

**"D'ARCY'S DODGE!"**

A splendid new long, complete school tale of

**TOM MERRY & CO. at ST. JIM'S.** R. S. WARREN BELL'S grand school serial.

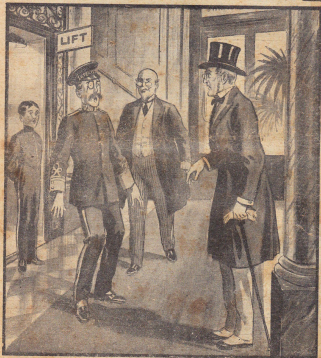
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OF GREYHOUSE.

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**D'ARCY'S DODGE!**

Retreat was impossible! The Head of St Jim's and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy stared blankly at one another. The Hotel Proprietor came forward. "What does it mean?" - exclaimed the Head of St Jim's. "Mr. Pawker, what is that boy doing here?"



Every

Wednesday.



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D'Arcy looked in the glass somewhat anxiously. "Do you think I look wretched young for the job?" he asked. Mr. Snodger came alert a smile.

CHAPTER I.  
Quite a Good Idea.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY, of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, wore a particularly bright smile. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was always, or nearly always, sunny and good-tempered. But on this particular afternoon he was in specially good spirits. And this was somewhat peculiar, too, for the weather was by no means all that could be desired, and it was a half-holiday at St. Jim's. Cricket had not started yet, and the ground would not have been fit for play, anyway. Jack Blake had been down to look at the footer ground, and had returned in a bad temper. Blake caught D'Arcy's sunny smile as he came into Riady No. 6, and it had an exasperating effect on him. A half-holiday with nothing to do did not please Blake. Blake scowled.

Arthur Augustus was trying on neckties before the big glass, which had been imported into Study No. 6 at D'Arcy's own expense.

"He looked round at Blake and smiled, and Blake gave another scowl."

"Anything the matter, dear boy?" asked Arthur Augustus mildly.

"Scowl!"

"Wendy, Blake, old fellow—"

"Scowl!"

D'Arcy smiled once more, and turned to the glass to try on a seventh necktie.

"I should think things are the matter?" growled Blake.

"The ground's simply impossible!"

"Scowl round!"

"Never mind!" howled Blake. "We can't play faster!"

Next Wednesday:

"THE SCHOOLBOY FIRE-FIGHTERS!" AND "SIR BILLY, OF GREYHOUSE!"

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# D'ARCY'S DODGE!

A splendid, new, long, complete school tale of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

As if that isn't bad enough, I find a silly old bore grinning like a Cheshire cheese—I mean a Cheshire cat—and saying never mind! Bah!"

"You see, dear boy—"

Herring came into the study and growled.

"Nothing doing this afternoon!" he said.

Blake scowled his growl.

"Nothing!"

"Tosses 'em off his head, too," said Herring anxiously.

"Tosses doesn't like this weather."

"How Tower?" said Blake.

"Why, you see—"

Digby came in. Digby looked glum.

"Seemly weather," he said. "Nothing to do but to write out lines ready for the next impost, I suppose! Groak!"

"What's Tom Merry doing?" asked Blake.

"Saying things."

Blake grinned.

"That's what I feel like," he remarked. "Schools aren't run on the right lines. Half-holidays ought to be arranged according to the weather. When the ground's fit for footer, there ought to be a half-holiday every day. That's my opinion."

"Jolly good idea, if you could get the Head to see it!" grinned Digby.

Jack Blake scowled once more.

"Oh, you wouldn't catch the Head taking a tip from a junior!" he said. "The masters think they know, you know, but they don't!"

"Wendy, Blake—"

"And, of course, Gussy must be grinning like a magpie over his neckties, instead of sympathizing!" grinned Blake.

"I did not know that magpies grinned, dear boy!"

"Bah!"

"You see, deah boy," explained Arthur Augustus, "I've got an idea for this afternoon?"  
 "The chance of the fourth did not seem much improved," Blake asked a colleague across the study and Herries sat down in the armchair, and scowled on the fender. Digby looked out of the window and whistled.  
 "I've got a wippin' idea for the afternoon!" repeated Arthur Augustus, with emphasis.  
 "That what you were grinnin' about?" asked Blake.  
 "I was not aware that I was grinnin', deah boy. 'Tiswaps a mile..."  
 "Well, what's the rotten idea?" asked Blake discontentedly.  
 "Anything's better than nothin'! Get it off your chest!"  
 "It is not a rotten idea!"  
 "Nah! you say it was years?"  
 "Yes..."  
 "Well, that settles whether it's a rotten one or not."  
 "I regard you as an an' an' Blake! I have an idea that is wweally wippin'!"  
 "Hah!"  
 "I do not regard that as an intelligent reply, Blake. However, I will come to the point. Have you heard about the new hotel in Wayland?"  
 "Yes," said Blake. "I knew a new hotel's been opened there; quite a swagger place. But what an earth..."  
 "Look at that road on the table!" said D'Arcy.  
 Blake picked up the card and looked at it. It was evidently an advertisement of the new swagger hotel in Wayland market town.  
 "Good Royal, Wayland," intimated Blake. "Electric light; rooms with private bath-rooms; terraces overlooking the river; afternoon tea's speciality; interpreter always on duty in the hotel; on Paris Francois; Mergersin Deutsch; of Paris Italian. What on earth has this got to do with us, Gassy?"  
 "Gassy's governor's got shares in it, perhaps?" suggested Digby.  
 "Wweally, Digby..."  
 "Well, what is the idea?" asked Blake. "Has it got anything to do with this hotel?"  
 "Yes, wweath!"  
 "Explain then, you an'!"  
 "I wweath to be called an an'!"  
 "Be-e-e!"  
 "Pwey do not make unintelligible noises, deah boy! Do you see what it says on the card?"  
 "Interpreter kept some on the possession," said Blake.  
 "Do not know that."  
 "Private bath-rooms," said Blake. "Do you want to go there, and bath?"  
 "Wweally, Blake..."  
 "Then what is it, deary?"  
 "Tiswaps overlookin' the river," said D'Arcy. "Afternoon tea's speciality. The new hotel is the swaggiest place for miles round. My idea is to take a few friends, and go there and have a wippin' feed!"  
 The faces of the juniors brightened up at once.  
 "Now, you're talkin'!" said Herries.  
 "Enjoy our Gassy taking some like that!" said Digby wweathly.  
 "Wweally, Dig..."  
 "Jolly good idea!" said Blake. "I suppose we come under the list of your friends, Gassy? Might ask Tom Merry, too. But the place will be frightfully expensive! I've seen those blessed swagger hotels before! They charge you if you breathe, and charge you deah if you don't!"  
 D'Arcy nodded.  
 "Yes, it will be deah; but this is gair'd to be a wippin' excursion, deah boy. The fact is I've had a wweathman from my governor, and another from my Aunt Adelaide, and they both awarded by the same post. That was what wweally put the idea into my head. I've got two fairs!"  
 "Harrak!"  
 "And I wweath think that will see us through, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus, trying on a tenth necktie. "What do you think?"

"Think? Why, it's simply a ripping wheeze!" explained Blake, rolling up his elegant shirt, and logging his knees.  
 "Ow?" roared D'Arcy. "Mind my collah!"  
 "There? Never and your collar!"  
 "Mind my necktie, you deah! Ow?"  
 Arthur Augustus jerked himself away.  
 "You awful an'! I shall have to change my collah now; you have wrungled it! Pwey don't play the giddy game! Now, when will you chaps be wweally to start for Wayland? I've only got to settle on a necktie, so I shall be wweally in about half an hour."  
 Blake chuckled.  
 "You won't have to wait for us," he said. "I'll go and gather in Tom Merry and Manners and Lewther, if you like. If you've got a tenner to spare, may as well take those Shell chaps. They stood us a decent feed yesterday."  
 "Yess, wweath!"  
 Blake left the study in great spirits. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had really deluded himself of a good idea at last. Herries and Digby were away in search of clean collars for the occasion, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was left alone to try on the rest of his neckties. But he was not left alone for long.

CHAPTER 2.  
Plenty of Pals.

GASSY, old man—"I wweally think I had better decide upon the pink one with the blue spots," intimated Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.  
 "Hah, Gassy!"  
 "I wweally think it suits my complexion bettah!"  
 "Gassy!"  
 "Bal Jore!" said D'Arcy.  
 He turned round at last.  
 Two jiggers were in the doorway; Kangaroo, otherwise Harry Noble of the Shell, and Reilly of the Fourth. They were smiling sweet smiles, and appeared more suspicious than Arthur Augustus D'Arcy might have imagined that they had visited the study with ulterior motives.  
 "By George," exclaimed Kangaroo, as D'Arcy turned round, "what a ripping necktie!"  
 "Faih, and it's a wweath!" said Reilly heartily.  
 Arthur Augustus nodded pleased.  
 "You wweally like it," he asked.  
 "I like it," said Kangaroo. "There's nothing in the wide world like it—I'd meet you, rather! It's ripping! How it agrees with the colour scheme of your waistcoat, too!"  
 "And 't suits your socks down to the ground entirely!" said Reilly.  
 "We just looked in to see you," said Kangaroo wweathly.  
 "Are you going to wear that necktie at the hotel feed, Gassy?"  
 "Yess..."  
 "It is bound to make a sensation," said the Cornstalk junior heartily.  
 "Faih, and you're right!"  
 "How did you know about the hotel feed, deah boy?"  
 "Ahem! I just heard Blake talking to Tom Merry," said Kangaroo. "I hear that you're taking a little party to the new hotel in Wayland for a big feed!"  
 "Yess..."  
 "And looking for old pals to take with you?"  
 "Sure, and it's a long time that I've felt mighty friendly towards ye, D'Arcy, deah boy," said Reilly.  
 "And I'm sure that you won't forget an old class from Annapolis," said Kangaroo.  
 "I shall be verry pleased if you will come, deah boy! How do you think this necktie agrees with my diamond stud, Kargy?"  
 "Couldn't be better! When do you start?"  
 "At three o'clock. How do you like this waistcoat?"  
 "Gorgeous! We'll be wweally!"  
 "Faih, and we will see!"  
 "D'Arcy, here!" added Lorne of the Fourth, looking into the study with an agreeable smile. "By Jove, Gassy, what a ripping waistcoat! Whose do you get these magnificent things?"  
 "I should be verry pleased to give you the name of my tailor, deah boy," said D'Arcy. "I wweath think it is wweath good, wweath."  
 "Good?" said Lorne. "It's a regular scream! I say, Gassy, I hear you're looking for pals to come and feed at Wayland. I was just thinking of going there. I'll walk down with you, if you like."  
 "Thank you verry much, Lorne; but—"

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 (See column 2, page 27 of this issue.)



A figure lay huddled on the ground at his feet—and a cart was tipped in the shed, but that was all. There was no trace of a lurking enemy. D'Arcy felt greatly relieved. He struck a second match, and bent down to examine the unconscious man. (See Chapter 2.)

"Good! I'll be ready."

"I say, Lorne—"

"Hurry on me," said Lucas.

"Yas; but—"

But Lorne was gone.

Arthur Augustus went on tying his necktie. Kangaroo and Beryl grunted and departed from the study. But the smell of St. Jim's was not left alone long. Bernard Glyn of the Shell came in cheerfully.

"I say, Gansy, could you lend me a necktie?" he asked. "I wouldn't borrow one of anybody else, but I know yours are in such perfect taste, you know, and—"

"Certainly, dear boy. Take your choice."

"Thanks awfully. I hear you're making up a little party for the Blood Royal at Wayland—"

"I've made it up, dear boy, and—"

"And you were just going to send a message to me," said Glyn, affectionately. "Now that's just like you, Gansy."

"Waddy, Glyn—"

"You never forget old pal, do you, Gansy?" said Glyn.

"All across. I'll be ready."

"You see—"

"I'll wait for you downstairs," said Glyn. "Thanks very

much for the necktie, and rely on me. I'll be waiting for you at the door."

"My dear Glyn—"

But Bernard Glyn seemed suddenly afflicted with deafness. He walked away whistling. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy turned back to the looking-glass with a somewhat thoughtful expression upon his associate face. His little party, by the look of things, would be a big party by the time he started. It was very flattering to learn that he had so many close pals in the School House, but—

"Hallo, Gansy!" said Bishop of the Fourth, looking in from the passage. "Nearly ready?"

"Yas, dear boy; but—"

"I hear you're making up a little party—"

"Bai Jore! The little party is quite complete, and—"

"I'll come with pleasure!" said Bishop, affably. "Shall I have time to go and change my collar? I want to look decent for the occasion."

"My dear Bish—"

"Shall I have time?" asked Bishop anxiously.

"Yas, certainly; but—"

"Then I'll buzz off at once."

"Look here, Bish, I—"

"Not a word, old fellow; I'll be a glasser. Depend on me; I'll be ready." And Bishop of the Fourth stroked away.  
"Bai Jose!" said D'Arcy.

He reflected a moment, and then closed the study door and looked in. Two minutes later the handle was turned, and Arthur Augustus smiled. Then there came a knock at the door. D'Arcy did not speak. He tied his necktie with great care.

"Knock! Knock!"  
"Hallo, in there. Are you there, D'Arcy?" It was the voice of Buck Finn, the American junior in the Shell.  
"Gussy, old man, I hear you're making up a little party. I guess I'll come with pleasure."

D'Arcy grinned, but did not speak.  
"Knock! Knock!"  
"Gussy? Why don't you answer me? I tell you I'll come if you like."

"Gussy, old man!"  
No reply.  
"Look here, D'Arcy, you silly son—"  
D'Arcy chuckled.

Buck Finn bestowed a kick upon the door, and retired. A minute later there was another knock, and Gorg of the Shell spoke through the keyhole. Then came knock after knock, and tap after tap, and a swarm of many voices. It sounded as though half the School House had gathered outside Study No. 8. Arthur Augustus smiled and went on with his elaborate toilet. He donned his beautiful jacket, that fitted him like a glove, and jammed his eyeglasses into his cap and polished his silk hat. Then he was ready to walk forth; but he passed as he turned towards the door. The crowd in the passage was very thick by this time, and it was evident that all the fellows outside intended to come to the little party at the new hotel in Wayland town.

"Bai Jose!" whispered Arthur Augustus. "This is a shoulder awkward party! How the deuce am I to get out?"

"Gussy! Gussy!"  
"D'Arcy, old chap!"  
"Open the door, old fellow!"  
"I say, old Gussy!"

"Open the door like a good chap!"  
"I hear you're making up a little party!"  
Arthur Augustus unlocked the study door and threw it open. About fifteen or sixteen fellows were crowded in the passage outside, shoving one another, and looking somewhat excited. But they all sat on street stables as the street of St. Jim's appeared.

"Here he is!" said Lerrion of the Fourth. "We're joining with you, Gussy."  
"Psey allow me to pass, dash boy."  
"When are you starting?" asked Goss.

"Next dash boy."  
"Good! I'll get my hat."  
"Are you walking to Wayland, D'Arcy?" asked Dase of the Shell, as the crowd of St. Jim's pushed his way with some difficulty through the crowd.

"Yass, dash boy."  
"Good; I just wanted a stroll."  
"Psey take one, then, dash boy."

And Arthur Augustus went downstairs. Quite a little army was waiting for him at the doorway of the School House. There were Blake and Herron and Dugby, his study mates; Tom Merry and Manzner and Lowther of the Shell, Keagrove and Robly, Lucas and Bishop. They all had clean collars and silk hats, and looked very nice indeed. They stared as Arthur Augustus came along with a crowd of juniors at his heels.

"My hat!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Where are you taking that army, Gussy?"  
"I'm not taking them anychah, dash boy," said D'Arcy. "I'm ready now."

"We're going with Gussy," explained Goss.  
"He's making up a little party," said Kerraish. "As Gussy's oldest pal, I'm going."  
"Same here, I guess," said Buck Finn.  
"Wootly, dash boy!"  
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gentlemen," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, pretty but firmly, "I am sorry to say that I cannot take the whole school. The little party already numbers eleven—"

"Twelve!" said Kerraish.  
"Thirteen, you mean?" said Goss.  
"Thirteen's an unlucky number," said Dase. "It's fourteen!"  
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wootly, you know—"  
"Cease at, Gussy," said Blake. "We'll clear off those boundaries. We can't take all the hungry fags in the School House!"

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"THE MAGNET" LIBRARY,  
Every Monday.

"You go and eat coke!" said Goss. "We're ceasing!"  
We—

"Yes, rather! We—"  
"Gussy's old pals are bound to stand by him on an occasion like this," said Kerraish; "and we can't desert Gussy in the hour of need, dash boy—"

"But I am not in need, dash boy—"  
"No! but we are!"  
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus looked quite distressed. It was a case of "save me from my friends." Fortunately, the little party were ready to save him from his host of affectionate pals.

"Gentlemen, shape, and follow, charge!"  
"Hurry!"  
The little party charged. There was a roar and a scuffle, and the crowd of affectionate friends went staggering away from the charging janitor. Tom Merry & Co. swung them hip and thigh, and some of them rolled on the floor, and the rest were driven ignominiously down the passage of the School House. Then the little party gathered round Arthur Augustus once more, and escorted him out in triumph into the quadrangle.

"Back up!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "Blessed if I knew Gussy had so many pals below. When the news gets to the New Beeze, there'll be a lot more pals from over there!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Yass, wathah; look up!" said Arthur Augustus.  
And the little party hurried down to the school gates. In great spirits they took the footpath through the wood towards Wayland town.

### CHAPTER 3. Was to be Coaquered!

"HIS!"  
"Hallo—"  
"Hist!"  
"Well, I'm histing! What's the matter?"  
"Shah, you see!" said Gordon Gay. "It's the gibbly fag!"

A crowd of youths in Grammar-School caps were gathered round Gordon Gay on the footpath in Rylands Wood. They were juniors of Rylands Grammar School; the deadly rivals of Tom Merry & Co. of St. Jim's. Gordon Gay, the junior captain of the Grammar School, and the leader of the Grammarians in all their altercations and encounters against the St. Jim's fellows, was standing in an attitude of lowering, and peering through the bushes. His chance, Wootton major and minor, and Most Blow, the French junior, and Frank Monk and Lane and Carboy, and a dozen others, were with him. The Grammarians had been at another scolding in the wood, and Gordon Gay & Co. had wished very much that they might talk to with some St. Jim's fellows that afternoon, to turn some warlike into the real thing. He was destined to have his wish. The sound of voices and many footsteps came along the path, through the trees and bushes. Gordon Gay's blue eyes gleamed.

