spear, but the boys noticed that he seemed unwilling to sit down for the next day or two.

When the Prisoners Broke Loose to Return to the Islands.

Motioning his men to halt, Dick Dauntless peered anxiously over the parapet of the walk out in the face of the rock, along which he and Jack Orde had been escorted on their first visit to the Island of Lost Hopes.

Then the bare plain had been dotted with the figures of the unhappy prisoners.

Now not a soul was to be seen.

An ominous silence brooded over the enormous cave.

What might this absence of life portend?

Possibly it was some deep, cunningly-conceived trap to lure the upholders of Captain Flame's power into a fancied security, which would induce them to advance into the lower caves, where they might easily be taken unawares and massacred to a man.

Dick's idea that the man who had shot at him had retreated before them seemed to point to this solution of the mystery.

Then he called the sergeant forward, and bade him lead the way to where the Red Terror was stabled.

Saluting, the man obeyed.

Presently they entered a large cave, evidently separated only by a thin wall of rock from the sea, for they could hear the waves beating fiercely on the outer walls.

In the centre of this cavern stood the Red Terror.

As her name implied, she was made of a dull red metal, and, save for her huge padded wheels, and long, twining tentacles, was as unlike the cylindrical Octopus as could well be.

Whilst the latter could easily have been taken for a submarine on wheels, the Red Terror resembled an enormous caravan, for she was built in two stories, and her enormous square windows gave her the appearance of being made entirely of glass.

Dick Dauntless had no time to spare for a close examination of Captain Flame's second submarine vehicle.

At any moment they might be attacked by men rendered desperate by despair, and it was, above all things, necessary that he should render it impossible for the rebels to make use of the Red Terror to leave the islands.

Yet he hesitated to destroy the wonderful construction entirely.

He believed that it would only be a question of a few days before the mutineers would be compelled by starvation to surrender.

If he could inflict sufficient damage upon the caravan to make some weeks' work upon her necessary before she could be moved, his object would be achieved.

Bidding his men remain where they were, Dick entered the Red Terror, and made his way to the engine-room.

Before the complicated mass of machinery he paused.

His very soul revolted against the destruction of the engines.

But there was no help for it.

Selecting a heavy hammer from a tool-box close at hand, he attacked the various piston-rods and cylinders, and did not desist until the engines were hopelessly ruined.

Aghast at the damage he had wrought, Dick hastened from the Red Terror, and, putting himself once more at the head of his men, led them from the cave.

At the entrance, he paused and looked back at the now crippled caravan.

Instinct warned him to return, and, with the dynamite he had brought for the purpose, utterly destroy the wonderful construction.

But he passed out of the cave, leaving the main body of the Red Terror intact.

It was well Dick Dauntless could not see into the future.

Regaining the caged walk, they descended to the workshop cavern. Here a fearful sight met their horrified gaze.

In the centre of the cave lay six of the warders they sought, a pile of dead in a circle around them, showing how dearly they had sold their lives.

Even as the horrified warders gazed upon the dead bodies of their murdered comrades, they wheeled smartly round, and a dozen rifles were pointed at a ragged swartly figure, who ran hastily up the stairs leading to the lower caverns.

"Don't fire, mates! It is me, Jim Hayward!" came in hoarse, strained tones from the wretched fugitive.

The man made no immediate reply to Dick's anxious questions, but commenced dragging him frantically to a branching passage that led to the drawbridge, crying:

"Quick, the bridge is down, and the fiends have crossed it to the Island of Rest!"

Those with dear ones in the valley gazed at each other with pale, blanched faces, too horrified for speech.

"Forward, lads, we may yet be in time to save the women and children!" cried Dick, placing himself at their head once more, and leading the way along the passage.

With a low, intense roar of rage that boded ill to the rebels when they should reach them, the warders followed their young leader.

By Dick's side, armed with a rifle Dauntless had thrust into his hand, raced James Hayward.

In short, gasping, disjointed sentences he told a fearful tale—how, on the first sound of the electric alarm bells, which told that the prisoners had risen, he tried to join the warders, who had rallied in the workshop. Fortunately for him, he had been unable to do so.

