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"He's an Impoetor!"

A Dramatic Moment From "UNDER FALSE COLOURS!" The Sparkling St. Jim's Story Within

THE STORY OF THE BOY WHO WANTED TO SWOT INSTEAD OF—

UNDER FALSE COLOURS!



By **MARTIN CLIFFORD**

CHAPTER 1.
One of the Family!

“**B**LOOD—”

“Eh?”

“Blood—”

“Where?” asked Jack Blake of the Fourth Form at St. Jim’s, staring round Study No. 6 with pretended alarm. “Where, and whose?”

“Weally, Blake—”

“Has somebody been committing giddy murders, or is it merely the crimson stream from the harmless and necessary punch on the nose?” asked Blake.

Arthur Augustus D’Arcy, the swell of St. Jim’s, jammed his monocle into his eye and gave his facetious chum a withering look, which did not, however, have the effect of withering Blake. He never even turned a hair.

“I vegard you as an ass, Blake! I was goin’ to say that blood is thickah than watah—”

“Oh, I see,” said Blake, with an air of great relief. “I see!” He dipped his pen in the ink, and turned to his work again. “I believe I’ve heard the same thing before. Dry up now, or I shall never get this impot finished!”

“Blood—”

“My hat! He’s beginning again!” exclaimed Digby, looking up from the lemon-squash he was slowly absorbing through the medium of a straw. “Can’t you get to a more tasty subject, Gussy?”

“Weally, Dig—”

“Yes, do dry up!” said Blake. “I’ve got to get this impot done by tea-time—”

“I was goin’ to say—”

“Well, don’t!”

“You uttah ass! I weally think that when a chap is in a difficult posish he ought to be able to wely on his fwields to back him up!” exclaimed the swell of St. Jim’s indig-

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nantly. “I was wemarkin’ that blood is thickah than watah, and therefore it is a chap’s dutay to stand by his welations.”

The chums of the Fourth Form stared at Arthur Augustus D’Arcy. D’Arcy had been sitting silent a long time, while Blake was writing out his imposition, and Digby was absorbing lemon-squash, and Herries was mending a dog’s collar. The swell of the Fourth had suddenly broken out with these incomprehensible statements, and the chums of the Fourth could not help wondering what was the matter.

“Well, I suppose a chap ought to stand by his relations, if he’s got to stand,” said Blake in a very thoughtful way; “but in this hot and tiring weather I should recommend sitting down as much as possible.”

“Ass!”

“Well, that’s my advice—take it or leave it!” said Blake. “If you want to stand by your relations, you can stand. Is it a case of standing room only?”

“I wefuse to weply to such fwivolous wemarks! I was sayin’ that blood is thickah than watah, and it is a chap’s dutay to stand by his welations, whatever they are like; so I shall have to stand by young Devigne.”

“My dear chap, I don’t see any objection to your standing by him,” said Blake soothingly. “You can stand by him till you get an ache in each leg, if you like. But who is he, where is he, what is he, and why is he?”

“He is a distant cousin—I mean, a distant welation—and he is comin’ to St. Jim’s,” said Arthur Augustus. “I have had a lettah ffrom my governah. I had wathah expected to find a fivah in it, but instead of a fivah I had this wotten information! My relative is comin’ to St. Jim’s, and he is goin’ in the Shell.”

“Then Tom Merry & Co. will have some of his society,” said Blake. “What is he like?”

“I don’t know.”

“I suppose you know him, ass?”

“I decline to be called an ass—and I don’t know him, eithah. I have nevah seen him. I have heard a lot about

-GOING TO SEA, AND WHO CAME TO ST. JIM'S AS A VISCOUNT!

him," said D'Arcy dolefully. "He had a wotten reputation. He is only fifteen years old, and he has been allowed to wun quite wild. I have heard that he dwinks and smokes, and does all sorts of things that I disappwove of entirely. I have even heard that he is vewy careless of appeawances and neglects his dwess."

"Awful!"

"Yaas, wathah! It's vewy howwid! I don't know how I shall stand him, especially if he bwings his howwid habits to St. Jim's, as I feah he will. But the governah seems to think that I ought to stand by him."

"Oh, these governors!" said Blake sympathetically.

"As a mattah of fact, the chap is a howwid boundah, though, of course, he may have been painted blackah than he is," said D'Arcy. "Lord Westmoor is a vewy busy politician, you know, and his son has been left to his matah, who has spoiled him howwidly. The young boundah is weally a disgwace, you know, and I undahstand that he is bein' sent to St. Jim's against his will, because he is quite out of his matah's contwol."