"Quite a party of them," he grinned. "This is where we come in, you chaps! This is where we get level for the said those boundary roads on to the other day. They seemed up our dramatic performance, and now we'll meet them up. Cover!"

"Good egg!" said Frank Monk.  
"Cover—quick!"  
The Grammarians rushed into cover.  
Thick bushes grow along either side of the footpath, and there was plenty of cover for the Grammarian juniors.

In less than a minute they were out of sight, and waiting for the enemy to appear. Gordon Gay kept a very watch upon the path.

"Not a sound!" he whispered. "Wah! all I give the signal!"

"Can you see them?" whispered Monk.  
Gay chuckled.  
"Yes—a regular gang of three—eleven or twelve?"

"Never mind—we shall be two to one!"  
"They've all got their best bills and backers on, too," said Gay, peering through the bushes at the advancing party from St. Jim's. "Gussy's a pizorra. Where on earth are they going, I wonder? Mind you're ready when I give the word!"

"What ho!"  
"Callar the boundaries, and capture their hats and things," said Gay. "They look like a dandy-school out for a walk. Something's on, I suppose."

"More than that, I s'pose," grinned Wootton major.  
"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Shah! They'll bear 'em!"  
"All right—I'm drinking!"

The Grammarians waited.  
"THE PENNY POPULAR,"  
Every Friday.









Blake expressed breathlessly, "and—and we didn't know Mr. Lathson was coming. When he knocked at the door, we thought it was Gus, or one of the fellows, and—well—well—well—I mean the fellows—some of the fellows, or—well—well—well—Gusay rushed out and hit him, without stopping to see who it was, sir. If he'd known it was Mr. Lathson, he'd rather have chopped his hand off, sir."

"Yes, rather, sir!" said Digby.

"That's the latest idea it was—it was Mr. Lathson, sir," said Herrick. "We all thought it was Gus, or one of them. Of course, Gusay ought to have looked before he hit out. But—he can't help being an ass, sir."

"That's all right," said Blake. "He had'st the faintest notion that it was Mr. Lathson, sir. Why, sir, Mr. Lathson can't really think anybody in the Fourth would have the awful cheek to punch his nose, if he knew!"

"Besides, we all like Mr. Lathson, sir," said Digby. "We all respect him, sir. If any fellow really punched him, sir, we—well—among him."

"Yes, rather, sir."

"But it was all a mistake, sir."

"Gusay didn't mean—"

"He didn't know—"

The Head made a sign for the senior juniors to be silent. The old policeman was looking somewhat relieved. He did not doubt their statements in the least. In fact, their explanation was the most reasonable explanation that could possibly have been found. It was easier to believe that an excited junior had acted rashly and thoughtlessly, than that he had deliberately assaulted the Form-master.

"What do you think of this, Mr. Lathson?" asked the Head.

The Fourth Form-master looked up at his handsomely.

In spite of his age, remarkably good for his circumstances, Mr. Lathson was a good little man, and very much more reasonable as a rule.

"I think the boys are speaking the precise truth, sir," he said. "I know them to be truthful boys. And—and upon the whole, sir, I prefer to believe that D'Arcy acted in this way from foolishness, and not with the deliberate intention of assaulting me. It is all passed very quickly."

The Head drew a deep breath of relief.

"Of course, the matter is still very serious," he said. "A Form-master has been knocked down by a junior. I am glad to learn that the assault was not intentional. But I must inflict a very severe punishment for the action, intentional or not."

"Undoubtedly," said Mr. Lathson.

"But Gusay didn't mean, sir—"

He said eagerly.

"I quite believe that, Blake. I should be sorry to think that the worst boy in the school would intentionally be guilty of such an act. Had the act been intentional, D'Arcy would have been flogged, and instantly expelled."

"He'd have deserved it, sir, if he'd meant to assault his Form-master," said Blake. "But he didn't know. It was all a blunder, and—"

"Precisely! Therefore, I shall not think of expelling him from the school, as I had intended under the impression that he had deliberately assaulted Mr. Lathson. I shall, in fact, leave his punishment to Mr. Lathson. His act was foolish and outrageous. Mr. Lathson considers that he should be flogged, he shall be flogged."

"Oh, sir!"

The juniors looked anxiously at the Fourth Form-master. Mr. Lathson was calmer now.

The pain in his nose was increasing, rather than diminishing; but his excitement was calming down, and he was recovering his temper.

"Under the circumstances, sir," he said slowly, "if D'Arcy himself explains that it was a foolish mistake and apologizes for it, as I have no doubt he will, I think that a severe scolding will meet his case."

"Very well," said the Head.

"D'Arcy seems to have hidden himself away," said Mr. Lathson. "He is probably in a state of great uneasiness of mind. You justices had better find him and explain to him, and bring him here as soon as possible."

"Yes, sir—certainly, sir!" said Blake, greatly relieved at the result of his visit to the Head's study.

And the choice of No. 5 hurried away to look for Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. Others were already engaged in the task. D'Arcy's misadventure was known all over the House, and the fellows were looking for the swell of St. Jim's everywhere. But he was not to be found.

The Fourth dormitory was looked into, then the other dormitories, and then the box-rooms were searched, and the lavatory-rooms—nearly every room in the School House. But the swell of the school was not to be seen.

Blake and his chosen hunted high and low for him, growing alarmed as the time passed on without the justice being discovered.

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Where was D'Arcy?

That was a question that had to remain unanswered. The School House was ransacked in every room where the justice could possibly have hidden himself. But it was in vain. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had disappeared.

## CHAPTER 7.

### Clear Gait!

"WELL, here's D'Arcy go!" said Tom Merry.

The search of disappointed searchers met in the lower hall again.

They had been everywhere, they had looked everywhere, they had not left a stone unturned. But they had failed to discover the swell of St. Jim's.

Where was he?

That he was in the School House was impossible, unless he had found some secret nook to hide himself in, unknown to the other fellows, and that was not likely.

Blake was looking quite alarmed. In his excited state of mind, and with the fear of disgrace and expulsion wrong upon him, what might Arthur Augustus not have done?

"Where on earth can he be?" exclaimed Monty Lantier.

"Some he's not in the House!" said Reddy.

"We've searched everywhere," said Tom Merry, with a shake of the head. "He must have gone out of the House, Blake."

Blake brightened up.

"Of course! The young ass has baited across to the New House to hide himself, sure as a gun! Figgins & Co. would help him, if he told them that he was in trouble."

"Good idea! Let's cut across!"

"Have you found him, my boys?" asked Mr. Radford, the Housemaster, coming down the passage.

There was a general shaking of heads.

"No, sir," said Tom Merry. "He must have gone out of the House. He doesn't know that Blake has been able to explain to the Head about the—accident."

"He's afraid he's going to be expelled, sir," said Blake.

"He must be found!" said Mr. Radford.

"We thought he might be in the New House, sir."

"Quite so! Go and see, my lad, by all means!"

"Yes, sir."

And a crowd of juniors rushed across the quadrangle to the New House. They rushed excitedly into the New House. There was no sign of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy in the hall or the passage, and Tom Merry & Co. rushed into the junior common-room.

Most of the New House juniors were there, chatting before going to bed. Figgins of the Fourth jumped up at the sight of the invading parties. His only thought was that if he saw a House mad, out an extremely large scale.

"Line up, New House!" roared Figgins.

"Look it to 'em!" shouted Redden of the Fourth.

"Play up!"

"Kick the boarder out!"

"Hold on!" shouted Tom Merry. "We—oh—we—er!"

Red, left, left! Bump!

"Oh—oh!"

"Yarrah!"

"Yah!"

"Look it to 'em!" roared Figgins. "We'll teach the boarders to rush into our House—let me see 'em back 'em out! Go it!"

"Herrah!"

There was a terrific struggle in the common-room. The School House juniors had no time to explain. The uproar was deafening. Tom Merry & Co., finding themselves attacked, had no choice but to hit out; and perhaps they were too very willing to do so.

Master of the Sixth, the head prefect of the New House, came striding into the room, with Baker and Webb, two other prefects.

The three centers held cases in their hands, and they hid about them with vigour, and great impartiality.

The yells subsided as the cases sang and lashed about the excited combatants.

"Carrah!"

"Stagg!"

"Ch—ch!"

"Yah!"

"Stop the row!" roared Master of the Sixth. "What are you School House kids doing over here! I'll report the lot of you to your Housemaster!"

The combat ceased at last. The juniors could not fight with the prefects laying about them with the cases.

# ANSWERS

"It-it's all right!" gasped Tom Merry.  
 "All right, is it?" said Mootzeth, scornfully. "What do you mean by raiding the New House in this way, you young ruffians!"

"It wasn't a raid!" gasped Blake.  
 "What do you want, then?"  
 "It's all a mistake—"  
 "Mistake are cheap to-night," grinned Manty Lorthen.  
 "Ha, ha, ha,"  
 "Look here," said Mootzeth, sharply. "Tell me what you want here, then, before you're clapped out on your necks!"  
 "We want Gussy!"  
 "Gussy's disappeared—"  
 "We thought he had come over here—"  
 "That's all, Mootzeth—"  
 "It wasn't a raid—"

"Oh, I say!" exclaimed Figgins, realising that he had been rather hasty. "I'm sorry! Of course, I thought that it was a raid when you came tearing in like that."  
 "Why didn't you explain?" demanded Kerr.  
 "Expain, you can!" roared Kangaroo. "You didn't give us time to explain!"

Figgins chuckled.  
 "No news we did," he agreed, "Never mind, there's no harm done. But what's happened to Gussy? Something wrong?"

"Has he been over here?"  
 "We haven't seen him," said Fatty Wynn.  
 "Not a hair nor a hair of his!" said Heffern.  
 "But what's happened?" asked Figgins.  
 "Tom Merry explained best,"  
 "Great Scott!" said Midget, with a whistle. "I should think he'd have a pretty warm time when he's been here. But he's not over here. Somebody would have seen him if he'd come into this House. You School House kids can clear out."

"We'll look round the house for him," said Figgins.  
 "But I'm pretty sure he's not here. More likely he's tucked into the old tower, or the chapel, if he's trying to keep out of sight." Poor old Gussy! Just as always putting his head into it—what? Fatty Wynn's a jolly Fomenterer on the spot!"

Tom Merry & Co. crowded out of the New House. Figgins promised to run across and tell them if anything was seen of D'Arcy.

Blake wiped a red stain from his nose as they retreated across the dusty quad, towards their own House.

"Better smash the quad," he remarked. "Figg's right—Gussy must have dodged into the old tower, I think."  
 "Get like Heffern, and let's look," said Mamma.

"Right—ho!"  
 The jokers soon procured lanterns, and the old tower was searched. But Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was not there, nor any sign of him. Then the rickety chapel was searched, even to the top.

But there was no trace discovered of the swell of St. Jim's. The searchers returned disappointed to the School House. Kildare met them at the door.

"Found him?" he asked.  
 "No, Kildare."  
 "It's bad luck for you kids," said the St. Jim's captain.  
 "Can't you go to bed till Gussy's found, can we, Kildare?" said Blake.  
 "You can't stay up all night," said Kildare, laughing.  
 "He will turn up presently of his own accord, I think."  
 "I've got it!" exclaimed Heffern, suddenly.

Kildare looked at him.  
 "Do you know where he is, Heffern?" he asked.  
 "No! but I know how to find him!"  
 "How?" asked a dozen voices.  
 "Lower!" repeated Kildare, not understanding.  
 "Yes," said Heffern, eagerly. "My bedding, you know. You know how splendid he is at following a scent. If we show him something of Gussy's, he'll run him down in next to no time."

"Oh, rot!" said Kildare, politely, and he went to the Head's study to acquaint him with the fact that the swell of St. Jim's had not been found.

Heffern glared after him.  
 "As?" he said—just loud enough for Kildare to hear, however. "Did you ever hear such a blitherer, you chaps? Forever will do it. What do you think of the idea?"

"Rotten!" said Blake.  
 "Look here, you ass—"  
 "Rotten!" repeated Blake, with emphasis. "I say, you chaps, we shan't see Gussy here. My belief is that the ass has got outside St. Jim's."  
 "Outside?"  
 "How away?" exclaimed Tom Merry, breathlessly.  
 Blake nodded.

"That's what I think," he said.  
 "Just like the ass," said Lewison of the Fourth.  
 "I shouldn't wonder, Blake," said Tom Merry, thoughtfully. "He must have been awfully ashamed, and if he thought he was going to be sacked—"  
 "He did think so!"  
 "Then he might have leaped. Poor old Gussy!"  
 Blake's opinion was soon shared by the rest of the fellows. For though the search went on some time longer, no trace was found of the missing junior, and it became pretty certain that he was no longer within the walls of St. Jim's. When the jokers went to bed—an unusually late hour—nothing had been seen or heard of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

## CHAPTER 8.

## Out into the Wide World.

"**B**AI JOVE! This is about the wettest fix I have ever been in, I think!"

The swell of St. Jim's paused upon the dark road, as he spoke his thoughts aloud.

Blake was right; the swell of the Fourth had run away from the school. He had not stayed longer in the dormitory than was necessary to obtain a few things for his journey, and then he had quitted the School House by the back-room window, cut across the quadrangle, and climbed the school wall, and dropped into the road.

Thus he had turned his back upon St. Jim's, and tramped away, hardly knowing or caring whither.

In his state of excitement, running away from the school had forgotten to come to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, under the circumstances.

Mr. Lathorn had assumed that the assault had been deliberate. He was not really likely to be convinced to the contrary. The punishment in that case was certain—flogging and expulsion. D'Arcy was not afraid to face the ass, so far as the flogging was concerned; but why stay and be flogged, and then submit to the disgrace of public expulsion? It was easier to go while he had a chance.

And so he had gone.  
 He hardly stopped to think until he was two or three miles from St. Jim's.

There he crossed to rest.  
 He leaned against the stile at the side of the dark road, with a black dog behind him, and shadowy trees round him. The place was very lonely.

But Arthur Augustus was not affected with nerves. He leaned on the stile, breathing hard, and considering his position.

He had run away from St. Jim's.  
 He still considered that that was the wisest course he could have pursued. It was useless to wait till he morning and then be next away. But what was he to do now?

But his people certainly wouldn't be expecting him home—especially at that hour of the night. By the time he arrived at Eastwood House, all his people would be in bed and asleep; and D'Arcy had a natural disinclination to wake them up in the middle of the night with the news that he had run away from the school.

He felt that it would be better in every way for the news to reach them from the headmaster at St. Jim's.

Then he could make his appearance and explain, when the fire had been broken.

But—suppose his father determined to send him back to the school to take his punishment! It was quite possible; Lord Eastwood was a stickler for discipline. And D'Arcy felt that he would suffer anything rather than that.

Besides, to go home in disgrace—it would be a bitter pill to swallow.

"I'm jolly well not gone home!" said Arthur Augustus at last; that was the outcome of his reflections on the subject. But if he did not go home, what was he to do? With his house and St. Jim's closed to him, where in the wide world was he to lay his head?

"I'll write to the Head and explain, and write to the governor so that he won't be anxious about me," D'Arcy determined. "But—but I'm not gone home—and I'm not gone back to St. Jim's to be flogged and sacked! No! no!"

His mind was quite made up on these points.  
 It only remained to decide what to do. He was well provided with money; he still had the two fivers which were in his pocket when he had come to the party at the Hotel Royal which had never come off—that food which was the beginning of all his troubles, and which would never take place now!

He could easily make ten pounds last him a few days; and he had some weaker money—gold and silver—on well. D'Arcy had not had much experience at looking for himself, but he felt that it was quite possible to live on a pound a

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By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

Sold Every.

day—perhaps here—he had heard of people who lived on less than that. He had, therefore, enough to last him for nearly a fortnight. And in this fortnight—

He would have to look for work! Strange to say, the thought did not alarm him. D'Arcy had, as a matter of fact, when thought of what a curious experience it would be to work for one's living—he knew that lots of people did it, and some of them must be quite comfortable over it. In fact, although he had read up on statistics on the subject, he had an idea that the majority of people worked for their living—everybody could not be born with a landed estate or money in Cornhill. D'Arcy had made on many occasions to earn money, just to show the fellows, and especially his elder brother, Lord Conway, that he was not a useless chump without an idea in his head. It must be confessed that his attempt had been a ghastly failure. But D'Arcy was not the fellow to be depressed by a single failure.

He was willing to work! The only question was, what kind of work could he do? He had a good education, and could speak French—public-school French—perhaps not quite the French of France. He had some German, too—so much as Herr Schneider had been able to diter him. He knew a little Latin, a little Italian—nothing that, fellows did not get jobs on, in institutions, he knew that. He could dance—if he drove a horse, it was evidently an artful, even if not easily recognizable, as a horse. When Heron drew a horse, fellows asked him whether it was meant for a workman or a group of club men. But upon the whole, he scarcely felt fitted to seek immediately a berth as black-and-white artist.

"His feet" reflected Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, "public-school French, you mean, in the way of currier's Latin, when you get fairly up against it, as I am now. The only thing I know at all well is languages—but there don't get paid for writing Latin notes, and I couldn't get a job on horse for talking French! Might get a job somewhere as interpreter, perhaps—if there was one yet." But—

He did not know much about the employment market; but he knew that interpreters were not wanted in crowds. What was he going to do? In the midst of his reflections it came to him to raise; and he decided upon an immoderate nerve for shelter. He grabbed up the collar of his overcoat about his ears, and jammed his eyes into a tight fit, as he marched on, facing the wind. He had not thought of the weather when he was away from school, and so he had omitted to bring an umbrella.

He peered to and fro in the dark lanes, and wondered where he was. A slightest creak in his eye, and he struck a notch and read it.

"Wayland—our man." He was close to Wayland then. He tramped on.

He could get shelter in the old market town for the night, and in the morning take the train, and get a wider distance between himself and St. Jim's.

