

**TOM MERRY & CO. IN LONDON!**

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**THE GREAT ST. JIM'S RAG!**

(A Screamingly Funny Incident from the Grand Long Complete Story of the Chums of St. Jim's inside.)

# EDITORIAL.

My Dear Chums.—

We all know what feuds will accomplish—on the good side, of course, for the really bitter feud, which, by the way, is generally about just nothing at all, is one of the worst, and also the silliest things out. But the steady rivalry which exists between the School House and the New House at St. Jim's, is distinguished by real good feeling in the main, and not a little romance.

I have some fine yarns coming in which this subject is tackled with all Mr. Martin Clifford's piled-up tact and skill. The author is the chronicler of it all, and M.C., otherwise Martin Clifford (the letters also stand for Master of Ceremonies, and that fits in well), is a positive conjurer at giving the real scene, and making his tales hum with life.

Feuds at St. Jim's are, broadly speaking, as cheery affairs as the disputes in the jolly old days when knights were bold, and supped together afterwards when the fighting was finished with for

the day. And then, there were many sound, useful things born of feuds between good fellows, which come back in later years, and leave a mighty pleasant spirit behind them, just because of the friendship cemented through the misunderstanding.

But all that is putting the cart before the horse. There are studies at St. Jim's which risk horrible conflagrations just because of the smouldering resentment entertained by the residents against certain cads. For we have cads at St. Jim's, as in everywhere else. Luckily, also, we have Tom Merry, and Tom Merry, a fellow who can win a tenner at a professional boxing-show, is not to be sneezed at.

To oblige me, keep your eye open for the new serial, "The Valley of Surprise." The title fits the yarn like a glove. I know, from scores of letters I receive, that a great number of my readers like real adventure serials. Never listen to people who take a "fed-up" view about exploration, and declare there is nothing

else wonderful to be explored in the world. The more that is discovered, the more there is left to be found out.

As you will observe, the usual strong features are booming along in the old paper in great style. Under Tom Merry's capable editorship, the "St. Jim's News" is steadily bringing in new readers. Naturally, the supplement cannot do everything. When one gets requests, as I did this week, to supply lists of all the boys at the school, one feels one is up against a sheer impossibility. We cannot say catalogues, and so we must hang this matter up, as the paperhanger says.

You will find this number right up to the knacker, as the saying is. If some of my chums find that I have not so far fallen in with their ideas as regards new features, that is merely because of lack of space. But keep your eyes on the "Gem," and get next week's number early, before they are all sold out!

YOUR EDITOR.

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# Tom Merry & Co.'s Trip!

A Grand Long Story of the Chums of St. Jim's, telling of their unexpected visit to London. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

## CHAPTER I. Startling News!

"YAW-AW-AW! I'm tired!"  
Thus Tom Merry, the captain of the Shell Form at St. Jim's. Manners and Lowther his chums, blinked wearily at their leader.

"You're not the only one, Tommy!" said Manners. "I'm feeling as drowsy as I can be."

"Blessed if I know how to hang together!" said Monty Lowther. "Give me a gentle knock, Tommy, just to liven me up."

Bliff!  
Tom Merry obligingly raised his foot, and planted it forcibly in the rear of Monty's person.

"Yaroooooh!" howled Lowther. "I didn't tell you to do that, you ass!"

"Well, you wanted livening, didn't you?" chuckled Tom Merry. "Besides, we're just going down to footer, and I thought a little practice thrown in wouldn't do me any harm. Never mind, Monty. Let's go along and dig out those Fourth Form asses."

The Terrible Three went along the Fourth Form passage. They were dressed in footer garb, and, despite a little heaviness about their eyes, they looked the picture of healthy boyhood.

It was Wednesday afternoon, and the School House were playing a House match with Figgins & Co., of the New House. The time for kick-off was almost due, and Tom Merry, the skipper of his side, was collecting his men together.

"Blake and the others ought to be ready," he said, with a frown. "Perhaps they've got that tired feeling we are suffering from. But footer's footer, and they mustn't slack."

The Shell fellows kicked open the door of Study No. 6 in amazement, for their eyes encountered a strange spectacle.

Jack Blake, Herries, Digby, and D'Arcy were sprawled in various attitudes all over the study. Their eyes were closed, and their chests heaved with deep breathing.

Heavy snores echoed through the room. The chums of Study No. 6 were all fast asleep. Tom Merry gasped.

"My only hat!" he ejaculated. "The—the lazy bouncers! Why, they aren't even in footer togs! Here they are, snoozing! Snoozing, mind you, when they're expected down to footer!"

"It's the giddy limit!" said Monty Lowther.  
Tom Merry strode forward and stirred Blake, who was lying in an ungraceful attitude in the armchair, with a cricket stump.

"Grooooooh!" muttered Blake sleepily.  
"Wake up, slacker!" said Lowther, digging Herries in the ribs.

Snoor-r-re!  
The chums of Study No. 6 were certainly very much asleep.

Tom Merry inserted the business end of a pin in Blake's calf. Blake kicked out, and his foot caught Tom Merry in the chest. Then he leapt from the chair, and both collapsed on the floor together.

"Yooooop!" roared Tom Merry.

"Yow-ow-ow!" moaned Blake, sitting up dazedly and rubbing his calf. "Wh-what was that?"

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

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was awakened by the simple expedient of pouring water down the back of his neck. The noble swell of St. Jim's struggled up with a series of gasps.

"Goooooh!" Lowthab, you howlid beast—"  
"Get up, lazybones!" said Lowther, wagging an admonishing forefinger at D'Arcy. "This is footer-time, not bed-time, remember!"

"Bai Jove! I'm all wet and howwid!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "Lowthab, I shall have no othah vresource but to give you a feahful thwashin'!"

"Oh, pas, Gussy—pas!" implored Lowther. "We're in a frightful hurry to get down to footer."

"Gweat Scott! I had forgotten all about that, deah boy!"

Tom Merry, with an exasperated snort, whirled Herries off the chair on to the floor. Herries woke up with a howl.

"Yaroooooh!"

"The same treatment for Digby!" said Tom Merry grimly.

"We can't allow this slacking in the ranks!"

"Ooooooh!" wailed Robert Arthur Digby, as he smote the study floor with a terrific jolt.

The chums of Study No. 6, now awake, stood up and glared at the Terrible Three.

"You set of slackers!" said Tom Merry severely. "Had you forgotten we've a footer match on with Figgins & Co.?"

"Great pip! So we have!" exclaimed Blake, rubbing his eyes.

"Well, I'm jiggered! Fancy us all going off to sleep like that! Blessed if I can understand it! There's no heat to make us drowsy—in fact, the weather is rather chilly. It's jolly queer!"

"Yaas, wathah!" said D'Arcy, polishing his monocle. "I'm afraid we were all drowsy, and forgot all else, Tom Mewwy, deah boy."

The Terrible Three glared.

"Well, buck up and get into your footer rig-out, you lazy cuckoos!" said the School House skipper. "I expect Figgins & Co. will be waiting for us."

"Great pip! So we have!" exclaimed Blake, rubbing his eyes.

"Well, I'm jiggered! Fancy us all going off to sleep like that! Blessed if I can understand it! There's no heat to make us drowsy—in fact, the weather is rather chilly. It's jolly queer!"

They arrived on Little Side in time to see a weird procession come up. Figgins and Kerr, of the New House, were carrying a stretcher between them. On that stretcher lay a fat figure in an attitude of repose.

Suore! Snore! Snore!

Fatty Wynn—for it was he on the stretcher—was slumbering noisily. His untuneful snores awoke the echoes. Redfern, Owen, and Lawrence followed behind, grinning.

"My only sainted aunt!" exclaimed Tom Merry, in astonishment. "What the merry dickens—?"

"What's up with Fatty?" inquired Blake.

"Figgins and Kerr stopped."

"The fat bouncer was tired, and refused to come down to footer," he said, "so we fetched out this giddy thing from the Scouts' store-room, shoved him on it, and fetched him down. Just gaze at the image! He's as fast asleep as though he were in bed!"

Snoor-rrr-rrr!

Figgins and Kerr upturned the stretcher, and pitched their plump chum on to the turf. Fatty kicked sleepily, gave a grunt, rolled over, and then slumbered on!

The other juniors gazed at the Falstaff of St. Jim's in considerable amazement.

"Well, carry me home to die, somebody!" gasped Figgins.

"He—he's actually asleep still!"

Fatty Wynn, reclining on the grass, snored away discordantly. The others chuckled.

Redfern picked up a water-hose with which Taggles had been watering the hedge near by. Monty Lowther obligingly turned on the water, and Redfern sent a strong stream of wetness all over Fatty.

Sizz-zzz-zzz!

"Yerrugh! Yah! Ooooooh!" howled Fatty, jumping up with amazing suddenness. "Wharrer you up to, Groooh! Keep that lumatic off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Are you awake now, Fatty?" inquired Redfern.

"Yoooooh! Yes, you ass! Grooooooh!"

"Oh, good egg!"

Monty Lowther turned off the water. Fatty Wynn mopped at his wet hair, and glared at his grinning chums.

"You—you blitherers!" he shouted. "Can't you let a fellow rest? I'm tired out! But still, if I must play footer, I suppose I'd better. Stop that silly cackling, you burbling cuckoos, and let's get on with the washing!"

"Haven't you had enough of the washing, Fatty?" inquired Monty Lowther sweetly.

"Oh, rats!" said Fatty Wynn crossly.

The juniors chuckled, and went on to the footer ground. Soon both teams were assembled. Tom Merry and Figgins tossed for ends, and the New House Captain won. He elected to play with the wind.

North of the Sixth, who had consented to act as referee, blew his whistle, and the match commenced.

Tom Merry and his fellow forwards attacked hotly, but Figgins & Co. were equally game. A sharp struggle ensued in mid-field. The School House fellows strove hard to drive the ball down into the New House territory. They found it a more difficult task than they had expected. Consequently the backs and the goalies had little, if nothing, to do.

Suddenly, Tom Merry captured the ball in a break-away, and swept down the field with it. Figgins, long of leg and fleet of foot, charged him, but too late. The ball went over to D'Arcy. Gussy saw Owen coming to him, and headed the ball to Talbot, who in his turn passed neatly to Tom Merry.

It was a splendid exhibition of a team working in unison. Tom Merry, with the opposing forwards beaten, took the ball down the field in grand style. He slithered past the half-backs, and then Figgins gave a yell.

"Reddy! Lawrence! Look out!"

But the backs did not appear to hear. Dick Redfern and Lawrence were seated on the grass, and appeared to be peacefully slumbering. Tom Merry whipped by them with the leather.

"Fatty!" shrieked Figgins. "Fatty—look out!"

But Fatty Wynn did not look out. The corpulent goalkeeper was leaning against the left post, his arms folded, his eyes closed, and there was a serene, placid look on his plump face. Fatty was slumbering again!

Biff! Tom Merry took an easy shot, and the ball rolled into the net. There was a roar.

"Goal!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

George Figgins rushed up to Redfern and stirred him with his boot. Redfern jumped up, rubbing his eyes.

"Great Scott! Have I been asleep?" he gasped.

"Asleep? How could I be asleep?" Of course you have! Asleep on the footer field, mind you! Get up, Owen! I—I'll murder you!"

Owen jumped up, yawning and stretching himself. "Yaw-aw-aw!" he exclaimed. "Goodness knows what possessed me to go to sleep!"

Figgins strode over to Fatty Wynn, grasped that fat youth's snub nose between forefinger and thumb, and tweaked it.

"Yaroooogh!" roared Fatty, returning to the land of harsh reality. "Leggo by dose, you rodder!"

"I've half a mind to wring your neck!" howled Figgins, shaking a brawny fist at the sleepy goalkeeper. "Do you know you've let a goal pass while you've been snoozing?"

"Oh, Jimmy! Excuse me!" Fatty, blinking, returned.

Figgins strode back to the centre line, breathing threats of battle, murder, and sudden death to any of his team found slumbering again.

Play was resumed, and this time Figgins & Co. took the offensive.

There was a Spartan struggle, after which the dogged New House leaders broke through. Then it became apparent that the School House defenders were looking sleepy and tired. Reilly came to attack Kerr, but his charge had only half its power. Kerr slipped past easily, and Reilly was left rubbing his eyes and yawning.

"Buck up, Lowther!" roared the School House fellows round the ropes.

Monty was running to capture the ball, but his movements were slow and heavy. He lurched clumsily up to Kerr, missed, and flopped to the ground. There he lay, and, after a few prodigious yawns, went right off to sleep.

Next minute Kerr had kicked the ball, and there came a delighted yell from the New House juniors.

"Goal!"

Tom Merry looked deplete.

"The dearest dick in the matter with us all this afternoon!" he exclaimed. "I'm having a jolly hard job to shake off my drowsiness. There must be something in the air. Wake up, Monty! What's the matter?"

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"Yaw-aw-aw!" said Lowther, rising slowly to his feet and rubbing his eyes. "I feel tired out! Yaw-aw-aw!"

Play was resumed, but the players appeared to be all suffering from drowsiness. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was offside, and everybody noticed it. But the referee's whistle did not sound. They looked at North, and saw him sitting on the touch-line, nodding.

"Great pip!" gasped Tom Merry. "The—the giddy referee's going to sleep! It's amazing!"

The players all crowded round the touch-line.

"Look here," said Figgins. "I reckon the best thing to do is to postpone this game. We're all suffering from tiredness, for some unearthly reason or other. Yaw-aw-aw! I want to go to sleep! Pretty chilly weather, too! Whatever's the matter?"

"Goodness knows!" replied Tom Merry. "Yaw-aw-aw! My eyes do feel heavy. We'd better do as you suggest, Figg. Chaps, the match is off. We'd better all clear off to the swimming bath and have a dip."

But even a swim did not serve to drive off their sleepiness. Everybody at St. Jim's seemed to be suffering from the same drowsy feeling. When the chums of the School House went indoors for tea, with Figgins & Co. as their guests, they found an amazing state of affairs there.