He had heard the news pass from mouth to mouth that the bridge was down, and the Island of Rest, with all its stores and treasures, was at the rioters' mercy.

Dick heard no more, for at that moment the bridge was reached, and with the grim silence of desperate men determined on vengeance, the little troop rushed across at it.

Probably deeming it improbable that danger could menace them from the Island of Lost Hopes, or, perhaps, because none of the undisciplined rebels would be found willing to forgo the plunder and rapine that lay before them, the scoundrelly band had left the bridge unguarded.

A short hour before the valley at Dick's feet had presented a perfect picture of peace, security, and tranquillity. Now all was changed.

The well-tended fields and gardens were wrecked and trampled on. The village of warders' houses that dotted the sides of the vale was already burning fiercely, the lurid flames playing on a dense crowd of rebels, who, drunk with the sense of liberty and revenge for fancied wrongs, were dancing, more like maniacs than sane creatures, around the burning houses.

So enraged were the warders at the destruction of their property, that it was with difficulty Dick Dauntless could restrain them from hurling themselves headlong on their foes, careless of the hopeless odds against which they would have to contend.

Young though he was, he was a born leader of men. His quick eyes had already shown him how he might best serve the absent inventor.

Far away in the distance arose the castellated building which Captain Flame had erected, and in which he dwelt when he stayed at the island.

This castle, Dick knew, had been built for just such an emergency as the present.

Its thick walls of quarried stone would resist any force unprovided with artillery. He knew, further, that it was strongly garrisoned and well stocked with arms, ammunition, and provisions.

He knew there were quickfiring guns lining its walls, and wondered why the garrison had not already opened fire on the rebels.

He soon discovered the reason.

Over a level plain about halfway between the valley and the castle hastened a large crowd of women, children, old men, and invalids from the village and the outlying houses, all laden with their most treasured household goods, and hastening to seek the protection of the castle.

It was lest attention should be drawn to these fugitives that the castle had withheld its fire.

In a moment Dick Dauntless had made up his mind how to act.

Giving his men a few whispered orders, he led the way to where a cactus hedge screened a road leading to the plain across which the fleeing people were passing from the view of the rioters.

As soon as the cactus hedge was reached the little party broke into the double.

As they did so a fierce, hate-laden yell arose from the village. At first they thought they were perceived, but,

peering through the hedge, Dick saw that the rebels were streaming across the country after the fugitives.

Dick's troop had only just time to leave the road and fling themselves across the pastures behind the fugitives ere the rebels were upon them.

"Steady, men! We are few, they are many; every shot mus: tell!" shouted Dick, as his men flung themselves down on the short grass.

Crash!

The well-aimed volley had struck the foremost rank of the frenzied rebels, mowing them down like corn before the scythe of the mower.

Then for a few minutes the roar of independent firing burst from the rifles of the gallant twenty.

At the same moment the quickfiring on the castle walls took up the game, and cries of terror burst from the fleeing women and children as shells flew shrieking over their heads.

But the gunners understood their work. The death-dealing missiles fell amongst the rebels with deadly effect.

Mown down by the fire of Dick's men, decimated by the swiftly-falling shells, the rebels halted; then, with moans of terror, turned and fled.

Ten minutes later Dick Dauntless led his little band into the castle just as the last of the fugitives passed through the gates in safety.

They were but just in time, for as the heavy iron gates clanged to behind them night fell upon the scene.

"Well done, Mr. Dauntless! I have seen service in many parts of the British Empire, but never have I seen men handled better than you have handled your little party this evening!"

It was Colonel Hilliers, Captain Flame's great friend and the commander of the castle, who spoke.

Dick flushed beneath the gallant old veteran's praise.

"I only did what anyone else could have done, sir," he replied modestly—"besides, it was partly my fault for not having seen that the gate was more strongly guarded."

"Nonsense, my lad!" cried the colonel. "You need not blame yourself for that. How could you tell there was a traitor amongst us?"

"Again I was to blame, sir," insisted Dick; and he forthwith told Colonel Hilliers how he had been fired at from amongst the coral beneath the sea, and had taken it for granted that his assailant had retreated to the Island of the Lost Hopes, instead of which, he had evidently made his way inland, and had overpowered the sentry at the gate.