But, after all, why go further afield? At St. Jim's, when they discovered that he had one swag, they would naturally suppose that he had taken a train for some distant spot, and if a search were made, as was pretty certain, the highways would be investigated. He would be looked for in London, in the nearest town, and inquired for at all the stances. The authorities would never think that he was lying hidden in a place so near to hand as Wayland.

It would be a good idea to stop there, if he could get work. After all, there was as much work to be got in the country as in London. D'Arcy had heard that the problem of unemployment was very acute in London. He had not noticed that it was so in Wayland. In fact, that sleepy little country town, where so few would think of looking for him, was just the place for him.

He would get work there, and rise in the world in the course of time, probably become a great landed proprietor, or else the head of a huge business, with branches in every country under the sun. The prospect cheered him up, and he tramped on towards Wayland in renewed spirits.

The rain came down more heavily. Arthur Augustus's silk hat was dripping now, and his trousers were getting very damp below his overcoat. He looked round for shelter, and eyed a shed close by the lane under the trees. He groped his way into it, and was glad to hear the rain pattering upon the roof from above.

"But Jesus, thin it be!" murmured Arthur Augustus. Suddenly he started. There was another sound in the shed, beside the pattering of the rain upon the thatch overhead. He caught a sound of deep and measured breathing. There was someone else in the shed.

He listened intently. He moved, and his foot touched something soft, and he gave a little cry. He knew that he

had touched a body; whether human, or animal he did not know.

"The Jews, ye gods, is there?" called out Arthur Augustus, in a choking voice.

There was no reply. "Who was it?" Silence, save for that laboured, painful breathing.

With a curious flutter at his heart, the steel of St. Jim's stepped down in the darkness, and felt with his hand for the body. His fingers touched a coat—it was a human being who lay upon the floor of the shed. D'Arcy caught hold of the coat, and gave it a shake.

"Who are you?" he asked.

No answer. "But Jove, I wish you would speak! Are you hurt?" Grim silence.

D'Arcy felt his very flesh creep. He groped for the face of the unknown, and his fingers touched it, and passed over the uneven features. He felt a thick scum under his fingers, and breath on his hand.

"Still the man did not speak.

"If it goodness gracious," murmured the junior, now thoroughly alarmed, "the poor chap must be hurt, or else he's dead!" "But Jove! I say, dear fellow, if you'd say what you know! Who are you? What are you doing here?"

But no reply came from the man who lay at his feet.

CHAPTER 9.

The Interpreter.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY shuddered. His heart was beating painfully, and his flesh felt like what is described as "goose-flesh." He had a strong desire to run out of the shed in spite of the rain. It was not the thought of the rain that stopped him. The man at his feet was evidently incapable of movement or speech—he must be hurt. Wild thoughts of footpads flashed through D'Arcy's mind. He remembered the case of a man having been attacked by footpads near St. Jim's, and wondered unconsciously—Was this man suffering victim of a dastardly attack?

It seemed only too certain. And perhaps the raffish proprietors were close at hand still. Perhaps lurking in the darkness of those very sheds, waiting for an opportunity of swooping in upon a prey.

D'Arcy looked at the man's misery at the thought. But in the blackness of the shed he could see nothing; and he would hear nothing but the petty breathing of the man at his feet, and the pattering-patter of the rain. He groped in his pocket, and found a watch-chain. He struck a match, and, as the little flame swept in the wind, he peered round the shed anxiously.

A figure lay huddled on the ground at his feet; and a cart was up-ended in the shed, but that was all. There was no trace of a lurking enemy. D'Arcy felt greatly relieved. He struck a second match, and bent down to examine the unconscious man.

The man was a small fellow, not much larger than D'Arcy, though he had a thick mustache. His face was very red, and a cap with gold lace upon it was on his head. D'Arcy wasted a little as he saw the cap. It was shaped like those that commissioners wear, and on the front, in gold letters, was the word: "Interpreter."

Something also struck D'Arcy very much as he stooped over the miserable man. It was a strong odour of spirits. He could see no trace of an injury, and that, added to the words of speaking man's lips, made that his first impression had been mistaken. The man was not hurt. He had simply, as honest Gunga has it, put an ecstasy into his mouth to send away his brains. In a word, he was in a state of benign intoxication.

The match went out. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy rose to his feet, with a sniff of disgust.

"Drunk, but Jove!" he murmured. "It's a better word, more appropriate." D'Arcy's examination had somewhat disturbed the intoxicated man at last. The man heard him dragging himself into a sitting position.

"It's a lie!" he repeated. "I ain't drunk!"

"Really, my dear fellow—"

"It's a lie, Mr. Pawker!"

"My name is not Pawker, dear boy!"

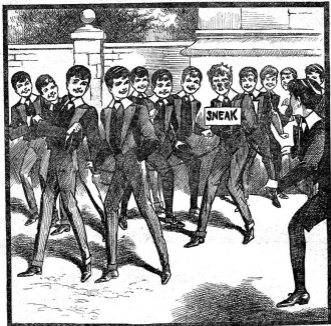
"Yes! another!"

"Really, you know—"

"You can suck me if you like," went on the voice, in the darkness. "You won't get another interpreter in a hurry, at eighteen bob a week and his grub. Don't you think!"

"But Jove!"

"Let of us for an interpreter here!" went on the voice



The gag's persecutors cheered as they marched along with their victim. "Sneak! Sneak! Sneak! Rotter! Rotter! Rotter! Yah! Yah! Yah!" Jack Wingate's face was very red, save where the black ink was daubed upon it, and he struggled every now and then to get away. (An amusing incident from the grand long, complete school fun contained in this week's **MAGNET LIBRARY**. Now on Sale. Price One Penny.)

scarcely. "How many foreigners do you have here? Half a dozen French occasional travellers a year. Yah!"

"My dear fellow—"

"It's awfully, that's what it is! You chuck interpreter on the advertisements—*ici en parle Français!* Pak! Si parla Italian! Bosh! Man sprichst Deutsch! Pöffe! Tes on the sacran! Rubbish!"

"Greatest Scott?" murmured Arthur Augustus, in bewilderment.

"Such see if you like!" continued the voice. "I'm not drunk! I've had a drop, and that's all! You hear me? I'm practically a teetotaler!"

"This is really very remarkable," murmured the swell of St. Jim's.

"All right, I'm soaked!" said the voice. "Don't pile it on! I'm gone! I won't stay in your blessed hotel another minute! Bah!"

"Bah Jove!"

"Royal Royal, indeed!" said the voice scornfully. "Good Bye!"

Then the gentleman who was not drunk relaxed into indolent meanderings, and finally went off to sleep again.

Arthur Augustus understood at last.

He remembered the advertisement of the new hotel in Wayland. There was an interpreter mentioned in that gorgeous advertisement. Truly, an interpreter was not likely to have very much to do in an hotel in a town like Wayland. French occasional travellers sometimes came there, and an occasional German scientist to examine the antiquities in the neighbourhood—that was all. But the new hotel was quite up to date in everything—electric light, lift, interpreter—the whole bag of tricks. And if there was not much for the interpreter to do, at all events, Mr. Perkins, the hotel proprietor, did not err on the side of paying him too heavily—to judge by the words of the gentleman who was not drunk.

"Bully as?" murmured Arthur Augustus D'Arny. "He's got a job, and he's lost it through drinking! Why rubbish; and I can't get a job! I regard him as a silly ass!"

And there is no doubt that the swell of St. Jim's was quite right upon that point. The interpreter of the Royal Hotel had evidently been the worse for drink when on duty, and his employer had sacked him—probably not missing his services very much.

Arthur Augustus's concern for his companion in the shed

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By MARTIN CLIFFORD,  
Order Lists.

vanished now that he found that the man was merely intoxicated. The jester looked out into the street again. The pain was coming down his nose, and it was evidently impossible to venture out. The only alternative was to pass the night in the shed.

That the jester proposed to do. After all, it would save the price of a night's lodging. And in his present circumstances it behoved the devil of St. Jim's to be economical. He might need all his supply of money before he secured a job.

There was a heap of straw close by the end in the shed, and Arthur Augustus, after carefully removing his topcoat, crawled into the straw to sleep. He pulled a heap of straw over him, and found himself quite warm. When the time was he did not know; but it was certainly late, and so soon as he was warm and comfortable in the straw, he dropped off to sleep.

The devil of St. Jim's slept as usually in the straw as he had been accustomed to do in his bed in the Fourth-Floor Sanctuary at St. Jim's.

When he awoke, the sun was shining in at the door of the shed, and the rain had ceased. Arthur Augustus started up. He rubbed his eyes, wondering for the moment where he was. A yawn fell upon his eyes. On the floor of the shed, the man in the gold-headed cap was sitting up, and rubbing his eyes, and blinking at D'Arcy.

"Good morning!" said Arthur Augustus.  
 "Hello! What you doing here?" said the other.  
 "I've been sleeping here," said D'Arcy.  
 The man blinked at him.  
 "You're a schoolboy," he said.

"Yes."  
 "What are you doing out of school then?"  
 "I've left."

"Left, eh?" said the man, rubbing his eyes. "Oh! So late! I left my job. And where I'm going to get my breakfast is more than I can say! Get the price of a breakfast about you?"

"Yes."  
 "Then share with a fellow in distress," said the man. "I want something to drink—I mean eat. I've got the cash."  
 "Can't you go back to your work?"  
 The man chuckled.

"No fear!" he said emphatically. "Old Pawker would boot me out if I did. I was a little bit squiffy, and I told a German restaurant that we didn't want any German sausage there. I was the whisky did it."

"But Juv's!"  
 Arthur Augustus and D'Arcy looked thoughtfully at the man sitting on the floor. There was a gleam in D'Arcy's eyes.

He was looking for a job; and this man had just lost one. The job he had lost must evidently be still unfilled. And, in turning over his various qualifications, Arthur Augustus had considered that the role that would suit him best would be that of an interpreter.

Was it a chance?  
 "I say," said D'Arcy slowly, "you were interpreted at the Hotel Worm, weren't you?"  
 "Yes, I was."  
 "And you can't get the job back?"  
 "Not going to try."  
 "Would you have any objection to my trying for it?"  
 "You?" he questioned.  
 "Yes."  
 "My only trade—"

And the gentleman in the gold-headed cap stared harder than ever. Arthur Augustus did not see at all why the man should trouble his awkward relatives in this astonished manner was surely making something in a fellow looking for a job!

"Never mind your trade, dash boy," said D'Arcy. "You've done with the job yourself, I understand?"  
 "Oh, yes—rather the job's done with me."  
 "Of course, I am quite aware that it is contrary to etiquette among working chaps for a fellow to take another fellow's job," said D'Arcy. "It's just the same as a doctor (dash) another doctor's patient, or a dog taking another dog's bone. Of course, I should not think of doing anything of the sort. But if you are really finished with the job, I should like to have a try for it."  
 "He, he, he!"

"What are you talking?" said D'Arcy.  
 "Excuse me," he said. "I've taken that you sometimes when I wake up in the morning. I get it from my great-grandfather. Look here, I'm thirty—seven years old. If you could stand a hard-working cheap half-crown—"  
 "My dash chap, I am looking for work myself," said D'Arcy. "If you could help me to get the job, I should be very pleased to make it worth your while."  
 He was now manager of the Hotel Royal appeared struck by seduction.

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"THE MAGNY" LIBRARY, Every Monday.

Our Companion Papers,

"THE PENNY POPULAR," Every Friday.

"That's not a bad idea," he said. "Look here, the pay's eighteen bob a week, and you have to find your own uniform."  
 "Yass."  
 "You get your keep—not too gorgeous—and any amount of good advice from old Pawker thrown in."  
 "Yass."  
 "You have to know four languages—English, I suppose you know English—"

"Yass, you see!"  
 "And French—"  
 "Oh, yes, my French is first class."  
 "And German—"  
 "I can handle German alright."  
 "And Italian—"  
 Arthur Augustus hesitated.

"Well, I know some Italian," he said. "You see, I got a letter, and I sang songs in Italian. I can pronounce it all right."  
 The late interpreter grinned. "I can pronounce it all right."  
 "I haven't seen any business in Wayland, excepting an organ-grinder, since I've been there," he protested, "so you're not likely to be called upon for Italian very much. He looks business looks well in the ads; but it's not really wanted."  
 "That's all right, then."

"And then you have to make yourself useful—help to keep accounts, and take messages, and listen to Mr. Pawker telling you about his early days when he was a writer in Paris."  
 "I shouldn't mind that."

"Well, then, you're the man for the job," said the interpreter, heartily. "and I'll tell you what—I'll sell you my uniform at half-price, and that will save you a lot of money to start with."

D'Arcy looked, and felt, very grateful.  
 "But Juv's, that's a wigger of you, Mr—"  
 "Snooker," said the interpreter, "that's my name—"

William Percy Snooker. The fact is, I've taken a liking to you, and really, I shouldn't want my services if I get another job. It will be neither large for you. And that doesn't matter—you're rather slight to be an interpreter, and it will make you look bigger."  
 "That's all right."

"You see, if you want and applied for the job in Ettes, they wouldn't listen to you," said Mr. Snooker. "They'd think you were a rummy schoolboy."

D'Arcy coloured.  
 "Thank you very much," he said. "How much shall I give you for the uniform?"

Mr. Snooker reflected.  
 "Half-price," he said. "I want to do the nice thing. Half-price—that's eight pounds."  
 D'Arcy looked surprised. He would not have imagined, by the look of them, that Mr. Snooker's clothes had cost eight pounds in the first place, or anything like it. His shock he had somewhat sofly.

"Don't you think they're worth it?" demanded Mr. Snooker.

"It isn't that, dash boy; of course, I like to save word for dash," said D'Arcy, stammer; and then Mr. Snooker blushed, for some reason. "But I can't afford it. You see, I've only got between twelve and sixteen pounds to last me till I get a job, and I might not get this one even with the uniform."

"Fair's fair," said Mr. Snooker. "I'll be reasonable. You lend me a five-pound note, and the uniform's yours."  
 "You are very good."

"Not at all," said Mr. Snooker. "If it's a go, I'll take you home to my lodging now, and we can change. You can throw in your own clothes as a zero-weight, if you like—I could save something on them with my uncle."  
 "But Juv's! Would you uncle really lend you money for my clothes?" asked D'Arcy, in astonishment.

"Uncle Solomons—three have balls—oh I do for you something," explained Mr. Snooker.  
 "Oh, I see—a yambrovolok!"  
 "That's it. Now, come along. I'm thirty—about—I mean hungry."  
 "Good!"

And Arthur Augustus, carefully polishing his silk hat on his sleeve, put it on his head, and followed William Percy Snooker out of the shed into the morning sun.

CHAPTER 10.

Quite a Change.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS was in high spirits now. The chance of a job had come along sooner than he had dared to hope.

And with the chance of a job, came the opportunity of complete concealment—for the position of an hotel interpreter would certainly hide the once-true elegant jester of St. Jim's

In the completest possible manner. No one would think of looking for D'Arcy of the Fourth under the gold-brained cap of an interpreter at an hotel. If only he could get the job, he would be all right. And why should he not get it? Why did his father go on like that at St. Jim's, if his French and German were a good enough for interesting to waitresses at an hotel? As for Italian, there was no likely to be much demand for that; and if it was called for, he could rake his memory for all the words he knew. As he knew a considerable number of Italian songs by heart, his vocabulary was really not limited; and he could almost have held a conversation on the subject of tender hearts, starry eyes, blue heavens and deep, alone seas.

Mr. Snooker led him to a lodging-house near the station in Wayland. He explained to D'Arcy that it was a lodging-house, but indicated before he explained his situation at the Hotel Royal. They were soon in a room, and Mr. Snooker prepared breakfast as the first step. Arthur Augustus was hungry, and he assented at once. He felt even more cheerful than before after he had disposed of bacon and eggs and hot coffee. Mr. Snooker did not assume the rights of a host in the least; he allowed D'Arcy to pay for the breakfast, which the owner of St. Jim's readily did.

Mr. Snooker was in a very good humour himself. He had drunk something stronger than coffee with his breakfast, early on the first day; and D'Arcy was not surprised that Mr. Peacock the Hotel Royal had given him the "push"; though he was too polite to say so. Mr. Snooker produced some shabby clothes from a bag, and changed into them, and placed his uniform at the disposal of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

D'Arcy stripped off his elegant frock, and donned the interpreter's uniform.

It was decidedly ugly on D'Arcy's elegant figure; and the junior, who was very particular about the cut of his clothes, could not help looking displeased.

But Mr. Snooker was good-natured itself—especially after he had had another go at his bottle. He produced needles and thread, and took in some "work" in the clothes, and revealed that in a more suitable size. They still looked considerably ugly; but, after all, as Mr. Snooker remarked, an interpreter in an hotel was not supposed to be a swell.

The gold-brained cap was a little large for D'Arcy, but Mr. Snooker's ingenuity was equal to that, too. He pecked it under the inside lining with strips of paper, so that it fitted D'Arcy like a glove.

"Looks ripping!" he said. "My dear kid, you were born for this kind of dober. It suits you down to the ground!"

Good!" said D'Arcy.

He held a letter for him to his tupper with great regret. But it was entirely useless to think of applying for an interpreter's job in a tupper.

He looked in the glass somewhat anxiously.

"Do you think I look wuthin young for the job?" he asked.

Mr. Snooker considered it awhile. Mr. Snooker had not the remotest idea, as a matter of fact, that D'Arcy would get the job. He regarded it as a little freak on the part of the young swell which he could turn to his own profit, as he was on the look. The uniform, which was not worth more than a couple of pence, was of no further use to him; and a five-pence note would be very useful. He had gazed at once that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had run away from school, and he had not the slightest doubt that he would be discovered and taken back the same day. If he chose to avow himself in the interval at playing at being an interpreter, that was his own business—and a very profitable thing for William Percy Snooker.

"Well, perhaps a little—or—youthful," he said. "But this is the age of young men, you know. I'm a young man myself. But a moustache would make you look older."

D'Arcy passed his lips a little. He did not like the idea of wearing anything so hopelessly out of date as a moustache. But it occurred to him that in making him look older, it would have the additional effect of adding to his disguise, and he considered the subject.