"Nice boy!"

"Awful young cad, I hear!" said D'Arcy. "But blood is thickah than watah, and I suppose I shall have to recog'nise him."

Blake chuckled.

"If he's going to be in the Shell, a higher Form than yours, he mayn't care to recognise you!" he remarked.

"Oh wats! Of course, he will want to know me, and, as he is a distant relative, I shall have to know him. But it's howwid!"

"Quite so. Still, we may be able to lick him into shape for you," Blake remarked.

"Weally, Blake—"

Five o'clock chimed out from the clock tower. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy started hastily to his feet.

"Bai Jove! The twain comes in at half-past five!"

"The young bounder's train?"

"Yaas, wathah! My governah suggested that I might meet it, and say somethin' nice to Lord Devigne."

"Oh, he's a giddy lord, is he?" asked Digby.

"Yaas. He is the only son of Lord Westmoor, and he takes the second title of the family," said D'Arcy. "The family is connected with ours by mawriage, and so it is weally a vewy good family. I was thinkin' that you chaps might like to come with me."

Blake rose to his feet and tossed the pen into the inkstand.

"We'll come. We'll have a look at the new kid, and see if we can stand him, anyway, you chaps," he said. "As Gussy remarks, blood is thicker than 'bacca-juice—"

"You uttah ass! I said that blood is thickah than watah—"

"Same thing! Come on!"

And the chums of Study No. 6 took their caps and left the study. Three juniors were coming down the passage—Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther—the Terrible Three of the Shell.

The Fourth Formers cheerfully bumped into them and sent them rolling over, and ran down the passage.

Tom Merry jumped up wrathfully.

"You asses!"

"After them!" gasped Monty Lowther. "I—I—I—"

But the chums of the Fourth were gone. They ran all the way to the school gates, and then proceeded at a more leisurely pace towards the railway station to meet the train which was to bring Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's relative to Rylcombe and St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 2.

His Lordship!

AN undersized boy, with a hard, discontented face, sat in the corner of a first-class carriage in a train that was rolling through the rich scenery of Sussex.

There was a bag on the rack over his head. The boy was dressed in expensive clothes, and he wore a silk hat, which was pushed back from his head. Under the rim of it his brow was puckered and angry.

He looked out of the window at each station as he passed, and scowled at the porters, at the passengers, and at everything and everybody else.

Lord Devigne was not in a good temper.

He was fifteen, and at that age he had most of what most people wanted to have. He was rich, he had a splendid home, and he had a fond, indulgent mother, and a father who denied him nothing. And the result was that he was a peevish, irritable, discontented, and an ungrateful young rascal.

A newspaper lay upon his knees, opened at the sporting news column. That was the only news that he cared to read. And the young viscount, boy as he was, could have told a great deal about the well-known stables, about the form of horses and jockeys. But that was a pursuit which was closed to him in the future.

At St. Jim's, where he was being sent for his sins, so to speak, nothing of that sort would be allowed. He was not to be in the hands of an indulgent and foolish mother any longer, but under the sway of a stern schoolmaster who would stand no nonsense.

And the boy's heart was filled with discontent and resentment and venom at the prospect.

"Hang them!" he muttered, a dozen times or more. "Hang them!"

He was not referring to anybody in particular, but probably to the world in general. He felt at that moment as if he hated everybody.

The train stopped at a station, and Lord Devigne, glancing out along the platform with a dull, savage eye, saw a lad of about his own age, in rough sailor clothes, come racing along the station from the entrance.

The stranger had a little bundle tied up in a large red-striped handkerchief fastened upon a stick over his shoulder. He was evidently anxious to catch the train; he came tearing along the platform at full speed as the guard slammed the doors.

"Stand back there!"

The sailor-lad rushed on.

It was pretty certain that he travelled third, but the third-class carriages were farther along the train, and he had no time to reach them.

He caught at the handle of a carriage and tore the door open and threw his bundle in and scrambled in after it.

An angry guard slammed the door behind him as the train was on the move.

The train glided out of the station.

Lord Devigne gazed sullenly at the boy who had invaded his carriage, which he had had to himself up till then. He did not particularly want to be alone, but he was annoyed at the abrupt entrance of the

stranger—he was in a mood to be annoyed about anything. The stranger picked himself up and then his bundle, which he put on the rack. He grinned at the viscount.