Mr. Molish informed them that an outbreak of sleepy sickness was rampant in Rylcombe, and that it had evidently spread to St. Jim's, for Herr Schneider, the German master, was down with it, and Mr. Latham, the master of the Fourth, had been asleep all the afternoon, and the combined efforts of Mr. Railton, Kildare, Darrell, and Rusden had been unavailing to rouse him.

A notice appeared on the board later on, saying that all boys would remain in Big Hall after call-over that evening. Great was the excitement and curiosity when the Head, an imposing figure in cap and gown, stood up and rapped with the hammer for silence.

"Boys," he said, in a quiet, grave voice. "As you know, sleepy sickness is prevalent in the neighbourhood, and I fear from various indications around me, that the trouble is likely to spread to the boys of this school. I consider it my bounden duty to prevent any such calamity from befalling St. Jim's, so, after consulting with the Governors, I have decided to close the School until the danger of an epidemic is past."

There was a buzz of excitement. St. Jim's to be closed! What about the boys?

"Order! Order!" rapped Kildare & Co., the prefects. "The boys of St. Jim's waited breathlessly for the Head's next words.

"As regards the disposal of the pupils," said Dr. Holmes, looking round over the rims of his spectacles. "I am making arrangements with the headmasters of various schools near or in London, for the accommodation of certain number of boys each. The school will be closed as from Monday next. Boys will be notified as to which schools they will be transferred to. Dismiss!"

St. Jim's was astounded. Never before had such a course been taken at the old school. They were all to leave St. Jim's for a little while, and live at other schools in London!

"Bai Jove!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, adjusting his monocle and regarding his chums seriously. "This has weally sent me into quite a fittah! It's wathah wotten havin' to leave St. Jim's, yet on the othah hand, it will be wathah wippin' to have a holiday spent in London!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Yes, there is that to it," said Tom Merry thoughtfully. "But I wonder how we shall be distributed? Jolly rotten if we are separated!"

"Oh, crumbs! Yes, rather!"

The closing of St. Jim's was the sole topic of conversation at the school that night. Fellows discussed it in bed, and did not go to sleep until quite late.

Next morning everybody looked eagerly at the notice board, but there was no further information. Figgins & Co. arrived from the New House to inform the School House fellows that Mr. Ratcliff, their hated headmaster, was "down" with sleepy sickness.

Figgins & Co. imparted that news with considerable cheerfulness. Fatty Wynn even went so far as to say that he hoped Ratty would never wake up again. Mr. Railton, the foreman of the School House, informed the chums of the Lower School that the best would be done so that they should be kept together. They would not, of course, take part in the work of the other school.

The object of their transfer was just to give them a holiday, and allow them to enjoy the fresh, open air as much as possible. Then the lists were published, and were read with great excitement.

Hurrah! yelled Blake. "We're all right, Tommy! Meek, Mr. Burth and Shell fellows are staying together at Magdalen School, Edmonton. That's London, of course!"

"Oh, good egg!"

The Head had certainly done his best.

Practically all the juniors of the Shell and Fourth were going to Magdalen School. The bags were transferred in batches to various grammar schools at Wimbledon, Brixton, and Hammersmith. Kildare & Co., the mighty men of the Sixth and the Fifth-Formers were staying at a college in South Kensington.

"Well, that's ripping!" said Tom Merry enthusiastically. "We sha'n't be separated, after all! And we're going to have a real good time in London, aren't we, chaps?"

"We, ha, ha!" said Figgins & Co. were well pleased. "Of course, it's pretty tough luck, having to dig with you School House freaks," said Figgins airily. "But we must grin and bear it, I suppose."

"You'll have to bear something else in a tick, Figgy, and I'll warrant you won't grin!" said Tom Merry darkly. "Take this tip in time—if you New House wasters give us any trouble, we'll turf you out of your lodgings and send you to the casual ward!"

"Look here, you cheeky worm—" began Figgins hotly. "Pax, my infants—pax!" said Ralph Reckless Cardew chidingly. "Let not your angry passions rise, y'know. Might as well while away the fleetin' hours by doin' some necessary packin'."

"Yaas, that's wathah a good ideah, deah boys!" "There are heaps of things we shall find to do in London," said Blake. "We must visit the Zoo and Madame Tussaud's, and the Tower, and all sorts of places."

"Not to mention Petticoat Lane on Sunday morning!" chuckled Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Everybody looked forward eagerly for Monday to arrive. And most of them sent home urgent requests for money. They all intended having a good time during their holiday in London.

## CHAPTER 2. Nearly Left!

"WEADY, deah boys?" Tom Merry & Co. and Figgins & Co. were congregated on the School House steps. Their luggage had been taken on in advance by a motor-lorry. They were travelling to London by train. The others were following by a later train.

"Weady, deah boys?" inquired Arthur Augustus.

"Ready—ay, ready!" said Tom Merry cheerfully. "By jingo, Gussy, what a gaudy waistcoat you've put on! It licks all the others into the shade! Oh dear! I must look away! It hurts my eyes!"

"Weally, deah boy—"

"The chuckle-headed chump has taken most part of the morning to dress himself!" growled Blake. "What with selecting ties to match the colour of his socks, and fancy waistcoats to give a good colour blending, I'm getting fed up. Gussy's taking all his tailoring emporium to London. I suppose we shall see him parading down Regent Street tomorrow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Blake, I must request you to apologise!" said Arthur Augustus, with asperity.

His chums cackled. They loved pulling Gussy's leg. Blake wagged a warning forefinger at his noble chum.

"Will you promise not to mash any of the London flappers, Gussy?" he said solemnly. "Remember we are going to be responsible for you, and keep you under our wing. We're not going to allow you to get smitten with any fair maiden's charms. We know how susceptible you are."

"Good word that, Blake!" said Monty Lowther approvingly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus was looking quite wrathful.

Mr. Railton, the popular Housemaster of the School House, came out of the door. He smiled good-naturedly at the boys.

"Well, my lads, you had better get along to Rylcombe," he said. "The London train is due in ten minutes. I hope you all have an enjoyable time.

The headmaster of the Magdalen School is sending a motor-coach to meet you at Charing Cross, and you will arrive at your new quarters in time for dinner. It is hardly necessary for me to ask you to be on your best behaviour, and leave behind a favourable impression of St. Jim's and its pupils."

"Yes, rather, sir!"

Mr. Railton smiled, and watched the juniors as they trooped out through the gates.

A tall, lanky, bony fellow came dashing out of the House just as the others passed through the gates. It was Herbert Skimpole, the brainy man of the Shell. Skimpole had two huge volumes under his arm. Skimpole was always delving into huge volumes. Weighty tomes were unto him bread and meat for the brain.

"Stop!" cried Skimpole, sprinting across the quadrangle. "Wait for me, my dear fellows! I—I am coming!"

Tom Merry & Co. glanced round and saw Skimpole coming. They grinned.

"Here's Skimmy—late as usual!" chuckled Tom Merry. "Let's give him a run down to the village! It will do the weedy old cuckoo a chunk of good!"

"Right-ho!"

The St. Jim's juniors started running along the Rylcombe Lane.

"Buck up, Skimmy!" roared Blake, over his shoulder. "We don't want to miss the train! Put a spurt on, man!"

"I—I can't!" gurgled Skimpole, hugging his two volumes to him. "These—these books act as an impediment to any swift locomotion! There is no necessity to accelerate your pace, my dear fellows! We have ample time!"

But Tom Merry & Co. trotted onward. Skimpole, puffing like a grampus, followed as quickly as he was able.

By this time they reached Rylcombe Station the luckless genius of St. Jim's was quite hot and breathless.

"Grooooooh!" he gasped, dropping his weighty books to the ground, and mopping his large forehead with a handkerchief. "I—I told you there was no urgency as regards time, my dear fellows! The train is not due for another five minutes!"

"Go hon!" grinned Tom Merry. "It's always best to be on the safe side, you know, Skimmy! What on earth have you brought those two books for?"

"I intend further perusing them during our enforced



"Yarrah!" roared the gentleman, leaping to his feet. "My corn! Yew-ow-ow!" Skimmy had let go Professor Balmcrumpet's volume on Determinism, and the weighty tome had crashed on the irate gentleman's toe. Skimpole looked distressed. "My dear, dear sir, I cannot sufficiently express my regret at this unfortunate occurrence!" he said. "I assure you it was purely an accident!"

holiday, my dear Merry," said Skimpole, blinking through his huge eyeglasses. "They are works to which I attach a great deal of importance. This first volume is a dissertation on the doctrines of Determinism, written by the celebrated Professor Balmycrumpet."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Merry & Co.  
Skimpole blinked.

"Really, my dear fellows, I fail to perceive any provocation for this unseemly levity," he said mildly. "Professor Balmycrumpet is an authority on this subject. The other book is on the fundamental principles of Socialism, by Dr. Dryasdust. It is a book which I can heartily recommend for your perusal, my dear fellows."

"Oh, help!"  
Tom Merry & Co. chuckled. They showed the tickets at the station barrier, and then trooped on to the platform. Skimpole walking with a large book tucked under each arm. The juniors whiled away the time sampling the contents of the automatic machines.

The train came in ten minutes late.  
"Hurry on there, please!" bawled the porter.  
"This way, chaps!" said Figgins. "We New House fellows are going to have a carriage on our own!"

"Thank goodness for that!" said Tom Merry. "It would be horrible to have to share the same compartment with you New House wasters all the way. There ought to be some cut-throats on the train for you!"

"Why, you—you cheeky rotter—" gasped Figgins.  
Kerr dragged at his sleeve.  
"Train's pretty full, Figgys," he said. "We can't afford to waste time ragging these School House wasters. Let's hop in here."

Figgins suffered himself to be led into the carriage. Tom Merry & Co. chuckled, and found adjacent carriages to themselves.

Herbert Skimpole blinked round him, and climbed into the carriage that was directly opposite. It happened to be a first-class compartment. A luxuriously dressed man was seated in the corner, smoking a cigar, as Skimpole entered. The genius of the Shell tripped over that gentleman's feet.

There was a roar.  
"Yoop! You clumsy young rascal!"  
"My goodness!" gasped Skimpole. "I am ever so sorry, my dear sir! Pray accept my sincerest apologies, and—"

Bump!  
"Yaroooooh!" roared the gentleman, leaping to his feet. For Skimpole had let go Professor Balmycrumpet's volume on Determinism, and the weighty tome had crashed on the irate gentleman's toe.

"My corn! Yow-ow-ow!" he wailed, hopping about in the carriage on one leg.

Skimpole looked distressed.  
"My dear, dear sir, I cannot sufficiently express my regret at this unfortunate occurrence!" he said. "I assure you it was purely an accident!"

"Get out, you dangerous little lunatic!" bellowed the injured party. "You have no right in this carriage! I'll wager you've only a third ticket!"

Skimpole sat down and blinked at the man.  
"You are correct in your estimate that I am the possessor of a third-class ticket," said the genius of the Shell.

The other blinked at Skimpole, astounded. The wordiness of the weedy schoolboy was more than he could understand.

"Why, you—you ridiculous and insolent young monkey!" he gasped. "How dare you talk like that to me! Get out of this carriage immediately!"

"Skimpole placed his cherished volumes on his bony knees and sat firm.

"I am sorry, but it is incumbent upon me to refuse your request, my dear sir," he said mildly, but decisively.

"Although but a holder of a third-class ticket, I have as much right in here as you. I—"

"Guard! Guard!" yelled the irate old gentleman, leaning out of the window and waving his gold-knobbed walking-stick.

"Sir?" said the guard, coming up.  
"Kindly turn this foolish young rascal out of here! This is a first-class carriage, and he's a third-class passenger!"

"Oh!" said the guard, a beefy man.  
He glared at Herbert Skimpole.

"You are there, young man?" he said grimly. "You ain't allowed in 'ere! You oughter know that!"

"I am fully aware that the mercenary principles of the company who own this railway edict that certain passengers, upon paying an excess of fare, shall be entitled to share a certain class of compartment set aside from the rest," said Skimpole, blinking through his huge spectacles; "but I scorn the practice as being quite contrary to the principle of Man's Equality to Man. Therefore, I refuse to vacate my seat in this carriage."

The guard wasted no further time on words. He dragged upon the door, strode into the compartment, and grasped Skimpole by the scruff of his neck.

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"Kim hon!" said the guard. "None o' your old buck!"  
"Yaroooooh!" roared Skimpole, struggling. "Desist, you rough fellow! Kindly leave me alone, or— Yahl! Owl! Yow-ow!"

Bump!  
Skimpole landed on all fours on the platform and sprawled there in a very undignified position.

Thud, thud!  
The works of Professor Balmycrumpet and Dr. Dryasdust came out after him, and the carriage door shut.

"Grooooh!" gasped Skimpole, struggling to his feet and grasping his books. "The—unreasonable man! I shall have to remonstrate, or write a severe letter to the company, or—"

"Urry on, there!" roared the porter.  
Pheesee!

The guard blew his whistle, and the train commenced to move out of the station.

"Buck up, Skimmy!" yelled Figgins. "You'll be left behind!"

"Oh dear!" gasped the bewildered Genius of the Shell. He bounded for the first carriage that came along. Tom Merry & Co. happened to be in there. They did not relish Herbert Skimpole as a companion on the journey to London; but they either had to drag him into the carriage, or see him come a cropper on the platform and miss the train.

"Terrible! Terrible! Three opened the carriage door. Tom Merry grasped Skimpole's shoulder.  
"Hang on, you ass!" he gasped.  
"Grooooh!" gurgled Skimpole. "Dud-don't release your hold upon me, my dear fellow! I—I shall f-fall!"

Bump!  
Skimpole was dragged bodily into the carriage just as the train passed under the signal-cabin bridge at the end of the platform. Monty Lowther kicked the books out of Skimpole's arms, and grinned with great satisfaction when he saw the volumes tumble on to the line.

"Grooooh!" gasped Skimpole. "My books! They have fallen out! Stop the train, my dear fellows! I cannot proceed without my books!"

"Here, leave that communication-cord alone, Skimmy!" said Tom Merry. "You prize chump! You ought to be bumped, causing all that sensation on the platform! Now, sit down and keep quiet, or we shall bump you!"

"Yass, wathah!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I weghad you as a shwiekin' ass, Skimmy, deah boy!"