"I've worn moustaches in amateur theatricals," he remarked. "It wouldn't be a bad idea to stick one on, when I come to think of it."

Mr. Snooker smiled.

"Good egg," he said. "I can easily get you one down the street, at the barber's."

"Thank you very much."

"I'll be back in a jiffy."

Mr. Snooker returned in a few minutes with a bloody, German-looking artificial moustache, which he proceeded to fasten to D'Arcy's upper lip.

It felt a little uncomfortable, and the corners persisted in curling into his mouth, but there was no doubt that it made the junior look much older. Added to the uniform and the gold-brained cap, it completely concealed the junior of St. Jim's, and D'Arcy might easily have been taken for a young man.

"Bai Jove, that's beaut!" he said, looking into the glass.

"It's absolutely ripping," said Mr. Snooker.

"You woudly think that I shall pass all right?"

"It's a dead cert."

"I trust Mr. Parikh will engage me," said D'Arcy. "It would be wippid to get a job like that, wouldn't it?"

"Best wosh," said Mr. Snooker, kindly. "Now, you can't do better than be the first in the field, you know. Old Parikh will be advertising for a new interpreter—but you can get in before that advertisement if you go now. That's where you get a pull on all other applicants for the job."

"Yess, wuthin!"

Mr. Snooker folded up D'Arcy's clothes.

"There's a little matter of a sewer," he hinted.

Arthur Augustus had changed his personal belongings to his new clothes. He took out his barbers' Russian leather pocket-book, and handed Mr. Snooker a five-penny note.

"That's wright, dear boy. And thank you very much."

"Not at all," said Mr. Snooker, politely. "The obligation's on my side." And Mr. Snooker was quite right there.

The arrangements now being completed, Mr. Snooker was in a hurry to be off. He made up a bundle of D'Arcy's clothes, for the rent to Mr. Solomon, and bade farewell to the junior. They parted in the street, D'Arcy again thanking his kind friend.

Mr. Snooker disengaged with his bundle, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy started his steps slowly in the direction of the Hotel Royal.

It was still early morning; the rain had quite gone, and a bright morning sun was shining down upon the quiet old streets of the market town.

D'Arcy felt considerably nervous and self-conscious as he strolled along. The new clothes did not feel quite comfortable, and the moustache gave his upper-lip a sticky and tight feeling.

It occurred to him that everyone must be looking at him in his new attire. But on his consideration he found that he gained more without unusual notice. As a matter of fact, he looked an unusually good-looking and youthful hotel interpreter, and nothing more.

He proceeded slowly to the hotel, his confidence growing stronger at every step. He could not help wondering what was happening at St. Jim's just then. He speculated at the thought of how Tom Merry & Co. would stare if they could see him now.

Probably he had been searched for the night before; probably he was being searched for now. "They would inquire for him at all the railway-stations near the school," thought the junior. He was in a good way of that. He had to pass the station on his way to the hotel, and, as he came in sight of the vestibule, he caught sight of a well-known figure there.

He started, and turned a pale cold. It was Mr. Railton. The Headmaster of the School House had evidently been making inquiries in the station, without result as his expression showed. He was standing at the station entrance now, looking out into the street with a perplexed face.

His eyes fell casually upon D'Arcy as the junior passed on the other side of the way. D'Arcy's heart was beating fast.

Would Mr. Railton recognise him? They were not twenty paces distant from one another, and he knew that the Headmaster was a keen-sighted man. At any rate, as he walked on, he expected to hear Mr. Railton's voice come rapping across the street. But it did not come.

He walked on, and turned the first corner, and breathed deeply with relief. Mr. Railton had not recognised him. He was thinking of a junior in Brown, and a silk hat; not of a young man with a moustache in an interpreter's uniform, and gold-brained cap.

"Bai Jove," murmured Arthur Augustus, "that was a narrow shave!"

He blossed his meeting with the "pushed" interpreter of the Hotel Royal, and the exchange of clothes that had saved him from recognition.

But the sight of Mr. Railton had recalled a matter to his mind which he had forgotten in the keen interest of preparing for his new job.

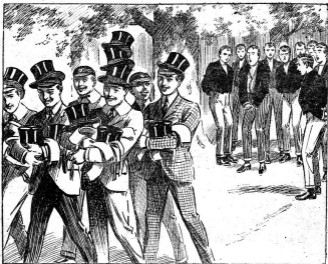
He stepped into a stationer's shop, and purchased paper and envelopes, and wrote down two letters, which he posted at the first pillar-box he came to.

One letter was to his father, to assure his lordship of his safety; the other to the Head of St. Jim's, explaining the unfortunate mistake he had made in huzzarding his expected Form-master upon his nose, and explaining that he had retired from St. Jim's voluntarily, instead of putting the Head to the trouble of expelling him, and adding that he would not be coming back at all.

That matter disposed of, Arthur Augustus arrived at the grand new hotel of Wayland, and marched in, his heart beating very fast.







The grinning gendarmes deprived their prisoners of their collars and neckties, and gathered up the topers, which had fallen off in the struggle, and crowded away down the footpath with their booty. Tom Merry & Co. looked at one another in dismay. (See Chapter 2.)

And Mr. Pawker took up a newspaper to indicate that the interview was over, and that his time was far too valuable to be further expended upon mere captives.

D'Arcy followed the guard out of the bureau. He was feeling very satisfied. Five shillings was certainly not an overvaluing salary; but it was a beginning. If he gave satisfaction his salary might be raised. He did not yet know Mr. Pawker.

The gigantic porter looked him over.

"Lift-boy'll show you your room," he said.

"Thank you!"

"Last interpreter was pushed for boozing," said the porter disdainfully. "Do you drink?"

"Certainly not!"

The porter smiled. He looked D'Arcy over again.

"Ever had this job before?" he asked.

"No."

"Ever been in a job before?"

"No."

"I thought not," said Phizmer sneeringly—"I thought not! It's a custom for a new interpreter to ask a man if he's thirsty."

"But Jove, what a curious custom!"

"Well!" said Mr. Phizmer.

D'Arcy thought he might as well conform to the custom, as popular as it was.

"Are you thirsty?" he asked.

"Yes," said Mr. Phizmer emphatically, "I am!"

"Sowwy!" said D'Arcy.

And he turned away towards the lift-boy, who was grinning. Mr. Phizmer looked after him with a scowl that was not to be expressed in words.

"Will you have the kindness to show me to my room, dear boy?" asked D'Arcy.

"Oh, my eye!" said the lift-boy.

"Woolly, my lad—"

"Where did you dig up that accent?" asked the lift-boy slyly.

"I say don't be cheeky."

"Oh, my eye!"

The lift-boy started for the stairs.

"Shall we not ascend in the lift?" asked Arthur Augustus.

The lift-boy stared at him as if overcome.

"The staff don't use the lift, you silly brute," he replied.

"Oh, but Jove, don't they?"

"No, they don't! The 'ere way."

D'Arcy followed the lift-boy upstairs. The stairs resembled him of the Eiffel Tower at Paris, which he had seen in an excursion there. There seemed to be no end to them. But they arrived at their summit at last. D'Arcy was shown into a tiny room with a sheet view upon leads and chimneys.

"This 'ere's yours," said the lift-boy.

"Thank you very much."

"Why didn't you stand Phizmer a wig?" asked the lift-boy confidentially.

"A—what?"

"A drink, you say."

"Does he drink?" asked D'Arcy in surprise.

The lift-boy rolled his eyes.

"Does he?" he murmured. "He's an old soldier!"

"I was not aware—"

"He'll cure you ere," said the lift-boy.

"But he didn't say—"

"Oh, you don't know nothing," said the lift-boy contemptuously. "You're grown. Anybody could see you've never been in a job afore. 'Ow much is old Weskit giv' you?"

"Who?"

"Old Weskit—old Pawker I mean, you dunny?"

"Oh! Five shill's a week," said D'Arcy.

"Oh! Five shill's a week," said D'Arcy.

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"Here's your worth," commented the lift-boy.  
 "Woolly, young shaver."  
 The lift-boy giggled. D'Arcy's beautiful accent seemed to furnish him with never-ending delight.  
 "Blessed if I ever saw an interpreter like you before!" he said. "Can you really pitch French and German?"  
 "Yaa, of course."  
 "Sneaker couldn't—he took in old Wadki. He could just jaw in French conversational in clove flags, but the only German he knew was 'snare-kraut,'" said the lift-boy. "There ain't much for an interpreter to do 'ere."  
 D'Arcy was glad to hear it.  
 "Old Wadki's a corker!" added the intelligent youth.  
 "O'right so long as you better 'em up, you know. That's a tip."  
 "Thank you, very much."  
 "No more keels than a rabbit," said the lift-boy. "You'll ask 'em—d'ere of a fraction, you know. 'Are you ever walked up twelve pairs of stairs for nothing?'"  
 "No."  
 "I don't like it, either."  
 "Sowwy!"  
 "Oh, you're a bloomin' hant!" said the lift-boy in disgust.  
 It dawned upon D'Arcy at last that the lift-boy expected some recompense for the trouble he had taken. He felt in his pocket, and placed a half-crown in the intelligent youth's hand. The lift-boy stared at it. He had expected three-pence, but Arthur Augustus was still more the swell of St. Jim's than he was an hotel waiter.  
 "My son!" said the lift-boy. "Is it a good 'un?"  
 "Woolly, you young waddler."  
 "Oh, prithee!" said the boy. "What's your name?"  
 "Wadkiem."  
 "Mine's Wadbert," said the lift-boy, with a grin.  
 "Very glad to make your acquaintance, Master Wadbert."  
 "Oh, my eye!"  
 And with that Master Roberts retired. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was left to himself in his new quarters—or, as he would have called them, his quarters.  
 He sat down upon the edge of the bed.  
 "Well, I am here, at all events," he murmured. "I've got the job. I wonder what Blake and Hercules and Big would say if they could see me now!"

CHAPTER 12.

Arthur Augustus Talks French!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY—alias John Robinson—had secured the "job."  
 He was installed as interpreter at the Hotel Royal.  
 It seemed almost too good to be true!  
 True, the salary was not magnificent. But five shillings a week was, in fact, five shillings a week, and board and lodging would be found for him. There was no reason why he should not do very well in his new situation.

He remained a little time in his room, to gather up his baggage, as it were, before descending to face his new world. Exactly what his social standing was in his new life he did not know.

But, at all events, he was a member of the staff, and was treated with courtesy and equality by the lift-boy, Master Roberts. He had a hazy idea that he was at least vital in rank to the hall-porter, but that gigantic individual put him into a secondary place by sheer weight. D'Arcy had felt that it would be preferable to avoid Mr. Pawker so much as possible, in case of awkward inquiries, but he found that he would not be got to any trouble on that account. Mr. Pawker was far too mighty a personage to trouble himself about an interpreter, and after engaging John Robinson he apparently forgot his existence.

Although Mr. Fitzner did not take to the new interpreter, and Roberts the lift-boy was somewhat superior, the maids of the hotel all liked John Robinson as usual.

Arthur Augustus's graceful manners always made his way with the ladies, and the maids all pronounced him a dear.

Indeed, the youngest chambermaid had serious thoughts of telling the policeman that she had found that their astute were incurable, after avowed adhesion, with a view to installing John Robinson as his successor.

It was D'Arcy's first experience of life below stairs. How he would like it he could hardly determine at first. But one thing was certain, and that was that he would have no choice about the matter.

Although the interpreter of the Wayland Hotel Royal was not an overworked individual so far as interpreting went, there were plenty of other things to be done, and the interpreter was apparently expected to do them. D'Arcy was not idle, however, and as he was willing to do everything else's work as well as his own, he was on the way to becoming quite popular before the first day was out.

When he was not otherwise engaged, it was his duty to be  
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stationed in the hall—partly in case he should be wanted, and partly to show all and sundry that the Hotel Royal really possessed an interpreter as well as a lift, a hall-porter, a grange, and electric light.

Late in the afternoon, about the time when the junkies at St. Jim's would be having their tea in the stables, a telephone-bell rang loudly.

D'Arcy did not take any notice of it, as it had not appeared to be among his multifarious duties to answer the telephone. He was thinking about St. Jim's, and wondering whether the chaps were having tea in Study No. 2 in the Fourth.

Mr. Pawker looked out of the barnea.

"Interpreter?"

D'Arcy jumped up.

"Yaa, sir?"

"Wanted here, sir."

"Certainly, sir."

"There's a man speaking in French on the telephone," said Mr. Pawker. "Ask him what he wants. It's a call from London."

"Yaa, sir."

The new interpreter took the receiver. He was feeling a little nervous, and his heart was beating fast. He wished that Mr. Pawker would not stand at his elbow as he was doing. Mr. Pawker had said that he knew French, and a sudden doubt had assailed D'Arcy as to his own powers now that they were to be put to the test.

"Yaa!" said D'Arcy into the telephone.

A voice came through.

"Allo! L'Hotel Royal de Vapland?"

"Yaa—I mean out, out, out, dear."

"Bon!" The voice ran on quickly, and D'Arcy tried in vain to catch the words. They were undoubtedly in French, and spoken close at hand he would probably have understood them, but on the telephone it was a different matter. It is not always easy to understand English on a long-distance telephone. And French, spoken at a record speed, is a far from clear voice, was a puzzle to Arthur Augustus.

"What does he say?" asked Mr. Pawker.

"Well a wizzra, sir."

"Yaa avat cootee—vous comprenez?" came on the telephone.

"Out, out, out!" said D'Arcy.

"Bon! Tout est arrange, d'acc."

"Out!"

"Well, what is it?" asked Mr. Pawker.

D'Arcy was desperate. He hadn't the faintest idea what that Frenchman in London had been telephoning about, but it seems to reason that when a man telephones in as a hotel it is because he wants rooms there. D'Arcy decided to risk it.

"The gentleman is coming here," he said.

"Good. What name?" asked Mr. Pawker.

"Robespierre," said D'Arcy recklessly, giving the first French name that came into his head, on the spur of the moment.

"How many rooms does he want?"

"Three," said Arthur Augustus. He felt that he was in for it now, and he might as well give his employer a good order.

"Doesn't he want to know the price?"

"He hasn't mentioned it—so far as I know," added D'Arcy under his breath.

Mr. Pawker smiled beatifically.

"Good!" he said with emphasis.

The voice came through the telephone again, in an impatient tone.

"Allo, allo! Ah, oui! Vous courez?"

"Out, out!" said poor D'Arcy.

"Parquet pas repousser, d'acc?"

"Eh?"

"Vous n'avez pas repousser—parquet pas?"

"Oh, dear!"

"Comment?"

"You—you see—I mean vous voyez—"

"Comment?"

"But Jove, what does he keep on saying 'concerning' for?" murmured the perplexed D'Arcy.

"What's he talking about now?" inquired Mr. Pawker indignantly.

"He—he says it's a beautiful day, sir."

Mr. Pawker sniffed.

"Just like those Frenchmen, wanting a business man's time with their blessed farin politesse," he said. "I knowed them like that in Paris. King all if you're finished."

D'Arcy rang off with pleasure. He knew that the Frenchman's last words had been demanding an answer, but as he did not know what the man had said, he could not very well give an answer, and it seemed simplest to ring off.

The next minute the telephone-bell rang furiously.

"Hallo, there he is again!" said Mr. Pawker.

D'Arcy grinned, and took up the receiver.  
 "Hallo," he said.  
 "Parbleu!" came the voice of the Frenchman in London.  
 "Parbleu! Qui est-il—vous êtes là, je crois? Parbleu!"  
 "What's that?" asked Mr. Parker.  
 "He says he must have a—a person with a southern accent," gaped D'Arcy.

"Tell him they're all looked on," said Mr. Parker. "He can have three voices looking on the river, if he likes."  
 "Yess, sir," D'Arcy spoke into the telephone. He spoke the first French that came into his head, which happened to be some sentences from a lesson at St. Jim's:

"Voilà, monsieur! Avez-vous les annonces de mon grand-père? Avez-vous les annonces de mon frère?"  
 He heard a gasp on the telephone. The Frenchman in London was already in a state of surprise. He was probably quite surprised at being asked if he had the shoes of D'Arcy's grandfather and the hair of D'Arcy's brother.

"Comment!" he stammered.  
 "Oui, oui!" said D'Arcy.  
 "Flak it! Qui est ce que c'est?"  
 "Oui, oui! Yes! Parbleu!" said D'Arcy.

"Well, what is he saying now?" asked Mr. Parker.  
 "He—he will be delighted with the money overlooking the river," guessed D'Arcy, "and he arrives to-night at nine o'clock." D'Arcy's invention, on the spur of the moment, would have done credit to a journalist.  
 "Nine o'clock!" said Mr. Parker in surprise. "There ain't a train to bring him here at nine o'clock. I suppose he's coming in a motor-car. Looks like being a good thing—especially as he hasn't mentioned the price. Is he still speaking?"

"Yess."  
 "How these blessed foreigners do keep on," said Mr. Parker. "What he wants."  
 "Indeed?" came through the telephone. "Non, da s'entend. Je crois que vous avez la une maison de feu."  
 "Oui, oui!" said D'Arcy.  
 "Comment!"  
 "C'est bien," said D'Arcy desperately. "C'est bien! Madame, oui, Palais Royal! City Park, can-can, et vive la République!"

The strange man of art.  
 Arthur Augustus was glad of it. He was in such a state of mental confusion that he hardly knew what he had been saying. It is safe to say that the Frenchman hadn't the remotest idea of what he had been saying. The ordinary language of a sane man certainly has suggested that he was talking to a fanatic, and probably felt glad that there was a length of the telephone line between them.

"Well, he's done at last," said Mr. Parker. "By the way, what's his name, did you say?"  
 "Jean Paul."  
 "Oh? You said Robinson's just now."  
 "Yess—Jean Paul Robinson."  
 "Queer that he should give you all his Christian names," said Mr. Parker. "But those blessed foreigners are all the same—all jays, like a sheep's head. Well, it's all right. So he'll be here at nine o'clock? Must be coming by car—three cars—no price mentioned!"