"Narrow shave that!" he said.

Devigne made no reply.

"Nearly missed it," said the stranger. "I should 'a' copped it if I 'adn't turned up at Southampton this evening."

He sat down opposite Lord Devigne. The viscount looked over him curiously. The boy was evidently very poor, and he bore his poverty with a cheerful and jaunty air, as if he did not find any trouble in it. He was short, but of sturdy build—about the same height, but a great deal sturdier than the viscount. His face was round and smiling, his eyes blue and cheerful, and his bullet head was surmounted by a shock of hair.

He grinned at the viscount cheerfully.

"Ope I ain't intruding 'ere?" he remarked. "I 'ad to tumble into the fust carriage, you see—I was in a 'urry!"

Devigne gave him a cold look.

"As a matter of fact, you are intruding," he said. "This is a first-class carriage, and I suppose you haven't a first-class ticket."

The lad chuckled.

"If I 'ad, it would be the fust in my natural," he said. "I've got a third-class, but I can change at the next station, I suppose. I 'ope you don't mind me for that fur."

"It's all the same if I do, I suppose; I can't pitch you out on the line," said the viscount.

Another chuckle.

"No; if it came to pitching out, I reckon you'd be the one to go," remarked the sailor-lad, looking over the thin, undersized form with a searching eye.

Devigne flushed angrily.

"Don't give me any of your cheek!" he exclaimed. "I shall have to stand you while you are here, you low cad, but I don't want any impertinence!"

The sailor-lad coloured.

"You ain't no right to call me names," he said. "I ain't doing no 'arm!"

The viscount shrugged his shoulders angrily. Curiously enough, the look of the lad made him angry and envious. He was going to a famous school, but to the viscount it seemed as a prison might have seemed. This lad was poor, uneducated, friendless probably—but he was as free as air—free to come and go, and do as he liked—free and apparently happy. Riches, after all, were not everything; riches did not make Devigne happy, and poverty did not make this lad miserable.

"I'm going to sea," said the sailor-lad, evidently feeling inclined for conversation, and not caring much whether his travelling companion was inclined for it or not. "I'm going in the Nancy Jane—skipper Ted Higgins. Ever heard of old Ted Higgins?"

"No, you young ass!"

"He's a scorcher, 'e is!" said the lad. "I'm Jim Brown—that's me. What might your name 'appen to be?"

"I am Lord Devigne."

The boy stared and whistled.

"A real live lord—eh?" he said.

Devigne could not help smiling, in spite of his ill-humour.

"My father is a real live lord, as you call it," he said.

"I have a courtesy title; but I suppose you don't know what that means. I am going to school."

A shadow came over the sailor-lad's face.

"School!" he repeated. "Lummy, I wish I was you!"

The viscount stared at him curiously.

"You want to go to school?" he asked.

"Yes, I should say so."

"What for?" asked the viscount abruptly.

"To larn," replied Jim Brown. "To larn, and get on in the world. But there ain't no chance for me—I've got to work."

"It's very odd," said the viscount slowly.

"What's odd?"

"That you should want to go to school. I was just thinking that I'd give anything to change with you—to get away and be free."

Jim Brown whistled softly.

"You'd soon change your mind," he said.

"I shouldn't. Look here," said the viscount, in a low, eager voice. "I'm being sent to school against my will. They sent my tutor to see me off to-day, and they've wired to the school to have somebody to meet me; I've got a beastly relation there—a fellow named D'Arcy—who'll be on the platform. If I don't turn up, I shall be searched for. But—"

He paused, his eyes scintillating.

There was a purpose in the viscount's looks now—a gleam of angry resolution in his eyes. A strange scheme had come into his head—a scheme that could not have entered any head but his own.

"Look here," he muttered. "You say that you'd like to go to school?"

"Yes."

"I want to escape from going—to be free. You understand?"

"Ye-es."

"Nobody at St. Jim's knows me; even my relation, D'Arcy, has never seen me. If another fellow turned up in my place, nobody would be the wiser."

"Lummy!"

"Will you change with me?"

CHAPTER 3.

A Change of Identity!

JIM BROWN leaned back in his seat and stared blankly at the viscount.

"Lummy!" he repeated.

The viscount was leaning forward, keen, eager. The strange idea had evidently taken firm possession of his mind.