Herbert Skimpole adjusted his eyeglasses and blinked round sorrowfully upon the juniors in the compartment.

"My dear fellows, if only your brains were sufficiently developed you would understand," he said. "However, it is too much to expect, I fear, from such depraved and vulgar minds such as yours—"

"Why, you—you cheeky scallywag!" gasped Tom Merry hotly. "I—"

"Pray do not allow your wrath to rise, my dear Merry," said the brainy man of the Shell, raising his hand. "Had my books not unfortunately fallen from the train I should have much pleasure in reading you a few chapters of Professor Balmycrumpet's dissertation on Determinism, with a supplement on Evolution. However, as that is impossible now—"

"Thank goodness!" said Monty Lowther fervently.  
"Really, I—"

"You are a silly ass, Skimmy!" said Tom Merry. "Now, we'll warn you, Skimmy! The very next time you mention Determinism, Socialism, or any other ism, we'll bump you!"

Skimpole blinked.

"Really, my dear Merry, you are most unreasonable," he said. "If only you set your mind on an unbiased study of—"

"Bump him!" roared Blake.  
Skimpole was grasped in many hands and whirled off his seat. The heroes of the School House raised their learned schoolfellow on high and proceeded to bump him well and truly.

Skimpole roared.  
Bump, bump, bump!

"There!" said Tom Merry at last. "That's what you'll get whenever you start gassing, Skimmy! So let that be a warning!"

"Yoogh! Yow! Oh dear! Yow-ow-ow!" said Skimpole. The train rushed onward, and Tom Merry & Co., having suppressed the eloquence of Herbert Skimpole, whiled away the time in "jawing" about London.

## CHAPTER 3.

In London.

"CAWAW!" roared Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.  
"Oh, gh, gh!"

The long train clattered to a halt in the great railway terminus in the West End of London, and the St. Jim's boys jumped on to the platform. They looked round them with great interest.

It was a busy, bustling, noisy scene in the large station. Several trains, their engines hissing fiercely, were at the various platforms, bound for different parts of Kent and Surrey.

"By jingo!" said Blake. "I could spend the whole day here looking at the trains, couldn't you? There's the Newhaven-Dieppe Boat Express."

"Tickets, please!" said the collector at the barrier. The St. Jim's juniors crowded out into the hall of the station.

"What a busy place, bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, adjusting his monocle, and looking round. "Yawwoogoh! Oh owumba!"

"Come on, Gussy!" said Blake, whirling along his aristocratic chum. "Remember what I said!"

"Weally! Blake, I—I— Pway don't wumple my coat! I'll come, deah boy!"

Arthur Augustus walked out of the station with his amused chums.

"Well, here's London—at least, a little bit of it!" breathed Tom Merry, as they stood at the corner of Villiers Street and looked down the Strand. "Busy, noisy old village, isn't it? Just a trifle different from Rylcombe, you know."

"Ha, ha! Rather!"

A motor charabanc was waiting in the station-yard, and a young, brown-faced chauffeur came up to the schoolboy party. He touched his cap respectfully.

"Remember you, young gents," he said. "Are you from St. Jim's?"

"Yaas, wathah, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I suppose you have come to take us to Magdalen School?"

"Yes, sir," said the chauffeur.

Tom Merry & Co. looked approvingly at the charabanc. "Trim old bus, isn't it?" said Blake. "I say, chaps, I don't relish another long ride after the train journey. We've heaps of time. Let's have a walk round for half an hour."

"Yes, that's a ripping idea!" said Fatty Wynn eagerly. "There wasn't a half enough grub in that hamper we fechered with us, and I'm feeling jolly peckish! I vote we have a feed somewhere. All I've had is a rabbit-pie, half a dozen or so jam-tarts, three bottles of ginger-pop, four cream-buns, some meringues, two apples, and a cake of chocolate."

"My only hat!" gasped Tom Merry, looking at the Falstaff of St. Jim's in wonder. "You don't mean to say you've room for any more, you—yau fat boia-constrictor?"

"Plenty of room!" said Fatty, patting his ample waistcoat. "A fellow must lay a solid foundation, you know!"

Tom Merry turned to the chauffeur. "You don't mind waiting, do you?" he said. "We're going to have a stroll round for a little while."

"Very good, sir!" said the chauffeur. The party of St. Jim's juniors went out into the Strand.

"You chaps had better follow me," said George Alfred Grundy. "I know my way about London, and there'll be no chance of your getting lost, so long as you keep with me. Lemme see; what's that large building along there on the left? Ah, I know! The National Gallery!"

"Go hon!" said Monty Lowther. "I was under the impression it was the Hotel, Metropole—at least, that's the name outside, in large letters. Of course, they may have made a mistake, and labelled the National Gallery the Hotel Metropole. You know best, though, Grundy, don't you?"

The others chuckled, and the great George Alfred went on.

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at," he grumbled. "I must have made a slight mistake. Ah! There's the National Gallery over there—with the large arch in front."

"You ass!" screeched Tom Merry. "That's the Admiralty!"

"Oh!" said Grundy.

He looked rather stupidly at his guide-book. The others chuckled. Grundy was such a certain youth. Grundy imagined himself to be a mighty man, and thought that he knew everything.

He was very high-handed in his methods, but on the whole was quite amusing. His two faithful disciples, Wilkins and Gunn, were with him. They were inseparable from the great George Alfred.

"I don't think we'll let Grundy take

us under his wing," said Tom Merry sweetly. "We'd much rather look after ourselves, wouldn't we, chaps?"

"Yes, rather!"

The great Grundy snuffed. "All right," he said independently. "If you chaps like to roam about and lose yourselves, don't blame me. I'm going up the Strand towards the Temple Bar."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy glared at Wilkins and Gunn, who were laughing. "What are you silly jossers grinning like Cheshire cats for—hey?" he demanded.

"Well, you see, Grundy, the Temple Bar happens to have been pulled down about twenty years ago," said Wilkins respectfully.

"And they wouldn't allow you in any other bar, Grundy," said Monty Lowther. "Besides, how horrid it would look!"

"Oh, rats!" growled Grundy. He motioned to Wilkins and Gunn, and those two faithful henchmen of his followed Grundy through the crowded Strand.

Tom Merry & Co. chuckled and went the other way. "Hallo! There's Trafalgar Square, and Nelson's Monument," said Tom Merry, as they passed out of the Strand.

"I wondah how tall it is, deah boys?" said D'Arcy. "Let me see," said Monty Lowther, with a thoughtful look. "I'm not much of a judge, but I should say that that monument was a great deal under two feet!"

"Ass!" said Blake witheringly. "You'd be just as sensible to say two miles!"

"I said two feet, dear boy!" replied Monty Lowther, with a grin. "I mean Nelson's feet, of course! Ha, ha, ha!"

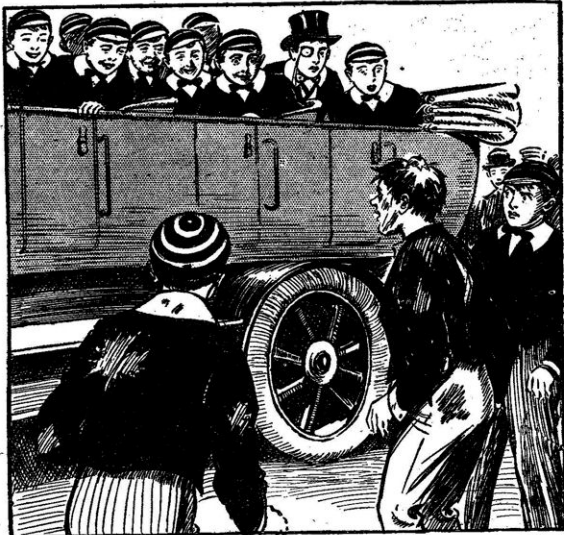
But Lowther laughed alone. Tom Merry & Co. groaned. Monty's little jokes seemed to hurt them. Lowther sighed.

"What's the use of a chap being witty?" he said. "Do you call that witty?" said Tom Merry politely. "It's a jolly good joke!" said Lowther warmly. "I'm going to put that into my comic column in the next number of 'St. Jim's Weekly.' Now, what is the difference between my comic column and Nelson's—"

"Shurrup!" howled Tom Merry. Monty Lowther subsided. They crossed the road, and strolled down Whitehall.

"The Horse Guards, by jingo!" said Blake, halting. "Yaas, wathah!"

The St. Jim's juniors looked admiringly at the stalwart, mounted Guards, in their picturesque uniforms, gleaming swords, cuirasses, and helmets.



The juniors looked spellbound at Grundy. He was a sight! His collar was gone, and his jacket was split up the back. His clothes were plastered with ripe tomatoes mixed with gravel and dust. A juicy tomato was poised on his head. "Great Christopher Columbus!" ejaculated Tom Merry. "Where have you been, Grundy?"

"So that's the Wat Office in there!" said Manners. "I'll take a snap of that. Jolly lucky I thought of bringing my camera."

Manners, who was a keen amateur photographer, took a picture of the Horse Guards. Monty Lowther humorously suggested to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy that he should offer to exchange his topper with the dusty one of the Guards, saying that Gussy would look rather nobly in that headgear. Arthur Augustus treated Lowther's suggestion with the contempt it deserved. He walked along Whitehall with his nose very high in the air.

The St. Jim's juniors went over to the Cenotaph, and, with heads respectfully bared, admired that fine Monument to the Fallen.

They passed on from the Cenotaph, and then Tom Merry discovered Downing Street or the righthand side of the road. "That's where the Prime Minister and all the nobs of the Government live," said Blake. "Wonder whether I shall ever have a house in Downing Street?"

"Ha, ha! Some hopes!"

"Here, where are you going, Skimmy?" exclaimed Tom Merry, as Herbert Skimpole detached himself from the party and made for the entrance to Downing Street.

The Genius of the Shell paused and blinked round.

"I am going to seize this opportunity to call upon the Prime Minister, my dear Merry," he said mildly. "I have frequently addressed letters to Mr. Lloyd George on various subjects, such as winning the war, and Waste, but have not had a single reply to any one of my letters. Neither have I been able to send any signs that the Prime Minister has taken any of my advice. So I will go in and see him, and have a long, serious chat."

"Great pip!"

Tom Merry & Co. gasped.

"You—you're going to have a serious chat with—the Prime Minister?" gurgled the captain of the Shell.

Skimpole nodded.

"I am sure to impress Mr. Lloyd George with my views on various matters," he said.

"Come back, Skimmy, you shrieking chump!" cried Tom Merry, as Skimpole turned away. "You can't run in and see the Prime Minister. You'll get into trouble!"

Skimpole did not come back. He was determined to see Mr. Lloyd George and give him some fatherly advice.

"After the lunatic!" said Blake.

They all rushed at Skimpole, and dragged him back.

"Yoooop! Leggo! Release me, my dear fellows!" gasped Skimpole. "I assure you I shall not seek to browbeat the Prime Minister! I intend merely to point out to him the fundamental principles of—"

"You'll get it in the neck, Skimmy, if you don't stop playing the griddy goat!" said Tom Merry severely. "I don't suppose the Prime Minister is at home. Ten to one he's in the House of Commons, making speeches. Come along, Skimmy! You wouldn't get at Lloyd George, if you tried from now till Doomsday."

Skimpole gasped, but he went along quite docilely.

He had found out that the Prime Minister was probably at the House of Commons. And even Skimpole saw the futility of attempting to have a long, serious chat with Mr. Lloyd George in there!

"Here's our old Big Ben!" said Talbot, as they came to the end of Whitehall, and saw the magnificent buildings of the Houses of Parliament, with St. Margaret's and Westminster Abbey adjoining. "Why, he's just striking! Twelve o'clock."

Big Ben boomed out its message, and when the last throb of the twelfth clang had spent itself, Tom Merry drew a deep breath.

"Wonderful old clock, isn't it?" he said.

"You're right, Tommy," said Monty Lowther solemnly.

"Big Ben's been here ever since it was a watch, hasn't it?"

"Oh, dry up, you burbling ass!"

The St. Jim's juniors strolled back along the Embankment, past Cleopatra's Needle. Monty Lowther, of course, could not resist saying something humorous about that. He said he'd like to see the thread that needle took, and observed that if that was the best needle the ancient Egyptians could turn out, "no wonder Cleopatra had the needle!" To which his chums sniffed, and threatened to hurl him over the Embankment into the Thames if he did not "ring off!"

Passing along Fleet Street, or the Street of Adventure, as journalists call it, the home of newspapers, they found it thronged with people, all of whom looked with great interest at the party of St. Jim's juniors.

Tom Merry chuckled when he saw various boys reading the GEM and the "Boys' Herald." Blake said it wouldn't be a bad idea to run in and look up the editor of the GEM. But, as Levison pointed out, the editor would probably be at lunch. Besides, it would be rather a "tall order" for that throng of schoolboys to invade Fleetway House without an invitation!

So Tom Merry & Co. proceeded on their way up Fleet Street, admiring the huge, magnificent building that towered on their right—the Law Courts. Arthur Augustus was very interested to see various learned and keen-faced gentlemen, dressed in flowing black gowns and with wigs on their heads, emerge from the Law Courts and walk across the road into the Temple opposite.

"Barristers," explained Talbot, with a wry smile. In the days of the past, when he was known as the Toff, Talbot had had one or two intimate meetings with those wigged lawyers. He led the way into the quiet squares of the Temple, where the judges and counsel had their chambers. It seemed marvellous that such a quiet and peaceful place could exist within a stone's throw from the roar and bustle of London's busy streets.

Having admired the Temple and its surroundings, the St. Jim's boys went once more into Fleet Street, and from there into the Strand. There, the first building which attracted their attention was Australia House, that majestic, imposing structure on the corner of Aldwych.

King's College, Somerset House, and Marconi House were close by, and all had an interest for Tom Merry & Co. They looked with deep interest, too, at the Savoy and Hotel Cecil, and at all the shops in the Strand. In so short a time they had seen many of the most famous places in the great City of London. London was a vast place, and they looked forward to their stay with keen anticipation, having had a preliminary look round.

"Charing Cross again, my sons!" said Tom Merry. "My hat! We've been over an hour walking round. But still, we've enjoyed it."