And a fat wife of sensibility overpowered Mr. Parker's usage. Undoubtedly there would be a kill of the most clevering dimensions for that unappreciated foreign gentleman when he had stayed a while in the Royal Hotel, Wayland. Mr. Parker was so pleased at the prospect that he gave the interpreter an encouraging smile.  
 "You answered that all right, well, Robinson," he said. "I'm quite satisfied with you—quite!"

"Thank you very much, sir," gasped D'Arcy.  
 And he made his escape from the bureau. He wondered whether Mr. Parker would have expressed satisfaction if he had known the real nature of that peculiar conversation on the telephone. He wondered, too, why the Frenchman was, and what he wanted. He waited for some time in fear of another ring from the same gentleman, but it did not come. The awkward traveller was evidently fed up with the Hotel Royal, Wayland, and had probably decided to go elsewhere.

## CHAPTER 13. CAMERA WANTED.

MR. PARKER was all attention when nine o'clock came round that evening. He was expecting the arrival of the French gentleman in a motor-car. Although the Hotel Royal offered shelter to all who came, big guns in motor-cars were especially welcomed, as at all hotels. Mr. Parker, as a true hotel-keeper, basked in the reflected glory of rich guests. But Mr. Parker was likely to have a little disappointment this time. Nine o'clock came,

but no Frenchman, and at half-past nine Mr. Parker looked cross. It was evident that that valuable guest had changed his mind about coming.  
 "Where did that French ring up from, Robinson?" he asked D'Arcy.

"D'Arcy started.  
 "I didn't ask him, sir."  
 Mr. Parker grinned.  
 "Must have been a hoax," he said. "He hasn't come. Keep an eye on the telephone, in case he rings up again. May be only delay."  
 "Yess, sir."

It appeared to be the interpreter's duty to answer the telephone, among other things. The bell rang at a quarter to ten, and Arthur Augustus went to the receiver in fear and trembling.

But it was a voice in English that came over the wire, and he breathed with relief. He could deal with that language at all events. Then suddenly he gave a start, as he recognized the voice. It was the voice of Dr. Holmes, the Head of St. Jim's, and the receiver almost dropped from D'Arcy's hand.

"Is that the Hotel Royal, Wayland?"  
 "Yess."  
 "Mr. Parker?"

D'Arcy hesitated hard. It occurred to him that Dr. Holmes might have had something of him, and might be going to make inquiries of Mr. Parker. In that case, Mr. Holmes must not be allowed to come to the telephone.

"I'm speaking for him," said D'Arcy, disguising his voice as much as he could. "Who is that?"  
 "Dr. Holmes, St. James's School."  
 "Very good. Do you occupy apartments here?"

"No, no!"  
 "We can let you have three women lookin' over the wire—"

"No, no! nothing of that sort. A boy has gone away from my school without permission—"  
 "But Jove!"  
 "Oh!"  
 "—I mean go on, Dr. Holmes."

Inquiry has been made at the railway-stations, and apparently he has not taken any train. It has occurred to me that he may be putting up in some hotel or inn in the neighbourhood, as he is known to have had a considerable amount of money with him. I am therefore making inquiries at all the hotels in the telephone-book. Will you kindly tell me whether you have a boy staying in your hotel?"

In spite of the state of nerves the boy's voice had thrown him into, D'Arcy could not help chuckling. It seemed so curious that the Head of St. Jim's should be asking him if he knew anything about his own overcoats.

"Pretty desirable the boy, sir," he said. "What name?"  
 "Arthur Augustus D'Arcy."  
 "No one has given that name here, eh," said D'Arcy quite truthfully.

"Do not possibly be under an assumed name. He is a lad of nearly fifteen, very well dressed, sometimes wears an eye-glass, and speaks very deliberately, and lips."  
 "There are no boys at all among the guests of the hotel at the present moment, sir."

"Thank you."  
 "I will inform you immediately, sir, if any boy comes here and asks for accommodation, or the description you have given, Mr. Parker."  
 "Thank you very much. Good bye."

"Good-bye, sir."  
 And D'Arcy hung up the receiver with a sigh of relief. Mr. Parker, who had been absent for some time, came into the bureau.

"Another telephone call?" he asked.  
 "Yess, sir."  
 "That chap again, I suppose? Does he say why he hasn't come?"

"He says he won't wait any more here, sir."  
 Mr. Parker grinned.  
 "These blessed Frenchmen!" he murmured.

As the evening drew on, Arthur Augustus began to feel sleepy. The janitors at St. Jim's were all in bed at that hour, and it was past D'Arcy's accustomed bedtime, he began to feel very drowsy. The hotel did not close till the last train in, which was at nearly half-past eleven, and the interpreter was expected to be on duty until then. Arthur Augustus sat and nodded in his chair in a corner of the hall, while the gigantic porter stared possessively into the High Street of Wayland, or chatted with the lift-boy. There was a table in the street as the hotel bus—among its other modern appointments—the Hotel Royal had a motor-bus full of its own—some travelling up to the big double-deck.

In a moment Mr. Fitzgerald was to see the motor-bus generally known as the schoolboys' motor, The big motor was started in Wayland by the bus-train. The big motor was started in Wayland by the bus-train. The big motor was started in Wayland by the bus-train.

the doors open and called forth to greet the new comers, if there were any. There was one man in the 'bus—a little, foreign-looking gentleman with a dark, olive face and black eyes, half hidden by spectacles, wrapped up in coats and rugs, topped by an old-fashioned silk hat. There were boxes and bags piled on top of the 'bus, showing that the foreign-looking gentleman had plenty of baggage.

The porter, and the under-porter, and the lift-boy and two sleepy waiters were very busy at once. Boxes and bags crashed down on the pavement, the porter opened the 'bus door, and assisted the little old gentleman to alight.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked out of the double doors of the hotel anxiously. He wished the word "Interpreter" with his cap was not quite so prominent. He dreaded that the new arrival might be a foreigner. It might even be the dreadful Frenchman who had spoken on the telephone from London.

Roberts the lift-boy came hurrying in with a bag in each hand. "D'Arcy caught sight of labels on the bags—Rome, Rome, Paris, London. Evidently it was a foreigner, though what of man from Rome and Milan could wear in a sleepy little place like Woking in Sussex was a mystery.

"What kind of a chap is it, Wolcott?" asked D'Arcy anxiously.

"The lift-boy guessed.  
 "Job for you," he said. "Furrier."  
 "Furrier?" asked D'Arcy in dismay.  
 "No, I think something else; what he said to Piersner didn't sound like French. More like Roushian," said the lift-boy.

"Oh, great Scott!"  
 The under-porter burst in with a big trunk. D'Arcy tapped his on the shoulder, and nearly oversteered him and the trunk too.

"Look out, you foolhard!"  
 "Pooy excuse me. Is it a foreigner, dash boy?"  
 "Yes—Roushian," said the under-porter. "Leave that trunk alone—dash's above a wain ewer!"

Arthur Augustus stood motionless.  
 If the new arrival had been a Russian, the interpreter would have stood his ground, as he was not supposed to know Russian. But Italian! Italian was one of the languages which

D'Arcy was employed at the princely salary of five shillings a week to speak. The Italian gentleman was not likely to speak English, and his amount of baggage showed that he was an important personage. Arthur Augustus wished that the floor would open and swallow him up. A few lines from an Italian comic had amused Mr. Pawker, but they were not likely to amuse an Italian.

"'Hal Jere'!" murmured Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "What wittily wrocter look! I don't suppose they have an Italian here once in a blue moon, and one man's droop in tonight—just because I've got the job of interpreter. It's wittily wrocter!"

He was moving away, when Piersner called to him.  
 "Interpreter! Robinson?"  
 "Yess?"  
 "You'll be wanted—Italian gentleman just coming in."  
 "Yess."


Arthur Augustus disappeared as he said the last "yess." The little foreign gentleman came into the spacious vestibule of the hotel. He was so covered up with wrappings that only part of his face was to be seen, and his black eyes twinkling behind his spectacles. Mr. Pawker advanced to meet him with a manner of great embarrassment.

The Italian gentleman nodded to him.  
 "Basso ven," he said politely.  
 "Bony Sarah!" repeated Mr. Pawker offhily. "Excuse me, sir, I don't speak Italian myself, but I've got an interpreter here.

He looked round.  
 "Interpreter?"  
 "No reply."  
 "Interpreter?"  
 The interpreter had vanished.  
 "Piersner, where is the interpreter? Fetch him at once!"  
 "He was 'ere a moment ago, sir," said Piersner, looking about him.

"Just a minute, sir. The interpreter will be back in a moment," said Mr. Pawker, speaking just as if his meaning would be clear to his guest, although it was perfectly evident that the stranger had no English.

The Italian gentleman rolled his eyes behind his glasses.



## Guy of the Greenwood

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—the celebrated young outlaw—were famous throughout the land, "Guy of the Greenwood" is exciting in every way. The opening chapters appear in

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"Ei parla Italiano, qui?" he exclaimed.  
 "Yes, sir," said Mr. Pawker, who knew what those words meant, as he had them inserted in his advertisements. "The interpreter will be here in a moment. Find that house of an interpreter! Do you hear, Plummer? How dare he go off duty without permission."  
 "Non importa niente," said the guest. "Una camera per la notte—tanta."  
 "Oh, great Scott, how does he expect a Christian to understand that brego?" groaned Mr. Pawker. "I'll skin that interpreter! Interpreter!"  
 "Ain't to be seen, sir!" said Plummer, coming back.  
 "I'll sack him! I'll flog him! I'll kick him out! I don't pay him to keep out of sight, when I've got foreign guests here!" gasped Mr. Pawker.  
 "Una camera!" repeated the Italian gentleman impatiently.

"Non importa!"  
 "He wants a camera!" said Mr. Pawker, in amazement. "What on earth does he want with a camera? He can't take photographs at night!"

The Italian gentleman caught the word "camera" in Mr. Pawker's speech, the rest of it being unintelligible to him. He nodded quickly.

"That right?" asked Mr. Pawker. "A camera?"  
 "Si, si, una camera, signore."

"Must mean that there's a camera among his legs, sir," said Plummer. "I ain't seen one. Only bags and trunks."

"Might have left it in the train," said Mr. Pawker. "Go and look for that interpreter, some of you! Find him, and bring him here! Tell him I'll sack him! You have lost a camera," he added, turning to the Italian gentleman, who was showing great signs of impatience.

The signor nodded emphatically at the word camera. Mr. Pawker was in blissful ignorance of the fact that the word simply meant a "room" in Italian, and he attacked the English meaning to the word.

"Did you leave it in the train?" asked Mr. Pawker. The guest looked puzzled.

"Yes!" he responded. "E' in una! Che volete dire?"  
 "Oh, certainly, did you leave the camera in the train, or perhaps at the station, sir?"

"Non capisco niente!" exclaimed the foreign gentleman impatiently. "Una camera—una camera! Capisco!"

"Go and inquire for the camera at the station, Plummer! I'll show the gentleman to his room," said Mr. Pawker. "I'll kill that interpreter! The villain! The scoundrel! This way, sir! The camera will be all right. It will be kept in the lost-property office, if the porter doesn't find it, sir. This way! Pray follow me! Here is the lift!"

The guest seemed satisfied now. He stepped into the lift, and as he disappeared upwards, the interpreter appeared from behind a door at the end of the hall.

He was gazing.  
 "Hal Jove, I was well out of that!" murmured D'Arcy.

"I trust that person will be gone to-morrow mornin' before I come down! Hal Jove!"

## CHAPTER 13.

## Arthur Augustus Talks Italian.

FORTUNATELY, the terrible guest was tired with his journey, and did not come down again that night—much to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's relief. But Arthur Augustus had an unpleasant ten minutes with Mr. Pawker. Mr. Pawker, as soon as he found his interpreter, told him plainly what he thought of him for being out of the way when he was wanted. Mr. Pawker did not measure his words, and the flow of his eloquence was something wonderful. He did not leave off till he was out of breath.

"Hal Jove!" was all Arthur Augustus said.  
 Mr. Pawker waved a fat fist in the air.

"I'd sack you!" he shouted. "I'd kick you out as I did the other rater, only I want you as interpreter to Signor Orvini in the mornin'! Do you hear?"

"Yes."  
 "Mind you're in sight in the morning, or there will be trouble! Got that?"

"Yes."  
 "Then don't you forget it! What do you suppose I pay you for, if I've got to talk Italian to my clients myself?" demanded Mr. Pawker.

"I'm sure I don't know," said D'Arcy meekly.

The gentleman's hat a camera, and he couldn't get particulars, because you were speaking somewhere instead of attending to business," exclaimed Mr. Pawker. "Mind you're on the spot to-morrow mornin', that's all! If you're not, it's the boot!"

"Yes."  
 Arthur Augustus D'Arcy went to bed feeling disgusted, and looking forward with great anticipation to the end of the mornin'.

"How was he to face the Italian gentleman? Apparently he was not going early in the morning, and D'Arcy would therefore have to talk to him, and translate all his words and desires to the staff. The prospect made the unhappy gentleman stare all over. He had a lively Italian, certainly; but it was of a poetic and lyrical variety. He could have read verses of Dante without great difficulty, and could have translated a song with only a few mistakes. But the Italian words for commonplace things were great mysteries to him. And as soon as he had to talk to the Italian signor, he would come out, and it meant what Mr. Pawker elegantly described as the "scour."

But D'Arcy hoped that he would get out of the difficulty somehow, and, anyway, he was sleepy, and so he went to sleep. He dreamed that he was back in the Formosa at St. Jim's, chasing Gordon Gay and Yves Meyer round the fountains, while an Italian traveller sat on Mr. Latham's desk, and waved Mr. Latham's cane. From that wild vision he was rescued by the bedclothes being dragged off him.

He started up in bed.  
 Givy damn was struggling in through the little window of his garret, and Roberts, the lift-boy, was standing by his bedside, reading. It was evidently Roberts who had mentioned the smell of St. Jim's in so uncomplaisant a manner.

"Pony don't be a wuff head, Roberts!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus indignantly.  
 "Going to sleep all day!" demanded Roberts.  
 "I ain't wuff-head yet."  
 Roberts started.  
 "The staff 'ere don't 'ave a rising-bell," he remarked.  
 "It's time for you to get up; and I've been sent to call you."

"Oh, very well!" said D'Arcy, with a sigh. "Thank you very much!"  
 "And when you get up," said Roberts, "I'd recommend you to put that moustache on a bit higher, young fellow—look!"

D'Arcy coloured crimson, and his head flew up to his moustache. It had been pushed nearly off by the pressure on the pillow. Robert chuckled.

"What's the game?" he queried.  
 "Hal Jove!"  
 "I won't give you away," said the lift-boy. "But what's the little game? Was it to make yourself look old enough for the job?"  
 "Yes, that's it. Pray don't mention it, dear boy!"  
 Roberts nodded.  
 "I'm afraid, old pal," he said, "that's all right. I'll bet you ain't much older than me, as a matter of fact. What?"  
 "Possibly not, dear boy," said D'Arcy. "I shall be much obliged to you if you will keep it dark about my moustache."  
 "Oh, that's all easy!"  
 Roberts left the bedroom, and D'Arcy rose and dressed. It was not yet "rising-bell" at St. Jim's, but evidently hotel employees were required to rise early. Arthur Augustus dressed in his interpreter's uniform, and carefully affixed his moustache, and descended into the great building. He passed a youth laden with newly-pebbled boots, which he was distributing at the doors of his owners, and came down into the hall. Mr. Pawker apparently was not yet down, but Plummer was there, very dignified and grim.  
 "Nice mess you got up in last, Mr. Interpreter?" he growled.  
 "Sorrow, dear boy," said D'Arcy politely. "What's the success?"  
 Mr. Plummer granted angrily.  
 "I've had a free's dance round the station inquiring for a camera?" he growled. "And the old one can't see lost one at all, from what they say. Ain't going to leather my 'ead about it any more—I can tell you that straight!"  
 "I wouldn't, dear boy."  
 "Don't you dissuade agin," said the porter sternly.  
 "Though he'll be worth for you if you do. Pawker will walk about it last night."  
 "Was he told me so," said D'Arcy meekly.  
 "He'll do more'n tell you so next time!" growled Plummer.  
 "And so will I, if you guess the job of toakin' to a Mough' Eretshan!"  
 "Is Signor Orvini down yet?" asked D'Arcy.  
 "No. You're to staver his bell when he rings," said Plummer. "Nobody else in the show can understand his language. You're to see wet he wants for breakfast."  
 "No, but when he rings," said Plummer.  
 "Thank you, Plummer!"  
 Plummer growled and turned away. D'Arcy had his breakfast before stairs, waiting in great anxiety for No. 13 to ring. He had to go through the ordeal, and he had to treat to look; but he could not help feeling peeved. He had thought it an excellent "device" to earn his living as an hotel interpreter. But the "device" was proving somewhat

The Great Linnæus—No. 209.  
 By MARTIN CLIFFORD.  
 Golden City.

rather than a cheque for him. So long as obscure foreigners talked to him only on the telephone, he felt that he could manage. But when they came to the hotel in person his difficulties commenced.

No. 48 rang at last, about half-past nine in the morning, and Arthur Augustus slowly and reluctantly took his way up to the apartment of the Italian gentleman.

He stood in the hall, debating in his mind whether he should return his ring, or bolt from the hotel, without claiming the salary already due to him for his labours as interpreter. As luck would have it, Mr. Pawker bore down upon him, at that moment. He waggled a fat forefinger at the dismayed interpreter.

"No. 48 is ringing," he said. "Answer the bell, and see what he wants, Robinson."

"Yes, sir," said D'Arcy.

"And he mounted the stairs. He tapped at the door of No. 48 with a beating heart. A voice replied from the interior:

"D'Arcy opened the door and entered.

The Italian gentleman was in bed. Evidently he followed in England the Continental custom of breakfasting in bed. D'Arcy carried his cap in his hand, but the Italian gentleman caught the word "Interprete" as it

"Interpreter!" he said.

"Just so, sir," said D'Arcy. "I mean, si, signore."

"Ah! la bacco!"

"Yes, sir. What do you want? Che volete?" asked D'Arcy.

The Italian gentleman looked at him stiffly. D'Arcy had asked the question in good Italian—what did he want? But considering his position as hotel interpreter, and the old gentleman's as guest, he should have adopted the polite form of address, in the third person—Che vuole Lei? But Arthur Augustus was only too glad to get the question out at all, without bothering about subtle distinctions.