"What do you say?" he asked.

"You must be dotty," said Jim Brown. "You—a lord—going to a good school—want to change with a poor lad going to sea!"

"I mean it."

"You wouldn't mean it for long."

"I do—I do! Look here, you say you want to go to school?"

"Goodness knows I do!"

"You can go—one of the best schools in England, and

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plenty of money in your pocket, and a good name to go by," said the viscount.

"You change clothes with me, and take my bag, and all my things, and my box that's in the guard's van," said the viscount eagerly. "You turn up at Rylcombe, and simply say that you're Lord Devigne. Who's to know any better?"

"But—it would not be true."

The viscount laughed scornfully.

"You have a right to use my name if I give it to you," he said. "I shall take yours in return."

"I s'pose that's all right," said Jim Brown doubtfully.

"Of course it is."

"But—but they'd bowl me out," said Jim. "I—I don't speak the same as you do, you know. That'd give me away."

Lord Devigne shook his head.

"They know that my education has been neglected," he said. "They won't be very surprised, however you turn out."

"But—"

"And they'll take special pains with you as the son of a lord," said Devigne.

Jim grinned.

To the sailor-lad, expecting to go to sea under a hard-fisted skipper, to slave hard for a few shillings, the sudden prospect of wealth and consideration and education seemed like a dazzling dream.

And if the viscount really wanted to change with him, why shouldn't he consent? he asked himself. He would only be taking what was freely given. Surely there could be nothing wrong in that.

"What do you say?" asked the viscount eagerly.

"Do you really mean it?"

"Mean it? Of course I do!"

"You—you want to go to sea instead of me—with a bundle—like Jim Brown?"

"Yes."

"It's a 'ard life."

"I don't care! I will not be sent to school against my will," said the spoiled youth, gritting his teeth. "I'll show them—hang them!"

"But—but—"

"It will be quite safe. My relations will never go to the school. My mother is going abroad for her health, and my father is too busy with politics to remember my existence at all."

"Lummy!"

"What do you say, then?"

"If you mean it—"

"Then I'll do it—glad."

The viscount sprang to his feet. His face was blazing with triumph. Not a thought of the harm he might be doing crossed his mind—of what might happen to Jim Brown, sent to a school he was in no way fitted for—of the anxiety of his parents if they discovered the truth. The viscount was not accustomed to thinking of anybody but himself.

"Good!" he exclaimed. "Let's get changed!"

"Orlright!"

And while the express rushed on steadily, the two boys stripped and changed clothes in the carriage.

It did not take them long.

In ten minutes, Jim Brown was arrayed in the garments of Lord Devigne, and Lord Devigne was in the rough clothes of the sailor-lad.

Fine feathers, it is said, make fine birds. Certainly Jim Brown looked better than Devigne had looked, in Devigne's costly clothes. His figure was a better one, and filled out the clothes better, and he carried himself more gracefully. Curiously enough, the poor deckhand made a better-looking lord than the real son of the Earl of Westmoor.

Lord Devigne grinned at him approvingly.

"Ripping!" he exclaimed.

"Think I'll do?"

"I'm sure of it."

"You're very kind."

"Not a bit of it; you're doing me a service," said the viscount. "Here's some money; I'll keep some, and give you five pounds. I've plenty."

Jim's eyes opened wide.

In all his life he had never possessed such a sum as five pounds, and the careless way the viscount tossed the notes over to him took his breath away.

"Lummy!"

"Mind, when you get to Rylcombe Station you're Lord Devigne, son of Lord Westmoor—your name's Pitt Ferndale, you understand?"

"But my name is Devigne—"

The viscount made an impatient gesture.

"Ferndale is our family name; Devigne is the second title of the family. You are Viscount Devigne."

"Oh, I see!"

"This express goes straight on to Southampton," said the

viscount. "I shall remain in it instead of you, and you will change at Wayland for Rylcombe."

"I see."
"You understand? As for my relation at St. Jim's—D'Arcy of the Fourth Form—you had better quarrel with him and prevent him from asking too many questions."

"Ye-es."
"My box will be changed into your train—I give it to you, and everything in it, so it's your property. Here's Wayland. Get ready!"

Jim Brown, like a fellow in a dream, jammed the viscount's silk hat on his head. It was a size too small, and it was the first time Jim had ever tried on a topper, but as he glanced in the little glass over the carriage seat he was very pleased with himself.