The charabanc was still in the station-yard. The chauffeur was looking rather impatient.

"Sorry to have kept you waiting, old top," said Tom Merry.

"I'll think we'll be off now."

"What about that feed?" said Fatty Wynn anxiously.

"We've only had some chocolate, you know, and—"

"Never mind about stuffing, Fatty!" said Figgins severely.

"Dinner will be waiting for us at the Magdalen School when we arrive there. How long will it take, driver?"

"About an hour's run, sir," replied the young chauffeur.

"Oh, that's ripping!"

"Cumble in, my sons!" said Tom Merry.

They tumbled "into the roomy charabanc, and then discovered that three seats were unoccupied.

"My hat!" said Figgins. "Where's Grundy and his two silly pals?"

Tom Merry looked worried.

"What chumps we were to allow Grundy to go off alone!" he said. "London's such a large place, and if he's lost—"

"Look!" shrieked Blake suddenly.

He pointed to a weird figure that emerged from a taxicab that had just drawn up.

They all looked and beheld Grundy.

George Alfred Grundy was a sight for gods and men and little fishes.

His collar was gone, and his jacket was split up the back. His hair was dishevelled, and seemed to be sticking together in great tufts with some mysterious substance. On looking closer at the Shell fellow, the others discovered that Grundy's clothes were plastered with ripe tomatoes mixed with gravel and dust. A juicy tomato was poised on Grundy's head. His face was dirty, and bore signs of rough usage. George Alfred looked like a sorry specimen indeed.

"Great Christopher Columbus!" ejaculated Tom Merry, in astonishment. "Where have you been, Grundy?"

"Groo-hoo-hoo!" said Grundy, wiping his face with a handkerchief.

Wilkins and Gunn, both looking rumpled and dishevelled, emerged from the taxicab.

"The silly josses took us up to Covent Garden, and started checking some of the porters in the market when they told him to get out of the way," explained Wilkins, tenderly rubbing a bump on his forehead. "You know what the Covent Garden Market fellows are—they don't like being checked, so they went for Grundy, and gave him a high old time. We had the dickens of a job to rescue him, and then the bouncers started pelting us with rotten tomatoes. I had to shove him in a taxi to get him away. Otherwise, he might have landed in Bow Street police-station for creating a disturbance."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yow-yow-yow!" said Grundy. "You silly ass, Wilkins, why didn't you leave me alone! I'd have mopped up the market with my own little white. The rotters! Called me a perky school kid, mind you! Me, a perky school kid—me—Grundy!"

The great George Alfred gulped. He was overcome with the enormity of the indignities he had suffered at Covent Garden Market.

Tom Merry chuckled.

"Serves you right, Grundy, for chipping in where you had no right," he said. "Now, get into the charabanc. We shall be late, as it is!"



Grundy climbed into the charabanc, and was followed by Wilkins and Gunn.

"Wight away, dwivah!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Let her whip, dear boy!"

The chauffeur nodded and grinned. The charabanc moved out into the dense traffic of the Strand, and threaded its way through the throng of motor-omnibuses, taxicabs, and other vehicles.

They passed up through Ludgate Hill, and by St. Paul's Cathedral, from thence up Chesapeake, catching a glimpse of the Guildhall, the Mansion House, the Bank of England, and the Royal Exchange.

Not until the charabanc was well past Moorgate was the driver able to put on speed. Nonth London was quickly reached, and then, to the delight of the St. Jim's juniors, they fairly tore along to Edmonton.

#### CHAPTER 4. Queer Customer.

"HALLO, dear fellows!" These words were spoken by an elegantly-dressed youth who, at the head of a party of about fifteen schoolboys, came up to the charabanc from the large gates of Magdalen School.

This youth wore a topper at rather a jaunty angle on his head. He was the most good-looking boy Tom Merry & Co. had ever seen. His hair was crisp and curly, and of a nut brown colour, his forehead lofty, his eyes a deep sea blue, his features chiselled as with the delicate art of a master sculptor. Tom Merry & Co. looked at him, and could not repress their admiration of this youthful Adonis. For, in spite of his handsome looks and his stylish dress, the boy's face showed strength of character and manliness.

"Hallo!" said Tom Merry cheerfully, jumping down from the vehicle, followed by the others of the party. "We are the visitors from St. Jim's."

"Yes, we had a faint suspicion that you might be," replied the other, with a merry twinkle in his eyes. "Allow me to introduce myself, as I am sure we shall have quite a lot to do with each other during the coming week. I am Hugh Valentine, the—er—captain of the Upper Fourth Form here. These others are my—er—tried and trusted disciples. I will introduce them one by one. Step forward, Micky O'Mally!"

A freckled-faced Irish boy, with daredevilry and fun written all over his quaint features, came forward, and bowed low to Tom Merry & Co.

"Faith, an' it's delighted to see ye that I am intirely," he said. "Springfield—our Form-master—took me harp away this mornin', otherwise Oi would have given ye a tune!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "O'Mally is the possessor of a harp," explained Hugh Valentine, with a grin. "He is generally harping upon it—when it's not in quarantine. The masters and prefects usually confiscate it on the average three times a week. They can't stand Micky's harp. But here is Anthony Woodhead—Timbernob, in other words!"

"Bai Jove!" gasped Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, grabbing his monocle and jamming it tighter into his eye, the better to view Timbernob.

"Great pip!" ejaculated Figgins.

"Mum—my word!" said Tom Merry, in a faint voice. For Anthony Woodhead, who at first appeared to be rather a short fellow, had suddenly grown taller—in fact, he grew even as they looked. By the time Anthony had stopped growing he was well over six feet in height. He grinned at them with a comical face, and wriggled his ears. Then his little snub nose began to grow, until it was twice its usual size.

The St. Jim's juniors gazed at this extraordinary fellow in speechless amazement.

"Tom Merry & Co. said Timbernob, and his voice almost knocked Tom Merry & Co. off their feet, for it was loud, deep, and reverberating.

Hugh Valentine chuckled. "Don't be alarmed, my dear chaps," he said. "Let me explain that our friend Timbernob is endowed with an elastic body. He can stretch any limb he wishes. Just shake hands with Tom Merry, Anthony, old glove!"

Anthony seemed to shrink to something just over five feet, and held out his hand. He was far enough away from Tom Merry to be out of arm's reach; but, to the amazement of the St. Jim's boys, Woodhead's arm stretched and stretched, until it was quite half as long again as the left arm.

Tom Merry took the proffered hand rather gingerly, and then, as Timbernob gripped him, he gasped. For there was immense power in Timbernob's hand.

"Mum—my only aunt!" gurgled Monty Lowther, blinking at the schoolboy freak with something akin to awe. "Are there any more at home like you, old bean?"

"Rather!" This time Anthony's voice was a mere squeak. "My father is now earning thousands of pounds a week in America—he appears on the theatres as the Rubber Man. My brother also possesses these amazing qualities, and more—

over, he bounces. He may be dropped from a wall twenty feet high, and he'll bounce like a tennis-ball."

"Ye gods!" Hugh Valentine smiled.

"Well, my sons, having introduced ourselves, let us show you our school," he said. "Timbernob is the only freak we possess, and I'm sure you'll get to like us. Ha! Here comes Mallet, the Housemaster!"

A short, dapper little gentleman, with a mortar-board on his bald head and a profusion of whiskers on his face, bustled up to the gates of the Close. There was a smile of welcome on his kind old face.

"Good-afternoon, boys—good-afternoon!" he said. "You have arrived at last! I am very pleased to see you! I hope you have had a pleasant journey?"

"Very pleasant, sir, thank you!" said Tom Merry.

"Yaas, wathah, sir!"

Mr. Thomas Mallet beamed.

"That is excellent! It is a great pleasure for me to see you, lads! I am an old boy of St. Jim's! And not such a very old boy, either—ha, ha!"

Mr. Mallet beamed again, and rustled away.

Hugh Valentine & Co. chuckled.

"Good old Tommy!" said the Upper Fourth Form captain. "We love our old Housemaster. He's a queer old stick, but the right sort. He likes boys, and will do all he can to make you comfy. You can play him up, too, and pull his leg no end—though, of course, we don't take advantage of that, only when it's necessary."

The sea!" said Tom Merry, smiling.

The St. Jim's boys walked across the Close of Magdalen School.

It was a fine old place, built in the Gothic style of architecture, and looked quite as old as St. Jim's. A splendid fountain played in the Close, and, in the distance, they could see wide, green playing-fields and two pavilions.

Tom Merry smiled his approval.

"You go in for sports a lot here—eh?" he said.

"Rather!" said Valentine, his handsome face taking on an eager look. "You chaps will give us a game of footer, of course?"

"Only too delighted!" said Tom Merry.

The boys of St. Jim's and Hugh Valentine & Co. were soon on the best of terms.

Magdalen School contained much of interest. Not the least interesting was the Head himself, Dr. Philpot Chamberlaine. He was a huge, big-boned man, with eyes that danced merrily, and a grin perpetually flickering at the corners of his large mouth. Valentine gave Tom Merry & Co. some interesting data concerning their Head. Dr. Chamberlaine had once footed in a Cambridge eight, been a champion cricketer and footballer for his college, and a boxer, too. He was still an athlete, and took more than a passing interest in the school games.

"There's only one drawback to the Head being such a gymnast," said Bobby Marlowe, one of Valentine's closest chums. "When he licks a fellow"—here Bobby rubbed the palms of his hands rather ruefully—"he lays it on like a steam-hammer."

Tom Merry & Co. chuckled. They quite believed Bobby Marlowe's statement.

After a good dinner they were free for the rest of the day. "Lucky beggars!" said Hugh Valentine, coming into the hall with a bundle of books under his arm. "We've got to grind Euclid and Homer while you take it easy. Wish we were free for the day!"

"But I am, old buds!"

It was the peculiar squeak of Timbernob. The rubber-limbed junior waddled into the hall with a smile upon his face that stretched absolutely from ear to ear.

"Have you got the afternoon off, then, Timbernob?" demanded Evans minor.

"What-ho!" chuckled Anthony Woodhead. "Tommy gave me permission to accompany our distinguished visitors to London, if they had no objection to my coming. You see, I am having extra touting, and an afternoon off won't do me any harm."

"By Jove!"

Tom Merry & Co. did not quite relish the idea of having the queer-looking Magdalen boy with them, but they could not say so, of course.

So Timbernob put on a clean collar, and sallied forth with the St. Jim's boys.

Jack Blake happened to see a sly wink pass between Anthony and Hugh Valentine.

He confided this knowledge to Tom Merry and Figgins. "We'll be on our guard, then, in case the chump tries to trick us," said Tom Merry grimly.

Timbernob looked round with a grin.

"Whither bound when you get to London?" he inquired pleasantly.

"We'll have a look round the West End, and then have an hour or so in Madame Tussaud's," replied Tom Merry.

"Ah! That's a fine programme!" said the rubber-limbed junior, wagging his ears. "I haven't been to Madame Tussaud's since I wore knee-breeches, so I shall enjoy it as much as you. This way! It's ten minutes' walk to the bus terminus."

"Then lead on, McDuff!" said Monty Lowther.  
 And Anthony Woodhead led on—walking calmly out of the school gates on his hands.

## CHAPTER 5.

## Fun at the Waxworks.

"HURRY along there, please!"

"Tickets ready, please!"

"No smoking allowed in the lifts!"

Those were a few of the cries that rang out above the hum of voices in the Tube station at Oxford Circus.

Tom Merry & Co. had been for a walk down Oxford Street, and were about to take the Underground to Baker Street, where Madame Tussaud's was situated.

The bustle and rush of London had impressed them deeply. Fatty Wynn found that the excitement played upon his appetite, and it had been only by dint of violent persuasion that his chums had wrenched him out of the Corner House.

Tom Merry took the tickets, and the St. Jim's juniors, with Anthony in their midst, crowded down into the Underground station.

"We go down by lift," said Figgins enthusiastically.

"This will be my first experience of the Underground."

"Same here!" said Monty Lowther. "Hallo! Here's a lift! Don't push!"

"Yawooogh!" yelled Arthur Augustus D'Arcy suddenly, as he felt a heavy tread on his left foot. "Hewwies, you clumsy boundah—"

"Why don't you get a move on, then, Gussy?" demanded Horries, glaring. "Can't you see the lift's getting full, and—"

"Gwoooogh! Oh dear!"

Arthur Augustus made a frantic grab at his topper as a lady, wearing a broad-brimmed hat, swooped by and knocked Gussy's headgear for her hat.

The topper slid through D'Arcy's hands and went to the floor.

Scrunch!

That sound came from Gussy's topper. For it had been trodden upon by a gentleman of the navy profession who seemed in rather a hurry to get into the lift. His large, hob-nailed boots had not improved the looks of Gussy's topper—in fact, the article now resembled a concertina.

Arthur Augustus turned a glimmering eyeglass upon the navy.

"Bai Jove! You wuff person!" exclaimed the noble swell of St. Jim's. "I distinctly saw you twed on my toppah! I geneerally considah it infwa dig to stwike a person oldah than myself; but, undah the circo—"

"Crums! Is 'e all there?" interposed the horny-handed son of toil, addressing the others in the lift.

"All except his topper!" said Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha!"

D'Arcy's eyeglass glittered. The blood of all the D'Arcys was boiling in his veins. He strode forward towards the navy, pushing back his cuffs in a warlike manner.

"I considah you a wuff, wude person!" he said, breathing hard through his nose. "I must wewquest you to put up youah hands, unless you apologise, as fwom one gentleman to another!"

"Gussy!" said Blake gently. "Don't get on the high horse, old man. Remember we're in London, in a lift, and—"

"That only makes it all the more impewative that I should wewceive an apology!" said D'Arcy haughtily. "Now, my man, would you wathah apologise, or—"

"Apologise for nothin'!" said the navy, in a truculent manner. "A bloke of your age oughter be workin', instead o' gallivantin' about in them swell duds with a 'fig' at 'em. Which I 'olds vew great objections to them 'ere chimney-pot 'ats. 'Ere goes for a goal!"

Crack!

The navy raised his heavy boot, and took a dying kick at Gussy's topper, which was lying half in the lift. The topper sailed in the air, and went whizzing into the vestibule of the Tube station.