"Dejeunare," said Signor Oresti; and that being a familiar French word, D'Arcy was at a loss. Besides, he had already guessed that the signor wanted his breakfast.

"Si, signore," he said cheerfully, "what will you have? Wabutsi and eggs, or fried fish, or kidneys and bacon?"

"Parlavo Italiano!" exclaimed the signor.

"Sowwy—I mean francese," said D'Arcy.

The signor snuffed. Apparently he was already beginning to have some doubts about the qualifications of the interpreter of the Hotel Royal.

"Cafe latte," he said, "ed il pane e bialino."

"Oh, dear!"

"Pane e bialino," repeated the Italian gentleman, "e cafe latte."

"Sweet Scott!"

"Caffee?" demanded the signor hotly.

"Yes. Cafe—that's coffee. What on earth is bialino?" murmured D'Arcy. "I dare say he means bread-and-butter. I know these blessed foreigners have nothin' but bread-and-butter for breakfast, as a rule, as they have nothin' fit to eat in their beastly continent! Lemme see—you want coffee and bread-and-butter!"

"Subbia!" snapped Signor Oresti.

"Oh, dear!"

"Is that something to eat?"

"Subbia!" shrieked Signor Oresti.

"Oh, but Jove, you're abtino!" said D'Arcy, with a shake of the head. "We haven't any left. There was a great demand for it yesterday, and we haven't a scrap left in the house. Is there anything else?"

"Cafe latte, subbia."

"Che cosa e abtino?" asked D'Arcy. "E qualche cosa di maturo?"

The Italian gentleman stared at him. Evidently he understood the question as to whether "abtino" was something to eat. He burst into a sudden roar of laughter.

"But Jove!" said D'Arcy; and he laughed, too. He laughed out of politeness, not quite seeing where the joke came in.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" echoed D'Arcy politely.

"Biete interprete?" demanded the Italian gentleman, pointing to D'Arcy's cap, which he held in his hand.

"Anno, Augustino roddio."

"Si, signore, come interprete," he answered.

"Interprete! Ha, ha!" exclaimed the abtino e qualche cosa di maturo? gestured the Italian gentleman. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"D'Arcy rubbed his nose thoughtfully. It was evident that "abtino" was not something to eat, at all events.

"E qualche cosa di bevuto?" he ventured.

The Italian gentleman simply shrieked. It was unnecessary to say more.

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for him to stover. Evidently "abtino" was not something to drink.

"But Jove, if it isn't anything to eat or drink, what does he want it for at breakfast-time?" murmured D'Arcy, in perplexity.

"Interprete," giggled the signor, "non e vero."

"D'Arcy knew that that meant that it was not true that he was an interpreter. Evidently the signor had found him out.

"Non parlate Italiana, voi!" said the signor severely.

"Si, sir," said D'Arcy. "La donna e nohbia."

"Ecco!" gasped the Italian gentleman.

"I don't notice any echo," said D'Arcy pointed.

"Per bacco!"

"Qual parte di vobro," said D'Arcy. "Mista d'acento, e di pastore!"

"E una aria!" gasped the Italian gentleman. "Pocher!"

D'Arcy guessed. It was clear that the words of a song would not do for Signor Oresti; he was not so easily satisfied as Mr. Pawker.

"Ecco," said the Italian gentleman. "Voglio dejunare—capite?"

"Si, si, signore!"

"Cafe latte, ed il pane, e bialino subbia. Tant de suite,"

said the traveller in French; and then D'Arcy understood. He knew that the word "de suite" meant "at once," and evidently "abtino" meant the same thing. He understood now why the Italian gentleman had looked when he asked whether it was something to eat or drink. Signor Oresti only meant that he wanted coffee and rolls and butter for his breakfast, and that he wanted them at once.

"Si, si signore?" gasped D'Arcy. "All right—I mean bialino. Subbia—all seems!"

And he stepped from the room. As he closed the door he heard the Italian gentleman chuckling, and repeating the word "Interprete" in the midst of his chuckles. Arthur Augustus descended, and gave the order for the Italian gentleman's breakfast with a great deal of dignity, thereby greatly impressing the staff in the regions below, as it proved that he did really and truly understand Italian.

## CHAPTER 15.

### The Return of the Wanderer.

THE interpreter of the Hotel Royal, Wayland, would gladly have avoided further inquiries with the Italian gentleman, but it was not to be. About an hour later there was a call for him.

"Interpreter!"

"Here I am!" gasped Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Che volete? What do you want? Pheasant?"

"The Euphrates is in the house!" growled Fitzroy.

"He's driven Mr. Pawker high raring; and you're wasted."

"But Jove!"

With lagging footsteps Arthur Augustus went into the bureau. Mr. Pawker was nodding and smiling to the Italian gentleman, who was talking in fluent Italian, much to the satisfaction of the hotel proprietor. Mr. Pawker gasped with relief as D'Arcy came in.

"Oh, here you are," he exclaimed. "Where have you been. He's waste wanting. Ask him what he wants! I suppose he's looking after that camera he lost in the train; but blessed if I can make head or tail of it!"

"Been giorno, signor," said D'Arcy. He could say good-morning most successfully.

"Been giorno," replied Signor Oresti; and he grinned as he looked at the interpreter. "Ah, ecco! Interprete! Ha, ha, ha!"

Evidently the signor remembered the interpreter's question that morning as to whether "abtino" was something to eat.

"Ahen!" said D'Arcy. "Il tempo e buono, signore."

"Si, sir. Ma dove e il telefono," demanded Signor Oresti.

"He wants the telephone, sir," said D'Arcy.

"Well, he can have that," said Mr. Pawker. "Don't see why he can't say telephone, instead of telephony. What does he want with the telephone?"

"Voglio parlare in telefono, sir," said D'Arcy.

The signor grinned again.

"Si, si. Dimmi il numero della scuola del dottore Olivero."

"Oh, sir."

"E numero della scuola."

"Squalido," murmured Mr. Pawker. "Who's a squalido? Is he talking about me, Robinson?"

"No," said D'Arcy. "Scuola means school in Italian."

"School? He ain't going to school at his time of life?"

"Il numero," repeated the Italian gentleman.

"Qual numero?" asked D'Arcy.

"Milla scuola del dottore Olivero."

D'Arcy jumped.

"Hobbes?"

"Si, si, si," rapped out the Italian gentleman, delighted at being understood.

D'Arcy stood blankly at him. The "scuola" that the



OUR

## Weekly Prize Page.

## A CHANGE OF DIET.

"Any complaints, orderly?" said the commanding officer.

"None, sir," replied the fornicator, "except the men would like some ribstuck."

"Very well; give it to them."

"Ere, corporal," said the orderly, a few minutes later, to the man in charge of the commissariat, "C.O. says as 'ov we can 'ave ribstuck."

"Right-oh!" said the corporal, and he proceeded to write it down.

"Ere—" he spoke snidely, then he rubbed it out.

"Ere—" he wrote on, and hastily abandoned that.

"Ere—" he wrote, in desperation. "Ere, dish it," he said, "you 'ave cabbage!"

"I can't make my living by my pen."

"I make a good living by my pen."

"Do you, too, write poems?"

"No; I keep pigs!"

## LIGHT AND SHADE.

A swirl of fans and cakes and newly-made loaves pervaded the shop as Mrs. Higgins entered, a businesslike old lady in caps and bonnet.

"Good-morning!" said she briskly. "Permit me to compliment you on the lightness of your bread!"

The baker rubbed his hands, and smiled benignly.

"Thank you, madam!" he remarked proudly but respectfully. "It is my aim to bake the lightest bread in this city."

The old lady, still businesslike and brisk, then put the clover on the mixing.

"Yes," she remarked; "and you do it. If it gets much lighter I'll want two of your pound loaves to weigh sixteen ounces!"

## TURNED TO ACCOUNT.

In the mountains of bene Scotland a kilted Highlander and an American were walking. In due course they came to a basin in the hills from which a wonderful echo could be obtained.

Having explained matters to the Yankee, the Scotman proceeded to demonstrate. He emitted a warlike shout, and after nearly three minutes the echo returned as per programme.

"Men," said the Scot, "ye can't show anything like that in your country."

But the American was not abashed.

"I guess we can," he replied. "Why, in my camp in the Rocky Mountains, when I go to bed I just poke my head out of the tent and shout: 'Time to get up! Wake up, boys!'"

"Yes!" gasped the Scotman.

"Eight hours later that echo travels back and wakes me!"

Magistrate (to prisoner): "If you were there for no dishonest purpose, why were you in your stocking-foot?"

Prisoner: "I 'eard there was sickness in the family!"

"As an artist, I suppose you assume to be indifferent to money?"

"No; I'm not indifferent. But I'm not sufficiently acquainted to attempt familiarity."

Siffness: "What do you consider the most delicate form of flattery?"

Cynic: "Telling a man, who can't see, that he doesn't look ill!"

The Penny Librarian.—No. 208.

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## PUT HIM RIGHT.

A fish-shop is not a place to joke about, especially when the weather's warm, but sometimes funny things happen even there.

The lad who came in walked up to the shopman.

"Ere, master," he remarked, "I wants a 'siddick!'"

The shopman eyed him.

"Finnan?" he asked briefly.

The lad eyed him in turn. He wasn't going to be done by a fishmonger.

"No. Pick 'em!" he replied curtly.

## IN OR OUT?

Faced with an anxious problem was the umpire. It was a village cricket match, and the man at the wicket was the umpire's landlaid. Luckily, many golden sovereigns were owing as rent.

Time after time the bowlers frantically appealed under the L.W. rule, but to each frantically appeal the umpire replied with a solemn, laconic:

"Not out!"

During the interval, however, the umpire's friends approached him gently but firmly.

"I say, Tom," asked one of them, "why don't you give that chap 'em?" Don't you see he keeps putting his legs in front of every straight ball?"

"Yes," replied the umpire, "I see, right enough, what he keeps doing. It's what he keeps saying that bothers me."

"What's that?" they chorused.

"Give 'em 'em, lad, and I'll get 'em in! Yes; I'll get the bowlers in!"

## THE FIRST ONE.

"Yes," exclaimed the newly-married woman to a bunch of her friends, as they sat round the tea-table, "for three months after our marriage my husband made me bake hot cakes for lunch at every meal!"

"And yet," chorused his friends, "your husband is a strong healthy-looking fellow."

"Well," asked the lady, "what about that?"

"Oh, the doctors say that such a diet is dreadful, and that—"

"But this husband is healthy. I was referring to my first," remarked the lady complacently.

## HER MASTER'S VOICE.

Business had detained the master of the house. Strictly speaking, it was three o'clock in the morning as he softly crept up the stairs, and everything was quiet and peaceful.

Carefully and noiselessly he opened the door of his bedroom, and crossed the threshold with the grace of an Indian on the trail.

Unfortunately, however, the family cat was enjoying a well-earned rest on the rug by the bedside, and the master of the house elected, under a misapprehension, to deposit the weight of his foot upon the feline's curled appendage.

Naturally, the feline uttered a shrill and obscene complaint, pouring sounds that awakened the mistress of the house.

This good lady sat up in bed, perturbed, but not at a loss.

"Frederic," she murmured, "don't you think it's a trifle late to be singing! The neighbours might complain, you know!"

Then Frederic nimbly ejected the musical manner, and deftly slid between the sheets.

## MONEY PRIZES OFFERED!

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### WHAT HAS HAPPENED.

Sir William Fawcett, Bart.—to give him his full title—is a slight, fair lad of twelve when he is first sent to "Fighting Greyhouse" by his guardian. His Fawcett-fellows in the Lower Fourth are considerably older than "Sir Billy," as the youngster is soon nicknamed, and he has to put up with a good deal of bullying. His great hero is Warden, the captain of the school.

Under the stern rule of Mr. Fawcett, the new headmaster, Greyhouse is growing sterner, and one memorable night, when the Head, with most of his staff, are absent for the evening, and Warden is on the sick-list, the school breaks out in open revolt.

Under the orders of a reckless Fifth-Form senior named Bannerman, the rebels barricade themselves in Big School, and resist all the attempts of Mr. Dodds and Hallow to dislodge them. When the Head returns, he is agnost at the state of affairs.

"Open this door!" he calls sternly, thundering at the door of Big School. "Do you hear me?" But neither sign nor sound from the rebels answers him.

(Read on, soon here.)

### A Masterly Evacuation!

At length a sporting young master, fresh from Cambridge, spoke up.

"If I may make a suggestion, sir," he said, "I think we had better leave them for the present. Possibly at daylight they'll think better of it, and steal off in their coats."

"But it is impossible," gasped the Head. "So think—to think that they should dare to defy me in this way! Bannerman," he went on, raising his voice so that those inside should hear him—"Bannerman, I understand you are in there. Open this door at once! I command you to!"

By way of a reply a shower of long-drawn, lightly exaggerated sneezes were produced by those within for the benefit of the masters without.

The Head turned pale. He had heard and read of rebellions in public schools, but never before had he had experience of the actual thing.

"I must ask you to be down for first school as usual," he said to the staff, "and then, if these boys are not in their places, we must take vigorous action. In any case I will make the ringleaders bitterly repent having acted in this outrageous manner."

At 7.30 A.M., when the masters repaired to their respective classrooms, they found that the rebellion was indeed a thing of substance and of fact. Only the Sixth and a feeble minority of the Lower School were present.

So a contest of war was held in the breakfast study. The young master fresh from Cambridge proposed beating down the door and bursting through the barricades; another suggested that a force of police should be summoned; a third proposed broadening laughter by uttering the word "Military"; and it was left to Dodds to voice a proposition which all accepted as most practical.

"I think," said he, "that we had better keep the matter

as quiet as possible. Calling in the police or the military would make us the laughing-stock of the whole neighbourhood. No; let us starve them out!"

"But I understood that they are well provisioned," said the Head.

"What they have now is fast very long," replied Dodds classically. "I'll give you a jar of Greyhouse appetites."

Which he was, for either had he carved until his arms ached from shoulder to wrist.

"What do you call 'very long'?" demanded the Head.

"Oh, three or four days!"

"Three or four days! Good gracious—they must have an enormous amount of food!"

"You see," explained Dodds, "I have an idea! Bannerman will put down on some ration. That if he doesn't stand them they'll get through what they have in one day."

"We will see," said the Head; "we can at least give your plan of campaign a trial. Dodds, meanwhile, choose, such as they are, will be held as usual"—an arrangement which the young master fresh from Cambridge found most agreeable, for, having no work to do himself, he obtained a kind holiday for the masters, whipped up as many of his colleagues as possible, and organised a Nigger match—Masters v. Sixth—which the masters easily won.

"It would have been very much the other way if we had been playing the Upper Fifth," observed that athletic young master, when "Tina" was called.

When the players returned they found that things were getting very lively indeed in Big School. The malcontents were kicking up a deafening row—singing, singing, and, as observed through a hole bored in the door, playing such vigorous games as leap-frog and "ball-in-the-ring." It was evident that Bannerman had set his men to these pastimes with the laudable object of keeping them warm.

After a time he stopped all promiscuous rumpings, and was seen drawing up his army as if for drill. Presently, when he had got the whole lot in a double line, he rattled off his orders in a sweet, military fashion:

"Form four—eight-wheel—quick march!" And as these poor-up Greys tramped up and down, they gave tongue to various stirring war-cries, what time Bannerman, at the head of his legion, blew furious blasts on a poverty trumpet which had been commissioned for the purpose from a musical junior. The wailing choruses proved most infectious, and it was with some difficulty that the fellows outside could refrain from taking them up. Thundered by all those voices, the songs fairly shook the rafters of Big School.

The sporting young master from Cambridge was strolling up and down the sphrag with Dodds and Hallow.

"Look here!" said the Captain. "If we can get in there the thing would be over. I dare say the majority are inclined to throw up the sponge, but Bannerman won't let 'em. Capture Bannerman, and the rest will surrender without striking a blow."

"Don't see why we shouldn't have a try," said Dodds, who, although he had advised the starving-out policy, was burning for more active warfare. "See here! Why not pick up desks outside the windows, just as they have picked

THE GEM LIBRARY—No. 250.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

them up inside! Then we should meet them at a certain level. Some of us might make a feat of sticking at the top end, and draw all the big fellows away from the bottom, which we could then rush with our main body."

Both the Captains and Hallam were much excited by the prospect of a hand-to-hand encounter, and suggested that if the Head's permission could be obtained, it would be as well to put the idea into practice.

The Head gave his assent unwillingly—but he gave it—and as soon as it was quite dark the mechanics set about building platforms of desks and forms from which to attack. This was effected at the top end with as much noise as possible, while at the bottom end everything was done quietly.

While the platforms were being constructed, the besieged kept up a continual marching and singing, giving all the popular ditties of the day a turn, and filling up intervals with mad whoopings and cat-calls. At these times appeared at the top windows, though hardly high enough to be recognized. Evidently the doings of the enemy at that end were being kept by Bannerman's orders, under strict surveillance.

Shortly before the platforms were completed the huge blinds with which the windows in Big School were provided were pulled down, thus rendering the darkness within doubly dark. Some covering was thrown over the door, effectually preventing any more spring from without.

Dodds knew Bannerman well enough to be sure he had some wily game on foot, and wondered what it might be. He had posted a fellow on the roof of the gym, to watch what he could of the proceedings; but when the blinds went down there was, of course, nothing to be reported from that point of vantage. Thus, though the besieged were undoubtedly in the dark, the besiegers were, too—as regards the tactics of the besieged.

"No hurry," said Dodds, when all was ready; "it won't be a bad plan to keep them in suspense. They may get careless, and think we are not so anxious to come on, and so we may catch them napping."

But although he spoke confidently, he had considerable misgivings as to the ultimate success of the manoeuvre he had planned. What was going on inside? What cunning preparations had been made to "receive hostiles?"

The singing and shouting, Dodds noticed, had during the last half-hour been diminishing in volume. It ceased as if they were doing their mouths by actions. Gradually and gradually the noise subsided, until at last all was quiet. Not a sound reached the ears of the storming brigade. The two parties were waiting to begin, but Dodds held them firmly in check.