The train stopped at the junction.

Jim Brown jumped out.

"Good-bye!"

"Good-bye, and thanks!"

Jim strolled down the platform. A porter carried the bag and conducted him to a first-class compartment on the local train for Rylcombe. Lord Devigne stood watching from the carriage window. The guard came along the train and stared at him.

"You got a first-class ticket?" he said roughly.

Lord Devigne, forgetting for the moment that he was attired as a rough sailor-lad, stared haughtily at the man.

"Don't be impertinent!" he exclaimed.

The guard sniffed.

"You show your ticket!" he said.

Devigne flushed angrily.

"I decline to do anything of the sort!"

"Then out you come!"

The guard opened the door of the carriage and jerked Lord Devigne out upon the platform. The viscount shrieked with rage.

"You—you low cad! I'll have you discharged! I'll——"

The man grinned.

"You'd better get into your own part of the train unless you want to be left behind," he suggested.

The train was already moving. The viscount, bursting with rage, jumped into a third-class compartment, and sank into a seat. The express rushed on, and the viscount, as

he sat crammed between a big seaman and a fat lady in a shawl, began to think that he had not made a change so very much for the better, after all.

CHAPTER 4.

The New Boy!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY paused on the platform of the little station at Rylcombe and looked up and down the railway line.

There was no train in sight.

"We're early," said Jack Blake.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Better early than never," said Digby. "The local from Wayland is timed to get in at five-thirty, so we've two minutes to wait."

"I suppose that cousin of yours changes from the express at Wayland?"

"He is not exactly a cousin——"

"Does he change at Wayland?" shrieked Blake.

"Yaas."

"Then he'll be in this train—here it comes!"

The train came in sight down the line.

In a few moments it curved into the station, and with a grinding of brakes, jerked to a halt. Half a dozen carriage doors flew open.

D'Arcy turned his eyeglass up and down the train.

He did not know his relative by sight, but he expected to see which of the arrivals was the new boy for St. Jim's.

No other new boy was expected at the school, and a fellow in Etons with a box would be pretty certain to be Lord Devigne.

"Bai Jove! There he is!"

A boy with a bullet head and a shock of hair escaping under his silk hat jumped out of a first-class carriage and looked up and down the platform.

It was Jim Brown, alias Lord Devigne.

He caught sight of the juniors of St. Jim's. He guessed that they were from the school, and had come to meet Lord Devigne.

D'Arcy nodded towards him.

"That's the chap!" he said.



"What shall I give you, old cock?" asked the new boy. "Anything you like, my lord," said Taggles. "Turn round, then," said Jim. Taggles, in great amazement, turned round. Next moment the new boy planted his boot behind the school porter, and Taggles gave a wild roar as he staggered forward.

"You know him?"
 "No; but he must be. He's the only possible chap on this twain."

"Well, ask him, then."
 Arthur Augustus advanced towards the new boy.
 "Pway excuse me," he said gracefully, "but I think you are my relation, Lord Devigne. I am Arthur Augustus D'Arcy."

"Oh, you're D'Arcy, are you?"
 "Yaas, wathah! And you are the new kid?"
 "Right first time, cocky!"
 D'Arcy almost staggered.

He had heard all sorts of stories about his youthful relation—it was an open secret in the family that Devigne was a young rascal, that his education had been shockingly neglected, and that his manners savoured of anything but the repose which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere.

But Arthur Augustus had hardly expected to be answered in this strain.

He crammed his eyeglass a little tighter into his eye, and regarded the new boy with a peculiar glance.

"I suppose you know the ropes here?" remarked Jim.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Then you might tell the porter what to do with my box.

Tip him the wink."

"The—the what?"

"The wink!"

"Trumble, old man, shove that box in the hack," said Blake, laughing.

"Yes, sir!"

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Bai Jove! I was nevah so surprised in my life! I am weally thwown quite into a fluttah!"

"You blokes belong to St. Jim's, I suppose?" asked Jim.

"Blokes! Bai Jove!"

"I'm the new cove!" said Jim.

"My hat!"

"Suppose you show me the way to the school?" suggested Jim.

"Certainly!" said Blake, with a grin. "Look here, Gussy! Your relation is all right. I'm certain he'll be a success at St. Jim's."

"Bai Jove!"

"This way, Devigne."

"All serene, cocky!"