D'Arcy gave a yell.

"Gweat Scott! You feahful wuffian! I wewfese to accept an apology now, for I do not considah you a gentleman. Put up youah hands!"

Biff!

Gussy's fist crashed upon the navy's snub nose. The navy staggered back, astounded. Arthur Augustus had heaps of pluck, and when his ire was roused he cared nought but that he should be satisfied. He followed up that punch on the nose with a resounding thwack upon the chin.

The navy gasped.

THE NAVY GASPED.—No. 712.

"Come on, you wottah!" cried D'Arcy, brandishing his fists. "I am gom' to give you a feahful thwackin'! I—"

"Gussy! Chuck it, you ass!" roared Blake. "Look at all the people laughing at you! Get out before he kills you!"

"Wats!" retorted D'Arcy. "I considah—"

"Here, get out of that, young man!"

The lift-attendant interposed. The lift was full, and ready to descend. Just as the navy was about to go for Gussy the lift-attendant grasped the noble swell of St. Jim's and hurled him from the lift.

D'Arcy whizzed into the vestibule, and sat down with a thud next to where his damaged topper reposed.

He gasped.

"Yawooogh! Gwoooogh! Oh dear!"

Slam!

The attendant shut the gates, and the lift descended. "Bai Jove! Oh, cwubs!" gasped Arthur Augustus, picking himself and his topper up. "I shall miss the twin! Gwoooogh!"

"Get down the emergency stairs—quick, sir!" exclaimed a grinning porter. "There's the way down!"

"Thanks vew much, deah boy!"

D'Arcy jammed his battered topper on his head, and simply tore towards the emergency stairs. He went down three at a time, but by the time he had got half-way down the long spiral he was quite dizzy.

"Gwoooogh!" he said. "This is wotten! I—I feel dizzy, bai Jove! But I mustn't miss the othahs! Gwoooogh!"

So D'Arcy tore on down the emergency stairs. He emerged at last, and ran on to the platform. The train was in, and Tom Merry & Co. were aboard. Gates were slamming on the train as Arthur Augustus pounded along the platform, his eyeglass dangling on its cord behind him, his battered topper jammed down firmly on his head.

"Buck up, Gussy!" roared Blake.

"You'll only just do it!" yelled Tom Merry.

"Stand clear there!" roared the guard.

But Arthur Augustus did it. He jumped on to the train just as the door was closing. He staggered into the carriage, and sat down on a lady's lap as the train jerked forward. It was soon thundering through the tunnel.

Tom Merry & Co., who were mostly strap-hanging, chuckled.

"Poor old Gussy!" said Monty Lowther. "He's always in the wars, isn't he?"

"Gwoogh!" gasped D'Arcy, rising from the lady's lap and raising his topper. "Pway accept my sinewweet apologies, ma'am! I quite lost my balance, bai Jove!"

"Don't mention it!" said the lady graciously, and smiled behind her glove.

For Arthur Augustus D'Arcy presented an appearance that fully justified her laugh. Everybody in the Underground train was laughing at him.

Arthur Augustus was very relieved when they emerged from the Bakerloo Tube at last, and came out into the sunny fresh air of Baker Street.

"There's Madame Tussaud's!" exclaimed Figgins, indicating an imposing building on a corner, next to the Metropolitan station.

"Good egg!"

The St. Jim's juniors and Anthony entered the famous waxwork exhibition, and passed through the turnstile one by one.

"I feel vew uncomfortable, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I am all dustay, and my toppah wants a good bwushin'. That's all I can do for it, undah the circo. I wondah wheah I can get a wash and bwush-up?"

"Better ask somebody," said Monty Lowther. "Ask that policeman over there, Gussy. Remember the old saying—'When in doubt, ask a policeman.'"

"Yaas, that's wathah a good ideah, deah boy," said D'Arcy. And he walked over to the policeman standing by the wall with a sailor.

"Excuse me, offeah," said D'Arcy, raising his hat, "but could you diwect me to wheah I can secuah a wash and bwush-up?"

The policeman did not seem to hear. His attention seemed fixed upon the stairs on his right.

D'Arcy coughed.

"Ahem! Can't you heah me, deah boy?" he said.

The policeman could not have heard, for he still gazed intently at the stairs, as though watching who went up and down.

"Bai Jove! This is the first time I've encountered a deah policeman!" said Augustus, adjusting his monocle and going closer to the constable. He stood on tiptoe, and shouted in the policeman's ear.

"Can you tell me wheah I can get a wash and bwush-up, offeah?" he bawled.

To D'Arcy's surprise—and the high amusement of the beholders—the policeman did not even flicker an eyelid. He seemed totally oblivious to the presence of Arthur Augustus.

The swell of St. Jim's went red.

"Bai Jove! What an extraordinary man!" he exclaimed.

"Pway don't laugh, deah boys. Do you think the constable is purposely ignowin' me, or is he deaf?"

"Perhaps the poor chap's suffering from a sudden attack of sleeping sickness!" said Monty Lowther. "It does affect some people like that, you know."

"Bai Jove! Pway you're wright," said D'Arcy; and he turned just in time not to see Monty Lowther give a queer gurgle, as if he were choking. "I say, constable, deah boy!"

He prodded the uniformed figure, and was surprised to hear a queer sound proceed from it.

Groan!

Tom Merry & Co. looked startled, too. They, of course, knew that the policeman was only a waxwork. Monty Lowther had been pulling the guileless Gussy's leg.

"Bai Jove! Pway you're wright," said D'Arcy, "Theah is somethin' weally w'ong with the poor chap!"

Tom Merry & Co. did not reply. For another groan, more deep and heartrending than before, had come from the wax policeman.

Kerr suddenly nudged his chums. "It's this blighter Timbernob!" he said. "Watch his throat. He's ventriloquising!"

Anthony Woodhead placed a finger over his lips. "Hush!" he said, in a soft voice. "I am ventriloquising, but not a word!"

Tom Merry & Co. chuckled.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, without a suspicion in the world, looked at the policeman in deep compassion.

"I feah, deah boys, that there is somethin' wadically w'ong!" he said. "I—weally think we ought to wender first aid. This is weeah our twainin' as scouts comes in useful, bai Jove! I had better loosen the poor chap's collar!"

D'Arcy set about undoing the dummy's tunic, and would have proceeded further in that operation, but for the intervention of one of the exhibition attendants.

"What are you up to, young fellow?" he demanded. "Those figures are not to be touched!"

Arthur Augustus turned round, and surveyed the attendant through his monocle.

"Pway what did you say, deah boy?" he asked. "Leave that figure alone!" said the attendant, half-laughingly. "The public aren't allowed to touch the waxworks."

"Bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus was quite limp. "Waxworks!" he gasped. "Is—is that a waxwork?"

"There's as much life in this constable as there is in an ordinary lamp-post, sir!" grinned the attendant.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the others.

Arthur Augustus looked bewildered. "But—but the figure spoke! It gwoaned!"

The attendant winked at the desert air.

"Must 'ave been your imagination, sir," he said. "These figures ain't made to talk, you know, although we claim that they are speakin' likenesses of whoever they're supposed to represent."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Merry & Co.

"Bai Jove!" gasped poor Gussy, passing a hand dazedly over his brow. "I could swear—"

"Hush, Gussy! Don't do that!" said Monty Lowther, in a shocked voice. "Remember where you are!"

"I—I—I—"

"Better go over to the buffet and 'ave something cool to drink, sir," suggested the attendant kindly. "This heat is overbearing, isn't it?"

"Gweat Scott! If you mean to insinuate that I am sufferin' from sunstroke—"

"No; he means just a slight hallucination, Gussy!" said Tom Merry, taking his noble chum's arm. "Look! The place for a wash and brush-up is just over there on the left. Go over and have a spring clean, old chap!"

D'Arcy went, still wondering mightily concerning the affair of the policeman. The others chuckled, and went upstairs, attracted by the sound of the orchestra.

They purchased catalogues, and commenced to view the waxworks in Hall No. 1. The juniors were really surprised when they entered and saw all the waxwork figures ranged along each side of the room.

"Dear me!" said Herbert Skimpole, blinking. "Having completed their survey of Hall No. 1, they all trooped into the Grand Hall, where an imposing array of wax figures met the eye.

Celebrities of all times were there, including the famous war generals and members of the Government.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy came up whilst the others were inspecting the figures.

The swell of St. Jim's now looked as clean and spotless as a new pin. He had managed to push his topper back into shape, and a great deal of brushing had brought it back to something like its original appearance.

"Hallo, deah boys!" said D'Arcy, adjusting his monocle. "I feel much freshah now. Bai Jove, what are you gwinnin' at?"

"You, Gussy, old chap!" chuckled Tom Merry. "Poor old Gussy! Mind you don't fall over that attendant there. By Jove, he's fast asleep!"

In a corner of the Grand Hall was the recumbent figure of an attendant, reclining easily in a chair, his cap pushed over on one ear.

"Bai Jove!" said D'Arcy. "What a neglectful fellow!"

"Shall I stick a pin in him?" asked Baggy Trimble. "It will be fun to hear him yell out, and he dare not have us turned out, for we caught him asleep at his duty!"

"Go ahead, then, Baggy!" said Blake.

Baggy Trimble extracted a pin from the lapel of his coat and inserted it in the leg of the slumbering attendant. Baggy jabbed at the pin, but there wasn't the slightest movement from his victim.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Blake. "You're the third victim, Baggy! It's a waxwork!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

Baggy went red, and the other people in the room laughed heartily. It was one of Madame Tussaud's little jokes, to place that effigy of the slumbering attendant in the Grand Hall. Baggy Trimble was not the only one, by any means, who had been deluded, though probably he was the only person who had dared to stick a pin into the waxwork.

Anthony Woodhead had accompanied the St. Jim's juniors



In the midst of a group of criminals, was a figure the juniors knew only too well. It was the figure of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. Tom Merry & Co. stood rooted to the floor. They were incapable of speech for some moments. The face of D'Arcy was truly remarkable to behold. "Bai Jove!" he gasped. "Am I dreamin', deah boys? Heah is a figure of me."

quite docilely, since his ventriloquist trick on the waxwork policeman.

But when, having viewed the Hall of Kings and Hall No. 4, the juniors, as a brief respite, went into the little cinema at the exhibition, Timbernob slipped away in the darkness. He went out of the building, and was gone ten minutes. When he passed again through the barrier, he carried a large bundle under his arm, and he wore a glistening topper on his head. He dived into the dressing-room where half an hour ago, D'Arcy had had a wash and brush up. When he emerged—well, nobody on earth would have dreamed that that person was Anthony Woodhead, of Magdalen School. For he looked the living image of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Timbernob, whose rubber features responded instantly to his will, had given his face a most remarkable resemblance to the aristocratic features of Arthur Augustus. His height and form were the same, too, and, clad in the immaculate garments that the swell of St. Jim's wore, Timbernob looked D'Arcy to the life.

He saw Tom Merry & Co. emerge from the cinema and go to the buffet for refreshments.

So Timbernob dodged away quickly, sped upstairs, passed through Hall No. 1 into the Grand Hall, and thence passed through the turnstile into the Napoleon Room and the Chamber of Horrors.

The St. Jim's juniors were looking for Anthony. "Wonder where the ass has got to?" said Blake, puckering his brows. "He must have slipped away in the cinema. Hope he's not up to anything."

"He can't get up to anything in a place like this!" said Tom Merry. "Well, chaps, time is getting on, so we had better have a look at the Chamber of Horrors."

"Grooh!" said Baggy Trimble. "Wh-what's down there, you fellows?"

"Oh, all sorts of horrid things," said Levison, with a laugh. "Only those people with strong nerves are advised to go down there, Baggy. I should stop out if I were you. We know what a funk you are, and shouldn't care to have to carry, you back to Edmonton suffering from fits or hysteria."

"Rats!" said Baggy, rather gruffly. "I—I'm not afraid. I'm going down into the Chamber of Horrors!"

The others chuckled, and all went upstairs. The Napoleon Rooms came before the Chamber of Horrors. They found much to interest them in the relics of the great Napoleon. Then they descended the stone steps into the famous Chamber of Horrors.

"Bai Jove!" said D'Arcy, polishing his monocle. "I'm beginnin' to feel wathaw cheep, deah boys. This is where we see waxworks of all the famous ciminals, isn't it?"

"What-ho!" chuckled Monty Lowther. "Well, here we are in the giddy Chamber of Horrors, Gussy!" Just gaze at these tableaux—the "Six Stages of Wrong." Come on, Baggy, these will interest you, too. Mark them well, and be warned in time!"

"Oh, really, Lowther, you beast—" expostulated Baggy. "Have a look into this Coiner's Den, Baggy!" called Ralph Reckless Cardew. "Your chief ambition in life is to make money, isn't it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors found the tableaux highly interesting. Then a guide came up, and told them harrowing stories of crime and murder in connection with the arious exhibits in the Chamber. There was a twinkle in the old man's eye which Tom Merry & Co. did not quite understand.

Suddenly Reilly made a discovery. In the midst of a group of cold-blooded criminals, famous and notorious, was a figure they all knewally too well.

It was a figure of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy!

Tom Merry & Co. stood rooted to the floor.

They were incapable of speech for some moments.

The face of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was truly remarkable to behold. The varying expressions upon it were a sight for gods, and men, and little fishes. He gasped and he gurgled, he gurgled and gasped. His monocle fluttered on its string from his eye. Gussy groped bewilderedly for it, and jammed it into his eye.

"Bai Jove!" he said.

Tom Merry blinked dazedly at the figure.

"Wh-what—who is it?" he muttered.

"It's—it's Gussy's waxwork!" said Blake, in a faint voice.

"In the Chamber of Horrors!" gasped Figgins.

"Great Christopher Columbus!"

The St. Jim's juniors were astounded.

As for Arthur Augustus himself, it took him several minutes to realise the full enormity of an affair.

He gazed at the figure of himself. People came up from all parts of the Chamber of Horrors, and chuckled when they saw Gussy, and his counterpart with the criminals.

"Bai Jove!" gurgled the noble swell of St. Jim's. "Am I dweamin' deah boys? Heah is a figure of me—it it looks like me! Gwest Scott!"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 712.