At last—at last, after what seemed an interminable period, Dodds climbed softly on to the battlements under the top window, and, calling to those with him to follow, smashed the lower part of the window with a drill-stick, and charged the blind aside.

Not a movement on the part of those within—not a word, not a bow.

"Quiet," thought Dodds, and stepped back, fearing a trap.

At that moment one of the gymnasts employed on the playing-fields came up at a run.

"They're down there," he cried, "in the parlour, all yelling and shootin' like demons!"

"Where? In the parlour?" gasped Dodds.

"That's it. Ten minutes ago I saw some young gentlemen coloring the fields, and then there, and then a big crowd of 'em. I got behind the stable door an' watched. They went straight to the parlour and swarmed into it, and there they are now."

"By—by," exclaimed Dodds, "it's impossible! They couldn't get out of Big School!"

"Well, air, they have," returned the man; "of that I do assure you. If it's not them in the parlour now, I damn who it is, and, what's more, I recognized Mr. Bannerman's voice shouting orders to them."

The parlour, as Dodds knew, would easily hold the rebels. It was a big place, with a spacious balcony and chandelier.

"Well, sir," said Hallam, who was standing near, "it's quite easy to find out whether they're there or not by looking in Big School for them."

"It is," said Dodds, and getting cautiously over the jagged edges of the glass he had broken disappeared inside.

A few moments elapsed.

"Quite right," he shouted; "nobody here! Somebody got a light. Tell Cripps to turn on the gas again."

"Cripps did that this afternoon, sir," replied Hallam.

"Good! I'll light the gas—there—why—what—that an' that's this!"

The storming-party surged through the broken window, swarming many cuts in so doing, and soon all were by Dodds's side. And it was indeed a strange thing that they beheld.

### Bannerman's Stratagem.

Some few persons—and one of these must have been Bannerman—knew that Greyhouse possessed a subterranean passage, built in the old troublous days, when men had to hide in caves and secret chambers to save themselves from death by stake or axe.

Just such a passage as you may find in many ancient places, existed beneath the Greyhouse Monastery. It led to the street, which bounded one side of the playing-fields. The outlet was covered with bushes and grass, and from here, centuries ago, passed a haughty Catholic who had escaped to the sea coast, twelve miles away.

The entrance to this secret passage, as just a few persons at Greyhouse knew, lay precisely beneath the headmaster's desk in Big School.

Setting the fellows to march and sing, Bannerman and some others had gone to work and shifted the desk and platform, and then the planks beneath, thus exposing a yawning hole. And then, as steadily as drilled soldiers, the rebels had gone down into the hole and along that dark and grim underground way, illuminating the green with the candles they had procured from the parlor.

The passage was substantially built, and wholly free from debris. The bigger fellows had led the way, and the smaller had followed, and at length all successfully passed, in excellent order, from Big School to the opening by the river-bank, whence to the parlour was a few hundred yards run.

The masters and monitors gazed speechlessly at the hole's mouth, and Dodds merely shook his head as he admitted that Bannerman was indeed a Joe worthy of his steel.

"Well," he remarked, "I suppose now it must easily be a case of starting out. Wonder if they'll parley? We might propose terms that would prove acceptable to them. Who'll take a white flag?"

There was a junior standing near—no less a junior, indeed, than Sir Billy, whose friend Pansip was among the real-converts now safely housed in the parlour. Sir Billy had not altogether laid down his early reputation for being a bit of a "noble," and so he was one of those shut out of Big School. But Bannerman didn't know what he was leaving behind. Billy was worth his salt, and his keep, even in times of peace.

"Hullo, air, let me!" he said. Dodds turned round with a laugh, whereat Billy pointed, for his dignity was wounded. Dodds was always very quick to observe when he had lost the acceptability of a boy.

"Right you are," he said; "you shall, Travers. Of course, if they disregard the elements of war, and capture you, they'll put you on very short rations," concluded the master, with a smile.

But Billy was already knowing his handkerchief on a stick.

"I'm ready now, air!" he exclaimed. "What shall I say?"

"Ask Bannerman if he will come out and discuss terms with us."

"Yes, sir!" and Billy trotted off.

"Hi—stop!" cried Dodds; "they won't see you. Cripps must go with you, with a lantern."

The porter was fetched, but he did not appear to relish his task.

"Suppose the young varnishes lay hands on me!" he cautioned.

"They won't," replied Mr. Dodds. "Besides, you're going under a bag of truce. We shall follow at some distance just to see that you return safely."

Cripps got his biggest lantern, and gruffly told Billy to "follow."

"The ideal!" cried Billy with his chin up; "you follow us, Cripps. You're afraid, and I'm not, you see."

Then the white flag started on its errand of peace-making. The Head had told his colleagues to do whatever he thought best, so the party proposal was quite in order.

Followed at a distance by the masters and monitors, Cripps and Billy walked across the playing-fields, and halted within shooting distance of the parlour.

They had already been observed, and numerous clanks of truce came flying to meet them, many derisive voices directing them to "go back" unless they wanted to be fayed alive, and subjected to various other tortures.

"I think, sir," said the porter politely, "that we're getting a bit too close—and our dusk, too!" as a huge bit of dirt knocked his hat off. "They'll kill us far certain. Come back a bit, sir."

"Don't be such a hoarsey freak, Cripps," said the galloping leader of the white flag, as he waved the stick above his head. "Nobody would ever think you'd be a London policeman."

"I left the Force just as soon as ever I could," returned



Then the door was banged to and bolted, just as Dookie eagerly flung himself against it.

"Gentlemen," said Bannerman, addressing the three monitors, "if you give me a word of advice that you will not attempt to stir me, my word of advice. Furthermore, we hope to ask you to join us at supper, consisting of best Cadby cake, so soon as our six foragers arrive back from the village."

The three stoutish members of the Sixth gave their word, and were retained on parole.

"Now," said Bannerman, "all we can do is to sit on our benches and wait for the cake. Suppose we have a song, by way of keeping our spirits up! Mr. Wilkins, will you oblige?"

Wilkins was no other than one of the captured monitors, and those without experienced the unexpected pleasure of listening whilst he gave voice to a rollicking ditty for the benefit of his captors.

**The Police!**

Six breathless boys dashed up to Mother Cadby's cottage in Greyhound village, and without ceremony bolted her door with their toes and heels and fuses. Mother Cadby's was out of bounds, and because she was out of bounds, Greyhound delighted much in purchasing tack of her. Everything that she needed was home-made with a vengeance. Her cakes, puffs, tarts, and puddings, were large and soft and indigestible; but to the average Grey's stomach they were dreams of delight—they were so filling.

The school alone, situated in the upper playing-field, was supposed to provide most things in the way of tack; but to the possessed Grey it was, in point of size and taste, far below that procured by Mother Cadby. But, because she had given "tick," and encouraged fellows to mortgage their pocket-money, she—her cottage, so we have said—had been placed out of bounds. It was known that she had made a tidy penny out of the school. In the summer-time, she sold ginger-beer and tea and water-cress to pupils, but, the old dame was able to lead money occasionally at exorbitant interest. This habit of hers had come to the ears of the authorities, so that she was double, and, with good reason, barred from Greyhound custom. To deal with her meant an interview with the Head. Here, then, hammering at her door at ten o'clock at night, stood six candidates for a birching.

Mother Cadby had retired to bed; but the knocking on her panels brought her out of that snug retreat, with a curious snap of the two lock that still remained to her.

"What is it?" she asked, from the window.

"Come down, ma!" We want some cake!"

"Cake! The idea! Go away, and let an old woman have her lawful sleep!"

"If you don't open the door, we'll break it open!" observed Eddie, the leader of the party.

Mother was heard to make sundry observations of an uncompromising nature, advising dutifully to "the lor!" as a means of protection; but she probably saw her way to turning an honest penny out of her visitors—she had recognized them as Greys—for she slipped on her dress, yanked a shawl round her lean shoulders, and admitted them.

"Good old mother! Come on! All the cakes you have, and look sharp!"

"Thee man had given Eddie a couple of sovereigns. All the stuff you've got! Quickly! And this for it!"—displaying a gold coin.

"Oh, why didn't you tell me you was coming!" roared mother. "I'd have made a pile of things! As it is, I've not more than twelve shillings, and—"

"Out with them! Move about, mother, there's a darling! Move, you are looking pretty to-night! Got a sock, or something to put them in?"

"Oh, dear, don't worry, and I'll do what I can! Here's the shillings!"

With a scowl that clearly recalled the howl of a famished wolf on the approach of a plump traveller, one of the party made a grab at the money. Eddie thrust him back.

"Sneaky, mean; remember the other chap! We'll all start fair on them when we get back. Now, see, anything else? Leaves, meat, apples—anything?"

The result of this exhortation was that the foraging party fairly stripped mother's modest shop of everything it contained—no exception the rack and bedspreads. Mother charged them another sovereign for this clean sweep, and was taken to the jail at that.

When she had rusted out all her bags and baskets she prepared the articles for safe portage, and, at length, was able to close the door on her customers.

"It's dreadful thin as I mean you're up to," was her final speech to these—"murderin' the masters, and turning the school into a law-peddling, and it's a shame as a shame!" you I am, but a poor old woman must live.

The adventures six found themselves in the midst of a biting snowstorm. As they crossed the bridge, they heard the sound of voices beyond the curve of the hedgerow.

"Quick—hide!" whispered Eddie, and without hesitation the party concealed themselves in the nearest garden.

And not a moment too soon, for round the corner, with a steady swing, came twenty-four policemen. The Head had dispatched two sergeants at seven o'clock; this was the answer to one of them. They were constables from Bolton, a manufacturing town five miles away. A considerable force was always kept there, on account of the turbulent ways of the factory hands, so that on a snowy night, when all was quiet in the town, a couple of dozen men were easily spared.

They were tramping up from the station towards the main entrance of the school, and from the way their lanterns and talked it was again to be feared they anticipated an attack. A parcel of schoolboys—poor!—this would be a picnic.

Hardly daring to breathe, the six foragers watched them pass; then out of the garden, over a hedge, and swiftly along by the high palings which bordered the playing-fields. So cautious was their approach, and so thick the fall of snow, that they were undetected by the patrolling masters and monitors. Bannerman was awaiting their arrival anxiously enough by the locked panels.

"Hurrah! Here's the cake! By Jove, you've done your work well! Now, you chaps, stand back, and I'll deal out to each man his share."

Who to was they engaged, Eddie informed his general of the arrival of the police from Bolton.

"What! Bobbie! Oh, what a spree! We'll roll 'em in the snow, and bag their helmets. Lucky you saw them, by Jupiter! We'll be ready for them! Now, men, hurry up and finish the grab. The police have arrived, and they'll be at us in a few minutes."

The announcement thrilled the rebels with a burning desire for action. They were cramped, and cold, and longing for something to do. Bannerman hastily issued his orders.

"There's plenty of snow," he said, "so make snowballs, all you kids, and place them ready for us to throw. Break these ponds right out at the back. Never mind the rascally monitors—they won't hurt you. Now then, everybody begin. No stones, but make them as hard as you can. We'll greet them with a volley, and then rush 'em."

Everybody felt that the origin of the rebellion was at hand. There was to be a hand-to-hand fight—police, masters and monitors on one side; themselves on the other. The prospect was most warming in such chilly weather, and the kids worked with a will at the snowballs, finishing them off with a rotundity and a hardness which boded ill for the contestants in what they were to be shied at.

Nearly all the boys were in the pavilion, and they could all throw hard and straight. Throwing was an athletic practice teach in vogue at Greyhound. The pile of snowballs rose; the cold was such that there was no chance of their melting. Hats, stumps, sticks, and other weapons were raged hardy for use.

All was ready.

And now too soon, for as Bannerman was supervising the drawing of the balls which fastened down the shutters, the police entered the playing-fields and advanced through the foot-deep snow in the direction of the pavilion.

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"Lie low," said Hansmann. "When I give the word, whip up the station and let them have it hot!"

Suddenly and steadily the constables from Robert came up to the attack. They were headed by Dookie and an inspector. When the party was within a hundred yards of the pavilion it was joined by the patrolling constables and messengers, by Cripps, and by the other men-servants attached to Greyhouse. The Head, wrapped up to the eyes, watched the proceedings from a sheltered nook near the stable.

The strength of the attacking force could be clearly seen from the pavilion, the dark forms of the constables appearing black and bulky against the smooth marble of soon that lay around and about them.

The force was divided, the inspector leading one half, Dookie the other. With the exception of calling out the ordinary, this was the most stern measure that could have been taken under the circumstances. The Head was determined to quell the insurrection by striking a hard and sudden blow; but the police had been warned to be careful with their truncheons, using them, as far as possible, for defence only.

They advanced again—steadily, silently.

Fire, forty, thirty, twenty yards!

Up went the shutters simultaneously, and out flew a cloud of hard, compact, well-aimed shotballs!

This sudden fusillade was absolutely unexpected, and threw the attacking party into disorder. However gallant you may be, it is difficult to fight clear-headedly with an eye banged up and your mouth full of snow.

"Steady, my lad!" cried the inspector, but at that moment a scuffing-headed middle-aged man (under his right ear, and wet his staggering back into the arms of his men.

But the check in the advance was only temporary. Irritated beyond measure by the increasing shower of shotballs, the police rushed forward.

Then the flight of shotballs stopped as suddenly as it had started, and the rebels, headed by Hansmann, dashed out to meet the foe. The crash of the opposing bodies was tremendous, for the numerous Greys went for the police like bull-dogs.

Whack! Thump! Rap! Bang! went the drill-sticks and stumps against the helmets and coats of the constables. It was blow for blow, hand besighting and hand fighting—a small band of big men against a mob of boys. Shots rang out on the night air—cries of pain, yells of triumph.

Here you could see a burly policeman struggling with three boys, and there a master fighting manfully against over-whelming odds. A score or two of Greys were rolling about on the snow, having been roughly clutched and slung over by the muscular guardians of the peace, and all the time the banging and whacking and thumping went on with unabated force.

It was clear to the Head that his side was gradually getting the worst of it. How could it be otherwise? Two hundred against fifty—four to one!

Suddenly Hansmann's voice rang out, high above the din of battle:

"Back to the pavilion! They're barring us out!"

It was true! Dookie and Hallam had conceived the idea of closing down all the shutters and locking the door on the rioters, and were only just perceived in time.

Leaving thirty or forty of their number intricately mixed up with the attacking party, the main body of Greys retired hastily to their stronghold. Balken and Mr. Dobson, struggling heroically, were pitched out into the snow, the shutters were closed down and the bolts shot into their sockets. For a few moments the door was left open for stragglers, then that was shut.

The brief truce was at an end. The police had been too hasty and hattered to be in a mood to fight any more.

The inspector drew off his men, and Dookie his, taking the prisoners with them. Soon the fields were empty. There was no more patrolling. The assaults were fairly beaten.

"What next?"

"This was the question the victorious Greys put to themselves. At any rate, whatever happened, they were all in it."

"What next?"

All through the night, deep, shivering, miserable, but undaunted, the Greys watched and waited for a fresh attack.

But none came. The police had returned to Robert, and when dawn broke Hansmann and those with him found themselves apparently masters of the situation.

And now, how would it end?

(There will be another splendid long instalment of this grand new serial story in next Wednesday's issue of THE GEM LIBRARY. Will you please hand this special number on to a friend, so that he can read the story without waiting the first instalment.)

## A NEW FREE CORRESPONDENCE EXCHANGE.

The only names and addresses which can be printed in these columns are those of readers living in any of our Colonies who desire Correspondents in Great Britain and Ireland.

Colonists sending in their names and addresses for insertion in the columns of this popular story-book must state what kind of correspondent is required—boy or girl, English, Scotch, Welsh, or Irish.

Would-be correspondents must send with each notice two coupons, one taken from "The Gem," and one from the same week's issue of its companion paper, "The Magnet" Library. Coupons will always be found on page 2 of both papers, and requests for correspondents not sustaining these two coupons will be absolutely disregarded.

Readers wishing to reply to advertisements appearing in this column must write to the advertiser direct. No correspondence with advertisers can be undertaken through the medium of this office.

All advertisements for insertion in this Free Exchange should be addressed: "The Editor, 'The Gem' Library, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C."

A. Leslie, Semaphore Road, Exeter, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers in all parts of the world.

J. F. Spence, 254, Moorhouse Avenue, Christchurch, New Zealand, wishes to correspond with readers interested in conjuring.

F. Harrison, 8, Alloway Terrace, Richmond, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with girl readers living in the British Isles, age 16-17.

H. Tolfer, Lane Street, off Brazil Street, Beakins Hill, New South Wales, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers in Japan and exchange stamps.

L. A. Robbins, 50, Westoverland Avenue, Toronto, Canada, wishes to correspond with a girl reader living in England interested in stamps, age 15-16.

Miss J. F. Holt, 9, Fishbone Street, Altonwood, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with a boy-reader, age 12-13.

I. G. Hall, 684, Church Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, wishes to correspond with a reader interested in stamps, age 14-15.

R. McRae, 15, Arundale Street, Northcote, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers in England and Scotland, age 14-16.

H. B. Wess, Vermilion, Alta, Canada, wishes to correspond with readers of all countries other than Canada.

A. S. Murray, P.O. Box 432, Portico, Transvaal, South Africa, wishes to correspond with Miss G. Barry, of Melbourne, Australia.

Miss Marie Steward, Huxley, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with a boy reader living in England.

A. Howard, 28, Charlotte Street, Brantford, Ontario, Canada, wishes to correspond with readers.

Miss A. O'Leary, Weld Street, Blenheim, New Zealand, wishes to correspond with readers in all parts of the British Empire.

Sakay Arthur, 43, Rowe Street, Woodstock, Ontario, Canada, wishes to correspond with readers.

W. Rashby, care of Garney Bros, 385, Willis Street, Wellington, New Zealand, wishes to correspond with readers in Australia and South Africa to change postcards, age 15 and upwards.

G. S. Jarvis, 54, Bonland Avenue, Toronto, Canada, wishes to correspond with a girl reader living in England, age 15.

W. Stevens, 125, St. Patrick Street, Toronto, Canada, wishes to correspond with a girl reader living in British Isles, age 16-17. Will Miss Pat. H., of Northcote, write to W. Stevens regarding her League?