But the gallant old colonel would not hear of Dick bearing the blame.

"Come in!" he cried genially. "We can do nothing until morning, when our shells will soon drive those rats back to the Island of Lost Hopes."

As he spoke he moved from the courtyard, in which the above conversation had taken place, towards his own quarters.

"I must be going, sir," Dick declared.

"Going!" ejaculated the colonel. "What do you mean? You'd find a moonlight stroll on the island anything but healthy just at present."

"Nevertheless I must try it, sir," replied Dick, with a smile. "Captain Flame is waiting for the chemicals for his engines; besides, do you not think he ought to be informed as soon as possible of what has taken place here?"

Dick sighed as he spoke. Well he knew that Captain Flame's return, and the consequent abandonment of the search for his friend, would sign his father's death warrant.

"The boy is mad!" muttered Colonel Hilliers.

"How on earth are you going to get to Flame?" he demanded aloud.

"My chum, Jack Orde, is waiting for me in the launch on the lagoon. If I delay much longer he may come ashore to search for me, and fall into the hands of the rebels."

In vain Colonel Hilliers used every argument to dissuade Dick from what he looked upon as nothing more nor less than deliberate suicide. He pointed out that the island was swarming with rebels, who would be sure to discover and slay the boy before he had got a mile from the castle.

But Dick persisted, and was with difficulty persuaded to stay at the castle long enough to partake of the refreshment he stood so much in need of.

The castle clock was striking eleven as Dick Dauntless, having taken leave of Colonel Hilliers, was lowered by means of a rope from the castle wall.

"Good-bye, my lad! You're Dauntless by name and dauntless by nature. Take care of yourself. I'll never forgive you if you get killed," was the old colonel's farewell, as Dick dropped out of sight down the swaying rope.

Another long and thrilling instalment of this splendid adventure serial in next Thursday's "GEM LIBRARY." Order your copy in advance. Price One Penny.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 195.

NEXT WEEK:

"WHEN A BOY'S DOWN."

A splendid, New, Long, Complete, School Tale of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

OUR NEW WEEKLY FEATURE

**Next Week's Story.**

It is not until times of trouble come upon him that a fellow is able to gauge accurately the true worth of his friends, and this is the theme chosen by popular Martin Clifford for next Thursday's grand complete St. Jim's story, entitled

"WHEN A BOY'S DOWN."

Figgins—lanky, rugged Figgins, captain of the New House, and best of good fellows—has his "bad time," and bitter experience teaches him as it has taught many another, that it is only the truest of friends that can be relied upon

"WHEN A BOY'S DOWN."**Another Grand, Long, Complete School Story.**

I should like to draw my readers' attention, as connoisseurs of good school stories, to the splendid complete school story which will appear from the pen of the inimitable Frank Richards in next Tuesday's issue of our grand, little companion paper, "The Magnet" Library. The title of this fine story, which deals with the further adventures of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars School, is

"For the Honour of His Chum!"

and I strongly advise all lovers of good school stories to read it. I will guarantee that they thoroughly enjoy it.

Health Hints.**Danger of Checking Profuse Perspiration.**

This natural fluid of our bodies must have exit, or in a few hours we should die. Heat distends the mouth of the pores, and promotes a larger and more rapid flow of the fluid. On the other hand, cold contracts them. If these mouths are gradually closed no harm follows; hence the safety and wisdom of cooling-off slowly after any exertion, and the danger of cooling-off rapidly under the same circumstances.

Thus to avoid what is commonly called a "cold" it is only necessary to avoid closing the pores of the skin either rapidly by checking perspiration, or by waiting until the body is thoroughly chilled—that is, until the pores are entirely or nearly closed by inaction.

Encourage perspiration under proper conditions and with proper precautions. Always keep the surface of the body warm and clean, and you will have no difficulty in keeping physically sound.

How to Avoid Catching Cold.

Nature gives you an alarm in the first chilling feeling. Heed it at once, or pay the penalty.