"It's really Gussy's living image!" said Manners.

Tom Merry turned to the guide.

"What is this?" he demanded. "Who is this figure supposed to represent?"

The guide shook his head.

"Couldn't say, sir," he said. "I don't know anything about it. The figure ain't been here long. My eye! Ain't it the spit of this young gent 'ere!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The usually solemn and silent Chamber of Horrors rang with laughter.

Arthur Augustus turned pink.

"Weasly, deah boys! I see no reason for this wild mewmew!" he exclaimed heatedly. "I—I wefuse to have this figure heah! I considah it a gress insult! The management ought to be prosecutted, bai Jove!"

"Is it really a waxwork?" said Kerr. "Perhaps somebody is having a lark with us. I'll soon see!"

He took a pin from his jacket and jabbed it into the leg of Gussy's double.

The figure did not turn a hair.

"My only summer bonnet!" gasped Blake. "Then it is really a waxwork! A waxwork of Gussy!"

Arthur Augustus pushed back his cuffs.

"I'm goin' to have that figure wemoved!" he exclaimed.

"I absolutely and uttaly wefuse to allow it to remain heah for the public amusement! Pway step out of my way, sir!"

The guide planted himself between Gussy and the "waxwork."

"Hands off, sir!" he said firmly. "It's a rule of the exhibition that figures aren't to be touched."

"I'm goin' to smash that one up!" shrieked D'Arcy excitedly.

"Unless you wemove yourself from my path, I shall have no alternative but to admistiah a feahful thwashin'!"

The guide grinned.

"Guides mustn't be touched either, sir," he said.

"Keep off the grass, Gussy, for goodness' sake!" said Tom Merry. "It's a mystery how that giddy waxwork got there, but—but it must represent somebody."

"It's the limit—the utter, absolute limit!" said Jack Blake.

Arthur Augustus's eyeglass glistened with wrath.

The laughter of the other people in the Chamber of Horrors galled him.

"I demand to see the managh!" he said, in a voice that trembled with indignation. "I wefuse to leave heah until I have had an explanation from the managh!"

"You can't see the manager, sir," said the guide. "He's out!"

"Then I shall remain heah until he returns!"

"Topping wheese that, Gussy!" said Monty Lowther enthusiastically. "Stand right next to your giddy double, and we'll get the visitors to guess which is the waxwork—pin-stabbing not allowed!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

But Arthur Augustus would not be appeased.

When the guide was not looking he made a terrific rush at the waxwork, and smote it forcibly upon the nose.

"Yarooooooogh!"

That yell did not come from D'Arcy. It came from his double.

Tom Merry & Co. almost fell down.

They blinked at the "waxwork," and saw that the nose had changed shape somewhat. It was now long and pointed, and reminiscent of the nasal organ of their lost companion—Timbernob.

The eyes of the "waxwork" blinked, and its hands moved slightly.

Jack Blake gave a roar.

"It's not a waxwork at all! It's that bounder Woodhead!"

"Gwest Scott!"

Next minute, with the suddenness of a streak of lightning, the effigy of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gave a wild leap away from the group of waxworks, and bounded down the centre towards the exit.

"After him!" yelled Tom Merry, recovering from his astonishment. "It's Timbernob! Catch the spooter!"

"Come on, chaps!" roared Blake.

A wild chase was soon in progress. The other visitors to the Room of Horrors made way, shrieking with laughter, for the deluded St. Jim's juniors.

Anthony, chucking at the success of his joke, simply wrenched himself through the turnstile, and pounded along the Hall of Tableaux at a terrific pace.

His legs went like clockwork, and his speed was amazing.

Tom Merry & Co. tore through the turnstile, and flung themselves after the practical joker of Magdalen School.

Right through the tea-room he went, and made tracks for the exit.

"Stop him!" roared Tom Merry. "Catch the awful bounder!"

But everybody was too amazed to arrest the progress of the astonishing Anthony. His face had resumed its normal look, and his legs were stretched so that the trousers he wore

seemed much too short for him. But that fact did not deter his progress.

He dashed out into Baker Street, with the St. Jim's juniors quite twenty yards behind him. Tom Merry, Blake, Talbot, Figgins, and Arey were leading. The others were close behind. Only Skimpole and Baggy Trimble hung in the rear. "He's making for a motor-bus!" howled Blake. "For goodness' sake stop him!"

Anthony was racing along after a motor-omnibus that had just started from its stopping-place. His long legs fairly ate up the space between him and the omnibus. He grasped the rail and vaulted on to the platform. Waving his hand to the St. Jim's fellows, who came up just too late, he climbed on to the top of the bus.

"Good-bye. Bluebells!" he squeaked. "See you at Magdalen anon!"

"Oh, you—you rotter!" howled Tom Merry. "You—you spoofer!"

The St. Jim's fellows gave chase to the bus. It seemed a hopeless task, however.

But George Figgins, the lanky-legged hero of the New House, saved the situation.

A motor-lorry swerved from a side turning in front of the bus, which had to slacken speed. Figgins, running as though on the cinder-track, pounded after the bus and jumped on to the platform. He tugged desperately at the bell.

"Come on, boys!" roared Figgins. "The bus is stopping!"

The driver stopped the bus, and Tom Merry & Co. climbed on one by one.

Anthony, looking over the top rail, gave a gasp of dismay. Tom Merry & Co. bounded up the stairs, and caught Timbernob just as he was about to vault off the deck on to some flour-sacks in a passing vehicle.

"Got you, my beauty!" gasped Tom Merry, rolling over on top of Anthony. "Come on, boys! This is where we get our own back!"

"Yaa, wathah! The feabful wottah!"

"Yarooogh!" howled Anthony. "Leggo! Hands off! Can't you chaps take a joke? Yowp!"

"Got his legs, Talbot? Good! We'll soon have the beggar trussed up!" said Tom Merry.

There were not many other passengers on top of the bus. The conductor came up to see the cause of the disturbance.

He saw a writhing mass of schoolboys. A minute later they separated, and Tom Merry & Co. grinned down at the trussed-up figure of Timbernob. His belt and his necktie and several handkerchiefs made excellent bonds.

"All serene, conductor!" chuckled Tom Merry. "We've just managed to catch a funny practical joker. Set us down at the nearest cab-rank, will you?"

Kerr paid the fares, and five minutes later the St. Jim's juniors alighted from the bus, with Anthony in their midst a prisoner.

People in the street stopped to laugh at poor Anthony. He looked a curious figure trussed up, with his legs bound half-way up his back.

"We'll take taxi back to Edmonton," said Tom Merry. "The fare won't be a great deal if we whip round for it. And we'll make this beggar sit up! We'll take him back to his schoolfellows on a wheelbarrow!"

"Bai Jove!"

Tom Merry outlined his scheme, and all the others chuckled. Anthony Woodhead gasped with dismay.

"Look here!" he exclaimed. "Don't you dare take me back on a barrow! I—I don't see why you can't take a joke—"

"Jokes on St. Jim's are distinctly out of taste—according to our way of thinking!" said Tom Merry severely. "Those who jape any of our fellows always suffer! Blake, old chap, there's some news over there. See if you can hire a wheelbarrow for a few bob, will you?"

"What-ho!"

Blake returned in ten minutes, trundling a barrow and smiling.

"Ten bob did the trick," he said. "This barrow's due back to-night."

"Good egg!" chuckled Tom Merry. "The taximan can bring it back."

Anthony was dumped into the wheelbarrow, and tied there by means of some rope that Monty Lowther procured from a store near by.

Then two taxis were summoned, and the drivers, good-natured fellows enough, were "let into" the jape.

The wheelbarrow was tied to the back of the first taxi, and Tom Merry & Co. climbed in. Those who could not find accommodation inside the taxis climbed on to the roofs. The drivers did not mind, for they entered into the "rag" wholeheartedly.

"Right away, driver!" bawled Blake, from the roof of the first taxi.

The taxis drove off, the first one pulling the wheelbarrow in which lay poor Anthony.

A crowd collected to watch the "rag."

Shouts of laughter rent the air as the strange procession moved off.

The two taxis, alive with schoolboys, and the wheelbarrow in between, buzzed along the road, causing great fun and excitement everywhere.

Bump, bump, bump! went the wheelbarrow.

"Yooop!" howled Anthony. "Lemme go, you rotters!"

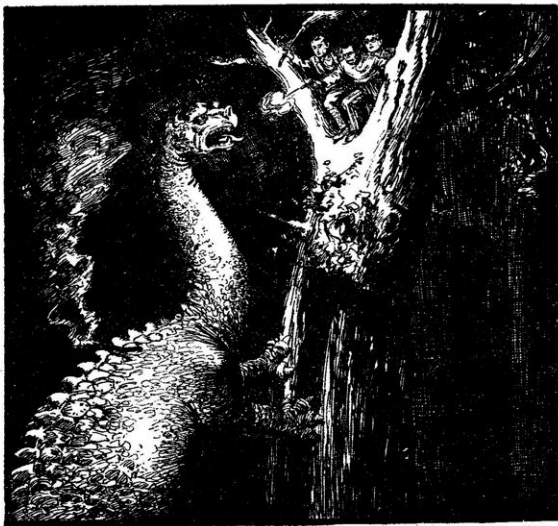
(Continued on page 18.)

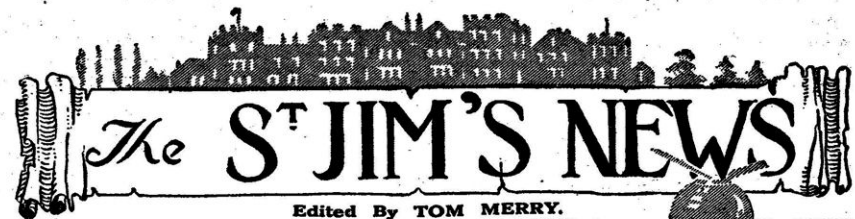
## A Thrilling Scene from "The Valley of Surprise."

An Amazing Adventure  
Story Coming Soon in  
The

# "GEM."

Look Out For It!





Edited By TOM MERRY.

## How Gussy Arrived at St. Jim's.

### AN HISTORIC OCCASION.

By ETHEL OLEVELAND.

**B**y now Jack Blake had fairly settled down in his position as leader of the Fourth Form. His own arrival at the school had been quite eventful, and many highly interesting scenes had happened since. In fact, from his first day at St. Jim's, Jack had not experienced a dull moment.

But little did Blake dream, when Eric Kildare called him into his study and told him a new boy was coming under the name of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, that every single occurrence which had previously taken place was to take on a significance compared with the sensation which the new boy was going to cause.

Blake imagined all sorts of things when Kildare said the boy was a little out of the common—that he had suffered from an indiscreet training through the hands of a number of very particular aunts. Blake pictured gloomily how the House would be able to chip them, and make fun of their new boy.

This is a very fitting description of my cousin when he first strutted across the old quadrangle at St. Jim's.

"He was tall for his age, and rather slim. He was clad in Etons which fitted him like a glove; he wore the slickest of silk hats, the finest of fancy waistcoats, the shiniest of patent leathers, and the most delicate of lavender kid gloves. He also wore an eyeglass, which was screwed in his eye, and he was smoking round him with languid interest."

The sight of him was too great for Figgy & Co. of the New House. They fell upon each other's necks, and wept with joy.

"D'Arcy went up to Figgins, and addressed him in a languid tone.

"Is this—ah—the School House? Where is the aw—er—ah—in my trunk?"

"I am the porter's boy," said Figgins, in a meek and humble voice. "What is your name, sir?"

"Arthur Augustus D'Arcy!" replied the newcomer.

Then Figgins had a severe attack from some internal pain which doubled him up in a very curious manner.

"That extremely curious little boys!" mused D'Arcy.

He strutted off for the School House, and his carriage was very lofty. Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn fell in behind him in file, and strutted along in the same manner.

The sight was so ridiculous that the Housemaster, standing on the School House steps, could not help bursting into a roar. D'Arcy screwed his monocle into his eye three times, and then surveyed the Housemaster.

"Weally, my man," he remarked, "I fall to see the cause for your weimwint."

Mr. Kidd informed D'Arcy that he was the Housemaster.

"Aw—weally! Well, kindly have directions given for my trunks to be taken up to my room," said D'Arcy, with a wave of his hand. "I should like to have my tea sent up immediately. The tea must be strong, and the muffins hot. If the muffins are cold I will have a complaint made to the doctah. You had also better get my bath prepared, and the bath must be clean. I should also like you to see that the bedclothes on my bed are germ. Now, my man, where are my quarters?"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 712.

Can you wonder that poor Mr. Kidd could hardly get out his hand to shake him? Of course, Percy meant to have vengeance, and when Mr. Latham wasn't looking, he lowered himself in his seat, and gave my cousin a sharp kick on the shins.

Three other boys were sitting on the same form as Arthur, and as the sudden attack sent my cousin sprawling backwards, the other three had to follow.

One of them had been in the very act of raising a cup of hot tea to his mouth. The contents of this shed itself down Arthur's beautiful waistcoat, while Percy Mellish sat on the other side of the table looking a picture of innocence.

Mellish didn't escape, though, because my cousin thought it only wise and proper to point out to the master the person who had caused all the trouble.

When Gussy arrived in Study No. 6, after tea, he found Blake and Herries and Digby araced with choppers. They were trying to crash up the lid of one of his trunks to get some firewood. My cousin made frantic objections, and at length his trunks were borne away to the box-room. When Blake came back he gave D'Arcy a very serious talking to.

"Your potty manners and customs may be quite all right for a monkey-house," he said, "but the wood do for St. Jim."

Arthur Augustus, as all of you know, is now the sole of honour, and always has been as far back as any of you can remember. That was why the boys were so tick which Blake gave him moved him round, and he saw the errors of his ways. In fact, when he found out that the jam he had so liberally helped himself to at tea-time had been the personal property of Mellish, he immediately went along and offered that junior an apology. Mellish quickly made it up, it being necessary for him to do so before his plan of vengeance against the swell form of the school could be put into operation.

"That's quite all right!" Mellish assured Gussy. "I have just had a fearful licking, but, bless you, I don't mind! I only hope you will forgive my cheek in kicking so superior a person as yourself."