The Editor specially requests Colonial Readers to kindly bring the Free Correspondence Exchange to the notice of their friends.

OUR SPECIAL WEEKLY FEATURE



**For Next Wednesday.**

**THE SCHOOLBOY FIRE-FIGHTERS.**

*By MARTIN CLIFFORD.*

This grand, long, complete tale of Tom Merry & Co., of St. Jim's, deals with the formation of an amateur fire-brigade among the juniors, to whom the idea occurs as the result of a fire that burns out one of the studios. The scheme is taken up wholeheartedly, and the juniors carry on their training in workmanlike fashion, in spite of the occasional disturbances caused by the never-ending rivalry between the School House and the New Home at St. Jim's.

When called upon eventually, as they are, to do some real work at a big blaze,

**THE SCHOOLBOY FIRE-FIGHTERS.**

are given a chance to prove their worth, and well indeed do they stand the test!

**ANOTHER NEW COMPETITION.**

I have much pleasure in announcing that a new, easy, and really interesting competition will appear in next week's "Gem" Library, from which a vast amount of amusement and enjoyment may be obtained by all who enter for it. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the one and only swell of St. Jim's, has been finding it so difficult to obtain what he describes as "really waggish" manuscripts, that I have determined to appeal to my readers to design one for him which really will meet every requirement of Grassy's somewhat exacting taste. On one of the pages in next week's "Gem," therefore, my clerks will find that I have printed the outline of a waistrout. What I am asking them to do is to elaborate this bare outline of a garment into the most tasteful and attractive waistrout they can design.

The designs may be worked out either in chalk, paints, crayons, or ink, and I am offering a number of handsome cash prizes to those readers whose designs are, in my opinion, the prettiest and best worked out. Full particulars of this most interesting and diverting competition will be found on the "Waistrout" page next Wednesday.

**DO YOU KNOW THAT—**

**THE DEEPEST MINE** in the world is the Lambert colliery? It is 4,800ft. deep, and is situated in Belgium.

**THE LARGEST BELL** in the world is the Great Bell of Moscow? Its circumference at the bottom is over 50ft., and it stands well over 10ft. in height. In some parts it is as much as 2ins. thick, and, although it has never been rung, its weight has been computed to be 455,700lbs.

**THE LONGEST WALL** in the world is the Great Wall of China—the Chinese Wall? It was built as a protection against the Tartars, and was completed during the reign of the first Emperor of the Tsin Dynasty, is about the year 220 B.C. It measures 1,200 miles, stretching which distance it passes completely round the northern boundary of China, over some of the highest hills, through some of the deepest valleys, and over other natural obstacles, such as are to be found only in Eastern countries.

The total height of the wall, including a 5ft. parapet, is 25ft., and it is 25ft. thick at the bottom and 12ft. at the top.

**THE LONGEST SUSPENSION BRIDGE** is the one crossing from New York to Brooklyn? It is 5,200ft. in length, and its main span is 1,585ft.

**THE TALLEST TREES** in the world are the Californian mammoth trees? According to a recent survey the height

of a certain tree in the county of Tulare, California, was 276ft., and its circumference at the base 366ft., whilst 120ft. above the ground it was 7ft.

Trees above 350ft. in height and 36ft. in circumference are quite common in California.

**THE GREATEST CITY** in the world is London, with a population of over 5,000,000!

**THE GREATEST WAR** for the last 120 years was the one between France and England, that started in 1793 and terminated in 1815! The expenditures of this war was 1,250 millions of pounds, and 1,800,000 lives were lost!

**THE HIGHEST LIGHTHOUSE** in the world is one built at Hell Gate, near New York? It stands 295ft. out of the sea, and has 10 electric lamps, each of which are of 6,000 candle-power.

**THE HIGHEST LIGHTHOUSE** in England is the one known as the Eddystone? It is quite a "sledge" in comparison to the Hell Gate Light, being only 86ft. high.

**THE BIGGEST MOUNTAIN RANGE** is the system known as the Himalayas! It is situated in the Eastern countries of Tibet and Hindostan. This range has a length of over 1,500 miles. Strange to say, this mountain range possesses the

**THREE BIGGEST MOUNTAINS** in the world. They are Mount Everest, 29,000ft. high; Mount Goodwin-Austin, and Kanchenjunga Mountain, both of whom are nearly 28,000ft. in height.

**THE LONGEST RIVER** in Europe is the Volga? This river is also the chief Russian river. It rises in some hills called the Valdais, and after a "run" of 2,400 miles it enters the Caspian Sea.

It is a very great river for fish, and contains innumerable storpees.

**THE LARGEST BODY OF FRESH WATER** in the world is Lake Superior? Its area is the same as Iceland—31,200 square miles. It is 500ft. above the level of the sea.

THE EDITOR.

**WHERE THE "TERRIERS" ARE ENCOURAGED.**

Messrs. Ridge-Whitworth, Ltd., of Coventry, manufacturers of the well-known Ridge-Whitworth Bicycles and Ridge motor bicycles, have set a splendid example to other large employers of labour by a sympathetic co-operation with their workpeople in assisting them in their duties as members of the Territorial Force.

In all their factories and offices—and their pay-roll covers over 1,500 hands—notices are posted as follows:

1. Staff.—Members of the staff at present entitled to one week's holiday at full pay will be allowed an extra week's holiday at half pay to make up the fortnight required for the annual training.

If an additional week's holiday is required, it may, if the state of work permits, be granted, without pay, on written application being made to the management.

2. Workmen.—Workmen on the regular pay-roll will be allowed leave of absence for the fortnight's training, and will be paid the rate of £1, as a grant from the firm towards their last dues, providing they have made themselves offered by number of drills.

This is a distinct step in the right direction, and Messrs. Ridge-Whitworth are to be congratulated on the liberal way in which they treat their employees. The country is bound to benefit by the enthusiasm and efficiency of their Territorials.

# READ THIS GRAND STORY!



"Drop that chair, do you hear? Or I'll shoot you down like a dog!"

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. The Pickpocket.

"**H**I, you, Tom?" A shabby, greasy-looking individual, clad in an ill-fitting frock-coat, whose silk hat was battered and shiny, and had been "sweated" to brown and lying up to the mark, and whose bushy-tufted hair had too much powder upon it, passed amidst the crush about a shop window in Piccadilly Circus, and spoke to an ill-dressed lad who held a box of wax matches in his hand—matches which he had been trying to sell as he wandered along the gutter.

The boy looked quickly up into the face of the shabby peddler man.

"Well," he queried gruffly.  
"Keep your papers skinned," said the man, addressing the boy, but turning his attention elsewhere. "Sam, and Bill, and George are all about here, as well as some of the 'lads.' We'll start business in a minute."

The lad made a grimace, and eyed his companion up and down.

"Got up to kill, ain't you?" he said. "You look a lot of the left, you do, I don't think. Why, if I was a 'cog,' I'd run you as an exception. You can't marry the tops, Jim. You look as if you were fit for leaning in a four-hole bar in a corduroy, and not 'sloping' in Bond Street or Piccadilly. We'll get chaff!"

"Same's yours," answered the shabby-greased individual, with a grin. "The Times's Kitchen, Viper Row, East, where we'll meet to-night, and there set the spell. Picked any pockets yet?"

If this then be in the shabby frock-coat had been against a private show, and had it a cigarette. The boy stood by his side, with his back half turned to him. They spoke in semi-whispers, and it would have taken a most observant man to have detected any movement of their lips as they spoke to one another. They had need for this awful secrecy, for both the man and the boy belonged to the public (?) order of thieves.

As the shabby-greased individual put the question to his companion, the boy frowned, and his eyes assumed a certain expression.

"No," he said emphatically. "and I don't intend to."

"Hi!" observed the other. "You're looking out for trouble. You know what Big George told 'er? He's told you over and over again that if you don't turn your noses to something, that he'll eat you—and he's capable of keeping his word."

"Same's I," returned the boy calmly. "And I don't pick no pockets to slobby him or anybody else."

"Obared you get in the matches then?" asked the longer man.

"They was given me by Ginger Dick," answered the boy. "I didn't ask him where he got 'em from. There's the

# A FIGHT FOR FREEDOM!

A Splendid, Long  
Complete Tale.

— BY —  
**ARTHUR S. HARDY.**

was on the box. They came from a shop in Fleet Street, the picked 'em, of course, but I didn't ask any questions."

"And you're trying to turn an honest living—selling of 'em?" asked the shabby-greased fellow, with a grin.

"No," answered the boy, his eyes flashing with a dangerous light. "An honest a living as ever I'm likely to get with 'em mixed up with your gang of thieves. But I don't want to go on 'em that far over. My heart isn't in it. I can't pick a pocket; I won't pick a pocket. They can skin me after for it, but I won't do it."

The man smiled, but there was about a look of pride in his eyes as he looked now at the stern and not unkind-looking features of the ragged fellow.

"They will skin you, Tom," he said. "Big George told me that if you brought nothing back to headquarters to-night, he'd have a fine rowing with you."

The boy squared his jaw. "He can do what he likes," he muttered. "I don't care for Big George any more than I do

for you, Jim, and I ain't afraid of nobody!"

Jim spluttered his teeth about the dirty collar he wore, and then fished a pair of greasy smocks gloves from out of his pocket.

"Right on, Tom!" he said. "Meanwhile I can cut two or three well-dressed lads whether it be fancy window shows. I'd see what they're made of. Just stand by and be prepared to catch hold of any valubles I may hand to you. There's one or two nice pieces about I don't like the look of. It's ticklish work. I may have to make a bit of it."

Tom nodded, and the pair moved off, edging his way in amongst a group of well-dressed women who pressed towards the window of a big draper's shop, to obtain the beautiful things which were displayed there.

The boy edged away to the left, and stood with his hands thrust into his trousers' pockets, watching the movements of the crowd with keen, observant eyes.

Presently a smartly-dressed, clean-shaven man of powerful build outstepped past him, and as he went by he flung a critical look at the boy. Tom eyed him from top to toe.

"A 'lee," he muttered to himself. "Jim and there as are going on the case may get themselves into trouble this afternoon if they don't look out."

How was it the boy came by his judgment? It is difficult to say. There was nothing about this well-dressed man who had passed to betray his calling. He was dressed as many another man might be. The boots he wore were patent. The stick he carried was one of Sangster's best.

But the boy Tom knew the man instinctively for what he was, and he saw toward his eyes anxiously on the crowd to search for the shabby-greased Jim, who certainly did not look what he represented himself to be.

Jim was there, right in the midst of the well-dressed crowd of straggling ladies, and Tom knew that Jim was having a sight rowal time. Jim was a debt collector. His fingers by this time had strayed into half a dozen pockets. He was sampling here, and sampling there, in the hope of coming upon a prize. Tom quickly looked around. There did not seem to be any other plain-clothes police-officers on the look-out for the needle-fingered maintenance, and Tom hoped that Jim would not get himself into trouble, for, with all Jim's blarney—and he had many—he was not a bad chap at heart.

Suddenly Tom heard the danger-signal—a woman's scream. There was an instant contraction about the shop-window, the women parted to right and left, and Jim, trying to look unincumbered, snatched from the group.

It occurred at first that he would get close away; but he had but covered a dozen yards before a shrill, wailing voice cried out:—"Stop him! Stop that man! Don't let him get away!"

Jim gave his frock-coat a hitch, and quickened his stride. He moved gradually, and in quite a natural way, to the spot where Tom stood, apparently indifferent to anything that

the passing around him. Tom detected a sign, quickly given and understood, and prepared to act on it. As the shabby-looking individual came up to him, there was a quick movement, and a paper was thrust to Tom, which the boy caught, turned inside the palm with a flick of the hand, and at once conveyed into his pocket.

The man, the shabby-looking, broke into a grin. Tom, who himself remained standing on the curb, and began to smile.

"Stop him! Stop him!"

The cry increased in volume until they became a shout. Men commenced to run here and there. The shabby-looking man's eyes suddenly brightened—brightened with a dangerous light, and his discolored countenance hardened. He realized that he would need all his wits, courage, and muscles to escape capture, and he had one of two little tricks and lesser valuables in his pockets which he would not like the police to find there.

Men commenced to run after him. The group of women standing before the window of the draper's store were suddenly attracted with interest, and the two who had reddened with scorn, almost falling into the arms of another female smiling there.

Tom's quick eye took in all the details of the scene, but it was his shabby-looking man who the master of his fate had watched Jim's progress with the loaves of bread. He saw Jim, running swiftly, now approach the corner of Air Street, and then he saw the figure of the man he had marked down as a detective a minute or so before, dart out, and wear down of Jim. There was a quick, sharp struggle, the two went down full length in the dusty road, almost falling under the wheels of a passing taxi-cab, and, with a scowl and a defiant shout, the number five, going off at the rear, crossed amongst the flying traffic, disappeared down a court by the side of St. James's Church, went thence into Jeremy Street, doubled back, and trotted by himself alone down here, and was presently safe and sound.

Tom kept up his whistle. It was of no use for him to lag the passing pedestrians to buy a box of matches of him now. There was his hawk's callowest way the robbery for that.

Tom had passed beyond the group of men and women who surrounded the lady who had been robbed, and was about to walk quickly away, when the sound of her sobbing struck his ear. Tom halted, then turned, came back, and passed his eye in the least of the crowd which had gathered about the unfortunate woman.

Tom looked kindly at her. He saw a well-dressed young woman of about two or three-and-twenty, with a lovely face, whose expression was covered now by the tears which would fall despite all her efforts to restrain them.

Tom's heart began to swell. He saw she was a beautiful lady as she drifted by, her parasol raised in the first place, and they looked so different from the rough, coarse women to see in the habit of seeing in the neighborhood of Vapor Row.

A well-dressed man was trying to console Jim's cousin. A policeman who had just come up had taken out his notebook, and was preparing to make some notes about the theft.

The women standing about were busy explaining to one another what had happened, and how they supposed the robbery had been accomplished. Tom didn't care a rap about any of them, but all the same, he wouldn't take his eyes off the beautiful lady's distressed face, and his own heart beat fast with a kind of sympathy for her.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Tom Restores the Purse to the Lady.

"I WOULDN'T mind so much," she said, drying her eyes with a careless handkerchief, "if the money in the purse had been mine. But it wasn't. It didn't belong to me. I was out out to purchase some things with it, and to take some bills, and my friend to whom it belonged is gone—so gone that she cannot afford to lose it. Oh, what shall I do?"

The policeman scratched in his notebook.

"It's afraid, lady," he said, "but you need my good love for this concern. Even if we succeed in capturing the thief, he should there will be little hope of getting the cash back. But there's much in the purse?"

"Yes," answered the lady. "There was more than twenty pounds."

"Any other valuables? Anything remarkable? Anything the police might be able to trace?"

Jim's cousin hesitated.

"There is a ring," she said, above a pause, "which I should not like to lose. It is not worth much, but I should value

to it beyond all else I have in the world. It belonged—well, not really to me—belonged—to it belonged to a dear, dear father of mine who is dead. I—I—well, the thing may mean more to me—I would not lose it for anything. I—I—"

"Madam"—the police-constable spoke politely—"will you let us look at it to come with me to the police-station and give a full description there?"

"I—I don't think so," she began; but she got no farther, for this was the moment Tom chose for his intervention.

He had listened to what the lady had to say with every interest. He had looked her up and down, and had noticed with what care she had patched and mended her dress, to what pains she had put herself to try and make an old and worn pair of boots look as smart as new ones, how she had trained a messenger hat into a winter one by the simple process of covering a straw foundation with black velvet, and by placing a leather or two about the crown.

Yes, Tom had noticed all these details, but no doubt, to everyone else standing there. But then Tom had been educated in a sharp school, and there was little that escaped his attention one way or another.

And when the lady had to say good to his heart, finding a responsive echo there.

Tom's part was wrapped in mystery. He knew not who his father was, and had never known a mother's loving care. He had grown up amongst the East End slums, and his companions had been thieves and masters and down-trodden folk—people like the shabby-looking Jim, but although he had had been out on thorny paths, there was a heap of good in Tom.

He observed such a lady as the pretty creature who stood before him now, and as he heard her speak about the ring which had belonged to her dead sister, and which she prized beyond all else she had in the world, Tom came to a decision upon which he acted now.

"Lady," he said, touching his rough cloth cap with his left fore-finger, "I've got your purse. That thief didn't get away with it. He was frightened, I suppose. Anyway, when he started to run he dropped it, and I picked it up. Here it is."

And Tom, who had filled the silver-mounted leather purse out of his pocket a moment before, held it out for the astonished lady to take.

She uttered an exclamation of delight at sight of it, and then looked at Tom.

She saw an honest lad, with features well-to-doed features, whose countenance was cast down at her, and she smiled.

How good-looking the stranger had now, she thought, and what a contrast there was between the kindly look of his kindly stranger, blue eyes and the hardened line of his lips, and the appearance of his face!

She took the purse.

"Oh," she cried, her face beaming, and the colour coming back to her cheeks, "is it possible! My purse! And you found it! Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

Tom eyed her solemnly.

"No cause to thank me, lady," he said gravely, "I only did my duty. Would you mind opening the purse and seeing if the money is all right, and whether that ring you spoke about is there?"

She eagerly stood upon the suggestion, unlocked the mouth of the purse with her dagger, knotted fingers, and studied its contents. She rapidly counted the money, and discovered the little ring nestled in the inner pocket.

"There is nothing missing," she cried joyfully, as she filled in the well for some silver, and then brought two half-crowns out for Tom to take.

"No, thank you, lady," said Tom, his eyes glowing dull; "I don't want no reward, I only did my duty."

"But you might bring me away with the purse," she said, smiling now. "You are poor. It isn't easy, but would have returned it."

"I think so, lady," answered Tom, looking around him for an opening through which to make his escape. "I won't have any reward, thank you. I believe me."

What happens to Tom? What does Big George, the bully, do when Tom returns to the "Grove" den? You can continue this splendid complete tale by reading "A Fight For Freedom," by Arthur S. Hardy, in the issue of "The Penny Popular," now on sale (Number 23). This issue of our new complete paper also contains a complete story of Saxon Blake, detective, and a splendid long-continued school tale dealing with the adventures of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Paul's, by Miss Gifford.