Take a brisk walk or run, breathing deeply, and keep the mouth shut. Take care of your throat and lungs by protection from within by keeping the mouth closed when passing from a warm to a less warm temperature—precautions are often wrongly taken. It is much better to turn the chest protector round—if you wear one—and make a back protector of it, thus protecting the chest and lungs by the necessary care of the spinal column.

It is better to turn up one's collar than to wear a muffler, and it is better to protect the back of the neck from draughts of cold air, and thus protect the throat.

To Get a Copy of "The Boys' Friend 3d. Library."

To obtain a copy of "The Boys' Friend" 3d. Library, my chum, L. Myer, of Dartmouth Park Hill, should either order it through his local newspapers, or send fourpence in stamps to "The Publishing Department The Amalgamated Press, 23-29, Beaverie Street," stating which number it is he requires

Replies in Brief.

Master C. Clements, Innes School, Uitenhage, South Africa.—I was interested to receive your letter, and will see if I cannot find room for a character on the lines you suggest before long. You must remember, however, that I get dozens of requests similar to yours daily, and from places in every part of the Empire. I cannot possibly grant them all, but can only do my best to act in the best interests of the general body of my readers.

V. H. Desar, Bombay.—Many thanks for your very interesting letter. I can only assure you that the Nabob of Bhanipur is a very popular character in our companion paper, "The Magnet" Library, and he has been sorely missed by a host of readers during his absence at the Durbar. As regards the request contained in the latter part of your letter, the reply printed above to Master C. Clements applies similarly to yours. I shall be very glad to hear from you at any time.

Master Robert H. Cameron, Plymouth.—Thanks for your letter. It is by no means improbable that the events you so desire will come to pass before very long in "The Magnet" Library. As to THE GEM and "The Magnet" readers having a distinguishing badge, are not the members of the great fellowship of my readers known already by that most popular of all badges—the copy of THE GEM or "The Magnet" that they hold in their hands?

L. C. J., Bristol.—No; the serial called "The Alliance of Three" was scarcely long enough to be reprinted in book form.

C. F. B. ("Faithful Reader").—Your suggestions and wishes are duly noted and added to my list.

H. E. Burrows, Leytonstone.—Thank you for your letter. By asking your nearest newsgagent to reserve you a copy of THE GEM and "The Magnet" Libraries every week, you will obtain them as soon as they are published.

Of Interest to All Readers.

I have pleasure in publishing the following readers requests:

Master R. Lagrue, 20, Callow Street, Fulham Road, Chelsea, wishes to correspond with some boy or girl fellow-reader.

Master Thomas Taylor (age 16), of 69, Bowland Street, Bradford, would like a Canadian girl reader to correspond with him.

Masters F. D. Bryden, W. E. Osborne, and J. Rientout would like a boy chum to write to them at 10, Hall Terrace, Willington, Co. Durham.

Will a girl "Gemite" please correspond with Miss A. A. Williams, of 40, Suffolk Street, Birmingham.

Miss Daisy Thorley, 21, Somerlyton Road, Brixton, London, S.W., wishes to correspond with a girl reader of THE GEM—age about 15 or 16—who lives in Australia.

Masters C. Willcox and W. F. Bun want a companion, who dresses somewhat after the manner of D'Arcey, age about 17 or 18, and living in the vicinity of Camberwell and Kennington. Letters to be addressed to C. Willcox, 77, Graces Road, Camberwell, S.E.

Master D. Hart, 12, Castle Street, Newport, Mon., wishes to correspond with some boy or girl reader of THE GEM.

Master C. Birgs, of 55, Corn Street, Bristol, would like some "Gemite" in Canada or Australia to correspond with him.

Will any New Zealand reader of THE GEM exchange picture-postcards with William Jackson, 15A, Upper Rathmines, Rathmines, Dublin, Ireland?

Master D. C. Swart, Box 137, Bloemfontein, S.A., would like to correspond with a boy chum in Australia, China, Norway, Switzerland, or America.

Miss Dorothy Davidson, of Market Square, Molteno, South Africa, would be very pleased if some "Gemite"—age 14 or 15—would correspond with her.

THE EDITOR.