He then went on to tell Arthur Augustus that as he was no ordinary person he would not have to sleep in an ordinary dormitory like the other boys. He would be allotted a special bed-room all to himself. It was then agreed that just before bedtime D'Arcy would look into Percy's study, and be shown the way to his room. On his way back Arthur passed the junior common-room, and glanced in.

The sight which met his eyes made him boil with indignation.

A number of the younger boys were amusing themselves at a new game. One of them was sitting on a rug with a huge top-hat pulled down over his eyes, twirling a poker in lieu of a cane, and keeping a shilling screwed in his eye in place of a monocle. The rest of the fellows were screaming with laughter, which was redoubled when D'Arcy looked round the door.

"Haw, haw!" sniffed the youngster, whose performance was so amusing to the Third Formers to such mirth. "Don't yer know 'o I am? My name is—haw—Harthaw Augustus Jull-huss Sneasar De Harcy! Get off the earth all you beastly, common little middle-class boys!"

D'Arcy beat a rapid retreat from the room, and decided to go up to his study. He soon grew tired of that, and the manner in which he went for a stroll outside. As he reached the stairs a senior passed by and sent his hat flying off.

Before he had covered the length of another corridor, another prefect passed, and, with the warning not to do it again, sent his hat to the floor.

Just at that moment, however, a terrific bumping was heard out in the corridor, and, opening the door, Jack Blake observed the porter and the pageboy dragging some heavy trunk along the corridor. When they had been dumped in Study No. 6, they occupied about half the ground space, and Blake, in surprise, asked him what they contained.

"This is a small portion of my wopacity. The rest is at the station," answered D'Arcy. "Of course I had to bring my dress clothes, and half a dozen top-hats. But I managed to limit myself to twenty-five waistcoats. Then, of course, these is my football widge."

"Your what?" gurgled Blake, clutching to the banisters for support. "You aren't going to say that you can play football?"

"No, I have never played yet, admitted D'Arcy, "because it's such a frightfully wuff game. But I am told that football is a very great feat-hah at all public schools, so I shall probably play for the first eleven."

Before Blake & Co. could recover from that bombshell, the tea-bell rang. My cousin asked Jack whether the tea he had ordered from the Housemaster would be brought to the study.

Blake replied by catching hold of Gussy by one of his ears. Herries grasped his necktie, and Digby his right boot. Together they bumped him down every stair, and plumped him into a seat in the dining-hall.

D'ARCY, MELLISH, AND SOME JAM.

Gussy was the object of a great deal of talk and chatter during the meal. In fact, the running commentary on him grew so trying that he jumped up at last and addressed them.

"You are extremely wude little boys," he said. "I am accustomed to bein' treated with great respect—"

"Are you?" murmured Percy Mellish. "Well, how's that for a bread across the table, and caught Gussy in the eye. This caused a big commotion, and took five minutes to settle.

Now, as most of you know, the junior boys are not obliged, at each, to have some bread-and-butter, tea, and one small piece of cake. But if a junior cares to buy himself a pot of jam, or some other little dainty, he is at liberty to do so. This was what Percy had done, and naturally Gussy's request to hand him his own jam, under the circumstances, seemed rather cool.

As Percy only appeared at each, and seemed in no hurry to oblige, Arthur stretched his hand across the table and helped himself.

Then he accented Kildare, the captain of the school, and Kildare told him that he wasn't allowed to wear a silk hat unless it was a Sunday, or a special walk with a master.

"I am—aw—accustomed to pleasin' myself in such matters," said my cousin frigidly.

"And I shall certainly take no notice whatever of your instructions, my fellow—"

But the look in Kildare's eyes made Gussy decide that he would, and he took off his hat and walked out into the quadrangle with it off.

Before he had taken many steps he was surrounded by Figgy & Co., who were just about ripe for it.

Now most of you know who is the worst prefect at St. Jim's, from my previous articles. So can any of you guess into whose room Percy Melmoth took the student and guinea Gussy for his first night's rest? No doubt you can, but for a description of it all—including what Figgy & Co. do—you must wait until you get your next Wednesday's "Gem."

COUSIN ETHEL.

## Spending a Thousand Pounds.

HOW I DID IT!

By AUBREY RACKE.

**T**OM MERRY usually gets hold of a good idea as often as red ink turns blue for him, but I must confess he hit the right note when he decided to publish an article on the above subject. What surprises me most, is that he should drop upon me to do the job. He generally picks upon one who has his own clique to write all his stuff, whether they know anything about the subject in hand or not! However, I expect he realised that none of them had ever handled such a sum, and accordingly came to me to get the real goods, as it were.

After a few minutes' thought I came to the decision that Rylcombe or Wayland would suit me, but I must confess I want to spend one's cash. London is the place. But to go up to London I must obtain a pass from the headmaster, and such a state of affairs requires further thought.

Saturday afternoon everything in the garden is lovely. I simply addressed the Head a letter which I had received from my pater, asking me to slip home for the week-end to view some historical buildings which would prove highly interesting to a schoolboy who is eager to learn things. That's me to a t'p, isn't it? Of course, the old scout promptly handed over a pass for the week-end. I left the study, I tucked the pass into my inside pocket, and stalked away to my bosom pal, Gerald Cutts, of the Fifth.

"Cheerio, old man!" I began. "Can you lend me your morning-coat?"

"Eh? My whichwhatter!" repeated Cutts.

"Your best Sunday or low-tail morning-coat!" was my cool request.

"What the dickens-for?" demanded Cutts, in amazement.

"I'm going to spend another week-end in London, you know, and I want to cut a dash!" I grinned.

Cutts, after a few moments' thought, gave way, and left the study. He knows I can be exceedingly wise when I like. He returned to the study in a few minutes with his best coat on his arm.

"Here you are, old chap!" he said affably. "Mind I ask you're going with it?"

"Yess, a nice young 'un," he replied.

Cutts heaved a deep, long sigh, and growled:

"Some chaps get all the luck!"

"I'm going to spend another week-end in London, you know, and I want to cut a dash!" I grinned.

"Here you are, old chap!" he said affably. "Mind I ask you're going with it?"

"Yess, a nice young 'un," he replied.

Cutts heaved a deep, long sigh, and growled:

"Some chaps get all the luck!"

"Ah, that's the telling!"

"That Levison kid?" suggested the Fifth.

"Doris Levison!" I snorted. "What the dickens!"

Cutts gave way to an explosive exhortation.

"Not much in your line, I know! But you might tell me who she is!" he persisted, burning with curiosity.

"Little boys shouldn't ask questions!" I said, with a reproving grin.

"But I'm going to be taking back some decent tuck and things suitable for our club," he advised, rather gruffly. "Now the dark evenings are setting in, we can do with a few good smokes, and some nice things to drink—"

"Trust your little Aubrey!" I returned, and left the study.

From the Fifth Form passage, I made my way to the Shell dorm. Here I cast off my junior schoolboy togs, and in their place donned a pair of immaculately-creased bags, black-and-white stripes, you know. Then a white shirt, and next a waistcoat which would have made Beau Brummell gasp for water. Next came a white, pointed collar and a bow tie.

Finally I donned patent boots, white spats, tucked best coat, my newest silk hat. Gathered my gold watch and chain, camolis gloves, and a gold-nobbed walking-stick. By this time I looked such a giddy young fellow that a Burlington Bertha, the woman I left the school, I was obliged to slip out through the back entrance to escape meeting a senior and getting kicked back into the dormitory again to take the whole staff of the school. I was the son of a multi-millionaire to be in, isn't it?

As soon as I got clear of the tradesman's entrance, I found Sloane, my chauffeur, had carried out my instructions, and brought round my Rolls-Royce.

I dived into the tonneau, and was soon being borne away towards Wayland.

Of course, this isn't the first thousand quid I've waded through, not by long chalks. The two great things I got violet de Indes and Berrymore, cost nearly a thousand to keep going; while that big Shell versus Fourth competition a few years back cost me two hundred and fifty in bets. I paid seventy-six pounds for my first car, and I don't mean to indulge in a modest chuckle among ourselves—to view some historical buildings which would prove highly interesting to a schoolboy!

(To see what Doreen does with this huge sum of money, and what dire consequences Aubrey Racke will have to face when he returns to St. Jim's, see your next week's "Gem!")

### MAKING THE MONEY FLY.

Arriving at a certain address in the most select part of Wayland, I left my car and dug out the young lady with whom I indulge in a modest chuckle among ourselves—to view some historical buildings which would prove highly interesting to a schoolboy!

She was quite ready to go to the Fifth. So you see, when I was ready, the car turned off for the railway-station. Here, luckily, a fast train to Victoria was waiting, so I abandoned my car, and told Bloane to come on up to town as fast as possible.

The cost of a first-class Pullman ride together with a few refreshments on board, necessitated me saying good-bye-ee to a ten-quidner.

Doreen Margot Roselle was the name of a famous cello player appearing at the Frivolity Theatre, Wayland, next week. It was also the name of one of my nicest costumes, and incidentally, the person who invited to accompany me on my expensive jaunt.

Doreen is eighteen and a half, and quite four inches shorter than I am, but on the whole, she's a dinky little girl. In fact, I don't mind admitting that her presence properly thrilled me. When the train rattled through the suburban districts, Doreen grew quite talkative.

"How much money have you brought with you, Aubrey?" she asked.

"Fourpence!" I replied, looking intently out of the window.

"Does that mean four hundred or four thou.?" she smiled knowingly.

"Neither," I said, with polite sarcasm. "It means four hundred thousand."

"Oh, how perfectly lovely!" murmured daintily Doreen, quite enraptured with the very idea. "I thought you would have some money to spend, so I prepared quite a long list of things I really want."

"Looks like a list," she said shortly, and snipped the scribbled list from her hand.

It turned out to be a list of those in-

expensive articles, such as only a girl would want, and ran something like as follows: a nice mink, a platinum ring, with a big diamond in the centre; a gold watch, set with brilliants, and an expanding thimblemy-jig; one dozen silk handkerchiefs, in pretty colours; a new pair of gloves, a nice cash of Indian silk, a dozen boxes of soap, at ten-and-six a box; a two-pound box of choce, at ten shillings a pound; one Japanese tree, three-fifty years old, in an ancient Egyptian vessel; a nice head bag, at forty pounds; three bottles of Indian perfume, a manicure set, at fifteen pounds; an ermine stole and hat to match, a pair of dancing slippers with gold buttons, a new hat with ostrich feathers, a gold link purse, a new bicycle, at twenty-five pounds; a new camera, at twenty-five pounds; a Staffordshire tea-service, a Wedgwood rose-bowl, with a gold wire frame; a portable typewriter, and a ladies' dressing-case at two hundred guineas—"

This was only half my cousin's "list," which concluded with a rope of pearls; but I had to stop "digesting" it because we had reached Victoria.

"What do you think of my list?" began Doreen, as soon as we had quitted the station.

"Splendid!" I commented, with a nod. "Though you might have put down the whole of London while you were about it!"

Doreen gave vent to a girlish giggle, and then went on:

"You've got plenty more money when you've bled this lot, haven't you?"

"Oh, pots and pots, heaps and heaps, pies and pies!" I said, with that light air, which was only natural with a fellow who really had money.

"Well," suggested Doreen, with another giggle, "give me the pile you've brought with you, and let me do a bit of the spending for a change. I think you'd like the position, Aubrey!"

I was fearfully obstinate at first, but soon realised the drift of Doreen's statement. After all, I hadn't got anything specially I wanted to buy—except, that is, for a new pipe in the place of one Fa Selby took an affection for, and some odds and ends for our Smart Set Club at St. Jim's—so I began to consider.

At length Doreen introduced her most wistful look, and her most persuasive manner into the argument, and this quickly "got over" me.

I gave way, and handed over nine hundred and fifty in a wad. The remaining forty I had to hang on to for my own safety.

But Doreen did not seem very delighted with the amount I had given her.

"Do you mean to say this is all you've brought with you?" she asked, gazing discontentedly at the notes I had placed in her hands.

(To see what Doreen does with this huge sum of money, and what dire consequences Aubrey Racke will have to face when he returns to St. Jim's, see your next week's "Gem!")



The arrival of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy at St. Jim's.

(See article on page 14.)



## A Magnificent Story of Life at Millford College. By IVOR HAYES.

Tom Mace, the son of a crackman, wins a scholarship for Millford College. The poor circumstances in which he has lived earn for him the scorn of Simon Lundy & Co. Spikey Meadows, a fellow crackman of Mr. Bill Mace, Tom's father, tries to persuade the lad to leave a window open so that he can enter the school at night. The following day Tom meets Mr. Gale, whom he had seen in conversation with Meadows when journeying to the school. Mr. Gale warns Tom against this man. After lights-out one evening Spikey Meadows meets Lundy, who readily falls into a cunning scheme to bring about the downfall of Mace. That same night the Head's study is burgled. Tom, hearing the noise, rushes below, and it is through this action that he himself is accused of the burglary by Mr. Gale, whom he learns is a private detective. Will Tom be expelled?

(Now read on.)

### Tom's Visitor.

SIMON LUNDY, his hands dug deeply into his pockets, leaned against the wall by the school gates. Lundy's face wore an extremely unpleasant smile, and his chums, Bradshaw and Garnet, who were with him, looked no more amiable.

"At last that cad's going!" said Lundy. "Tom Mace, the picture-book hero—the captain of the Form, you know, is going to be expelled for burglary."

"He, he, he!" sneered Bradshaw.

"And Garnet grinned his appreciation of Lundy's sentiment. "That means you'll get the captaincy again, Simon, old bird!" he said.

"The cad deserves all he's getting," sneered Lundy. "I—Hullo! Who's this?"

Lundy turned his head in surprise, for a woman had entered the school gates. She was small, and her clothes, which were rather plain, showed signs of hard wear.

"My hat, I know that old gal!" said Garnet disrespectfully.

"You don't mean—" gasped Lundy. "By George, it's Tom Mace's mother!"

"Oh, by gad!" murmured Bradshaw.

The school porter motioned with his hand, indicating the School House, and the elderly woman, her head bowed slightly, moved across the quadrangle.

"This is where we come in, my lads," grinned Lundy. "Follow auntie!"

And, in single file, the three oads followed the woman across the quadrangle, imitating her walk. Several fellows lounging about grinned, and others frowned their displeasure at seeing a Millford junior walking a woman in this way.

"Mrs. Mace—for Garnet had guessed rightly—entered the school building, and inquired her way to the headmaster's study. Smythe of the Fourth, who was in the passage, acted as her guide, and soon the woman was interviewing the headmaster.

"Dear me!" said Dr. Mason, rather surprised at the visit. "I am afraid I do not know your name—er—you have not been announced."

"Oh, forgive me, sir, if I'm intruding!" pleaded the woman. "I've come about my Tom—my boy, Tom Mace. You wrote to say he was being expelled."

"Oh!"

Dr. Mason reseat himself at his desk, took off his spectacles, and wiped them, and replaced them upon his nose.

"Hem!" he said, leaning back in his chair, and crossing his hands in front of him. He regarded Mrs. Mace doubtfully, and motioned her to a chair.

"I am afraid nothing can be done, madam," he said, with raised eyebrows. "I may say, however, that, until this outbreak, your son's conduct was exemplary. But—but the fact

is, as I explained in my letter to you—he left open a window so that his father and some other man might enter. The affair so far as your son is concerned, has not been put into the hands of the police yet. The man Meadows has been traced. I learn, and will, of course, be brought to justice."

"But, Tom," cried the woman. "Oh, it is untrue about him, sir! My Tom is not a thief! He would not steal—Oh, do believe me, sir!"

Dr. Mason shook his head.

"I should very much like to believe you, Mrs. Mace," he said sadly. "When your son first came to Millford, I was convinced that he would turn out a credit to the school." He shrugged his shoulders meaningly.

"But cannot I see him," pleaded the little woman, holding out her work-scarred hands, "just for one minute? I must see him!"

The headmaster eyed his blotting-pad reflectively for some moments before replying. Then he looked up.

"Very well, madam, just for a few minutes. I cannot refuse you this small favour. I will ring for the pageboy—No, I will accompany you myself."

He rose from his chair, and opened the door for Mrs. Mace. "This way," he said, and led on.

When they reached the corridor leading to the punishment-room, they found Bob Peel in argument with Stanson of the Sixth. Stanson was on duty there to prevent Tom Mace receiving visitors.

"Peel," said the headmaster sternly, "you have no right to be here!"

"Oh!" exclaimed Peel, wheeling. "Can't I see Tom, just for one minute, please?" He spoke eagerly, and Mrs. Mace, her eyes shining, stepped forward.

"You want to see Tom?" she cried. "My son? You believe him innocent? Oh, say you do!"

Bob Peel was staggered for a moment.

"Of course I believe him innocent!" he replied. "But you—er—are his mother?"

"Yes, yes!" said the little woman proudly. "And you—I can see that you are a friend of his!"

Dr. Mason blinked angrily.

"Hem! I am afraid, madam, that I cannot consent to Peel being in this corridor!" he said sternly. "A rule has been made that no boy is to be here, and that rule must be obeyed!"

Bob Peel turned to Mrs. Mace.

"Please tell Tom that I believe him innocent," he said. "Tell him that it will come right in the end. I will try to find the culprit."

Stanson of the Sixth caught the junior's arm, and dragged him away. Then Mrs. Mace followed the headmaster into the small punishment-room.

On the small, narrow bed sat a boy, his head bowed in his hands, motionless. He did not appear to have heard the door open, and Mrs. Mace moved forward softly.

"Tom!" she whispered.

"Mother!" cried Tom, starting in surprise. "Mother, you here!"

The woman dropped to her knees beside the lad, and two tears dropped on to Tom's hands. He placed his arms round his mother's neck, and Dr. Mason turned away.

"Tom," whispered the woman. "You did not do it? Tell me. I will believe you!"

"I did not do it, mother," whispered the lad. "I don't know how it happened. I—I thought Mr. Gale was the culprit. But the Head says he is a detective."

"But haven't you any idea who—who it was?" pleaded the woman, looking her son full in the eyes.

"The thief!" exclaimed Tom bitterly. "I know who he was, mother. Everyone knows that—Spikey Meadows!"



"Spiky Meadows!" echoed the woman. "Oh, Tom, that man! Oh! Then your father—"

She did not finish her sentence, but stared at her son in sorrow.

Tom nodded his head miserably, knowing what his mother's look had meant.

"And he is not at home?" he whispered softly.

The woman shook her head. She looked away, the tears trickling down her worn cheeks.

"They have arrested him!" she whispered.

"Arrested him!" cried Tom. "Oh, mother!"

"It was bound to come," sighed the woman. "But now I know—They arrested him for this!"

"I suppose so," mumbled Tom. "But, mother, don't worry about me. I can bear this."

"You sha'n't, Tom!" gulped the woman. "Oh, that he should have done this! He must know you are innocent!"

"Go, mother dear!" whispered the lad. "The Head is waiting."

Tom kissed her tenderly, and she rose slowly to her feet. She swayed rather; and the headmaster, fearing she would faint, caught her in his arms.

"Good-bye, Tom!" she whispered, bending down and kissing his head. Then, trembling and crying softly, she followed Dr. Mason from the small room.

And Tom Mace was left alone—alone with his thoughts.

### Exit Two.

"MY aunt!" ejaculated Bob Peel, and he stared hard at the announcement that had been placed upon the school notice-board. He and the rest of the Form were on their way to the dormitory that evening when the notice-board caught Bob's attention.

Quite a crowd of juniors gathered round the board, and all looked blankly surprised. For on the board was a most unusual notice.

Slowly, so that all could hear, Smythe of the Fourth read it aloud:

"Owing to ill-health, Mr. Mullins will be unable to continue his duty at the school. During his absence Mr. Brown will take charge of the Fourth Form.

"(Signed) ARTHUR MASON.  
"(Headmaster)."

"Mullins going away!" echoed Lundy.

"Blessed if I'd noticed any signs of illness!" said Hill.

"Weak head, perhaps," suggested Bob Peel.

And there was a laugh; Bob's suggestion certainly did seem to further matters. Mr. Mullins' complaint was likely

to remain a deep mystery. But, save perhaps Lundy, no one seemed disappointed at the news.

"Who's Brown?" came a general query.

"Third Form-master—as hard as nails," said Bob Peel briefly. "That's the only Brown in the school."

It was evening-time, and too late then to test the matter. So the juniors had to wait until next morning before they could pass any opinions on the master's good or bad points.

Meanwhile, Mr. Mullins, in his study, was packing in frantic haste. He had had no difficulty at all in convincing Dr. Mason of his illness. His trembling hands, his absolute inability to control his nerves, were evidence of an approaching break-down. As the Head quickly saw, Mr. Mullins had to go.

It had been quite late in the evening before the master broached the subject, and Peel had seen the notice as he and the other Fourth-Formers were on their way to bed.

Where he was to go Mr. Mullins had not quite decided; but he wanted to get away—right away—before there was further trouble. And, although he had told Dr. Mason that he had left nothing of a compromising nature did he make his escape.

He was a careful-living man, and had saved up quite a large sum of money. With that and what he would be able to earn he could live in comfort. Rogue though he was, Mr. Mullins was clever, and with the use of a little cunning he was sure of getting some remunerative position as master or private tutor.

He did not go until it was dark. For some considerable time he rummaged through his drawers and cupboards, destroying papers and letters. Not until he was quite sure that he had left nothing of a compromising nature did he make his escape.

But even when he reached the school door that led into the quadrangle he did not feel quite safe. There was still Tom Mace, he reflected.

Suppose Mace were proved innocent. Would he be suspected before he had time to get clear? He trembled with agitation. Any minute Spiky Meadows might be arrested. And from Meadows the master expected no mercy. Meadows would expose him.

There was only one way. Tom Mace must be freed—freed before the real truth came out. But how?

The master slowly wended his way back to his study. He flung himself into his chair, deep in thought. Mace must be freed!

He had a key to the punishment-room on his school key-chain, and it did not take him long to devise a scheme.

Drawing a sheet of notepaper towards him he scrawled upon it, in printed letters:

"Key to room. Tear this up.—Bob."

He chuckled as he read this message through. He was too clever to sign it "Peel," for he knew what great friends the two lads were—although, anyway, Mace was not likely to suspect that the message was a fraud.

Silently and stealthily the master crept along the punishment-room, and slipped the key and scrap of paper under the door. He tapped lightly, and heard Tom get up.

He waited a while to hear if Tom had discovered the key, then, as a match struck and a light gleamed under the door, he fled quickly.

Bag in hand, he went through the main door, leaving it ajar.

The master ran across the quadrangle and out through the side gate, to which he had obtained another key, saying he had lost his. Spiky Meadows still had that original key, he reflected.

Out in the lane, the master walked hurriedly, beads of perspiration standing out on his forehead. Lest he should arouse suspicion, he avoided the main road and cut through the hedge at the side.

It was a very dark night and Mr. Mullins had to step carefully; for there had been a heavy fall of rain, and puddles abounded.

Behind him was Tom Mace, but he did not know that.

(To be concluded next week.)

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## TOM MERRY & CO'S TRIP.

(Continued from page 13.)

Groooogh! Oh, won't Valentine and the others pay you out for this!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Merry & Co., in the taxis. Hugh Valentine & Co. were all crowded outside the gates of Magdalen School when the taxis drove up.

They had to hold each other up in their amazement when they saw the wheelbarrow and Anthony inside it.

"My only sainted aunt!" gasped the captain of the Upper Fourth, staggering out with his chums. "Wh-what the—who the—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Merry. "We've brought Timbarnob back to the fold, Valentine, old scout! He got too playful, so we had to keep him under supervision!"

"Yow-yow-yow!" moaned Anthony, blinking dolefully at his schoolfellows from the wheelbarrow. "Lemme loose, you chaps! Wow! I—I'm aching all over!"

Hugh Valentine & Co. grasped the wheelbarrow and released their chum.

Tom Merry & Co. paid the drivers, and then crowded into the gateway of Magdalen School.

Hugh Valentine and his schoolmates looked grimly at the St. Jim's fellows.

"Chaps," said Valentine, "I know it's not quite the thing to mop up the quad with visitors, but under the circumstances—"

"My sons," cried Tom Merry, "we all know that it's rather a breach of good manners to apostatize people we are staying with, but in this case I think—"

"Ah, boys, you are back! You must be hungry! Have you had an interesting afternoon?"

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**ALDGATE.**—The Ald or Old Gate of the City.

**GILTSBUR STREET.**—So called from the knights who in the olden days used to ride this way to Smithfield for the tournaments.

**SMITHFIELD.**—Formerly called Smooth-field.

**HATTON GARDEN.**—Called after Sir C. Hatton, Queen Elizabeth's favourite, who lived at Ely Place, near by.

**BLACKFRIARS.**—Called after a convent of Dominican Friars.

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#### LONDON'S WALL.

At the time of the Roman occupation—43 A.D.—409 A.D.—London's area was 380 acres, and around the city the Romans built London Wall. It was 3½ miles in length, and had several gates, the names of which still survive to-day, as does portions of the wall—Ludgate, New-

gate, Aldersgate, Cripplegate, Moorgate, Bishopsgate and Aldgate. The Tower forming the gate on the east, and Billingsgate the eighth, a gate on the river. During this period, and for many centuries after, London Bridge was the only means of crossing the river, save for one or two ferries. The principle buildings at this time in London were Old St. Paul's, Royal Exchange, Leadenhall, Baynard Castle, The Tower, Allhallows', Barking, Allhallows', Staining, Crossly Hall, St. Helen's. In 1665 Lord Macaulay writes, "Chelsea is a peaceful village with one thousand inhabitants, and Islington is almost a solitude, and posts love to contrast its silence with the 'Ground within London Wall.'" — L. S. Brown, 15, Rannoch Road, Hammersmith, W. 6.

It was Mr. Mallet, the Housemaster, or "Tommy," as the juniors affectionately called him. The dapper little master bustled through the gates and smiled benignly upon Tom Merry & Co.

Had he only known it, he had saved the situation. But for the appearance of Mr. Mallet, the two parties of schoolboys would have hurled themselves at each other and proceeded to have a "rag."

Tom Merry & Co. grinned.

"We've had a very interesting time, thank you, sir," replied Tom Merry. "Madame Tussaud's is a grand place, and we enjoyed all we saw there."

"That is excellent!" gushed "Tommy," rubbing his hands. "And now, my dear boys, come in and have tea. The meal is ready for you in the Hall."

"Thank you, sir!"

Tom Merry & Co. trooped away across the quadrangle, led by Mr. Mallet.

They smiled sweetly at Hugh Valentine & Co. as they passed.

The Upper Fourth-Formers looked quite disappointed.

"Never mind!" said Valentine, allowing his handsome face to break out into a smile. "I dare say you deserved all you got, Anthony! Have you had some fun with 'em?"

"Yow-ow!" gasped the rubber-limbed junior. "I don't know who had the most fun, they or I!"

Tom Merry & Co., partaking of tea in the magnificent Hall of Magdalen School, chuckled over the events of the afternoon.

THE END.

(NEXT WEEK.—Don't miss the wonderful story of the chums of St. Jim's. This deals with a fierce battle between Figgins & Co. of the New House, and Tom Merry & Co. of the School House. Just the thrilling sort of yarn you have been waiting for. Extra special!)

gate, Aldersgate, Cripplegate, Moorgate, Bishopsgate and Aldgate. The Tower forming the gate on the east, and Billingsgate the eighth, a gate on the river. During this period, and for many centuries after, London Bridge was the only means of crossing the river, save for one or two ferries. The principle buildings at this time in London were Old St. Paul's, Royal Exchange, Leadenhall, Baynard Castle, The Tower, Allhallows', Barking, Allhallows', Staining, Crossly Hall, St. Helen's. In 1665 Lord Macaulay writes, "Chelsea is a peaceful village with one thousand inhabitants, and Islington is almost a solitude, and posts love to contrast its silence with the 'Ground within London Wall.'" — L. S. Brown, 15, Rannoch Road, Hammersmith, W. 6.



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