And the lad followed Jack Blake from the station. The juniors were grinning gleefully. Lord Devigne was a great surprise to them. Arthur Augustus followed them with blank amazement and dismay in his face. Whatever he had expected his cousin to be like, he had not expected him to be like this.

The juniors left the station. The box was piled on the hack with the bag. The new boy pushed back the tight silk hat, and mopped his brow with a handkerchief.

"Ain't it 'ot?" he remarked.

"Bai Jove!"

"Where's the school?" asked Jim, looking down the quaint old High Street of Rylcombe. "Where do you chaps hang out?"

Blake grinned.

"It's down the lane," he said. "Would you rather go in the hack, or walk?"

"Shanks' pony is good enough for me."

"Come on, then; we'll walk."

The juniors tramped down the lane together. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was still in a state of bewilderment, and he murmured "Bai Jove!" at intervals all down the lane to St. Jim's.

Taggles, the porter, was sunning himself outside the lodge when the party came in. Taggles looked at them in his sour way, but he grinned amiably as he discerned the new boy with the party.

Taggles knew that a lord's son was expected at St. Jim's, and a new boy generally shelled out a tip, and from a lord's son, naturally, something extra in the way of a tip was expected.

Taggles rose, and came towards the juniors with his best smile turned on.

"Hallo, Taggy!" said Jack Blake cheerfully. "Thirsty this afternoon?"

Taggles' eyes glistened.

"Which I ham, Master Blake. It's dry weather."

"Go and have a good drink at the fountain, then," said Blake sweetly. "It's really refreshing on a hot day, Taggy."

Taggles snorted. Water might be a refreshing drink, but it was not the kind of refreshment that Taggles was looking for.

"Thank you for nothing, Master Blake. Look 'ere! The young gent will want 'is box carried hin, I suppose?"

"It's coming on in the 'ack," said Jim.

Taggles started.

He was accustomed himself to referring to the hack as an "ack," but he was very much surprised at hearing the son and heir of Lord Westmoor do so.

"You can take it in when the 'ack comes," said Jim.

"Wot are you staring at, old cock?"

"Oh!" murmured Taggles.

"He wequiah a gwatuity," murmured D'Arcy.

"A which?"

"A tip," Blake chuckled.

"Oh, I see! What shall I give him?"

"Anything you like."

"Lummy!" said the new boy. "You see, I don't know the ropes 'ere, that's 'ow it is. What shall I give you, old cock?"

"Anything you like, my lord," said Taggles, in his most obsequious way.

The new boy's eyes sparkled with fun.

"Anything I like?" he asked.

"Yes, my lord."

"Turn round, then."

Taggles, in great amazement, turned round. The new boy raised his foot, planted it behind Taggles, and the school porter gave a wild roar and staggered forward.

"There you are!" said Jim.

And he walked on, grinning, following the juniors roaring with laughter. Taggles stared after them blankly. The new boy had taken him at his word, but Taggles was not pleased at being taken at his word in this way.

"The young rips!" he muttered. "I always says that all boys ought to be drowned, and I think that young rip oughter be drowned and 'ung, too! Ow!"

CHAPTER 5.

Thrown Out!

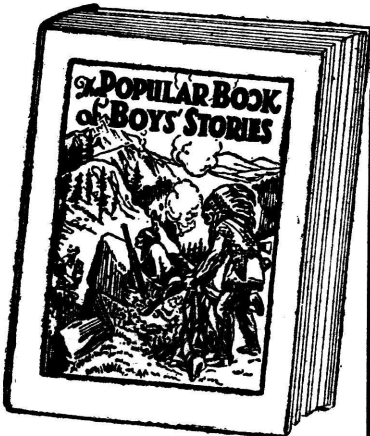
TOM MERRY of the Shell was standing upon the steps of the School House when the juniors arrived there.

Monty Lowther and Manners were with the hero of the Shell. The Terrible Three looked a little warlike as Blake & Co. came up. They had not forgotten being bumped over in the passage an hour before. But Blake saluted them with a cheerful grin.

"Hallo, my sons!" he said. "We've brought you a present."

"A what?"

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"A new kid for the Shell."

"Oh, we're fed-up with new kids!" said Manners. "I hope they won't shove this one in our study, as they did the chap who turned out to be mad. I dare say this one will turn out to be an idiot, as I hear he's a relation of Gussy's."

"Weally, Mannahs—"

"If you're a-calling me an idiot, you'll get a dot on the boko!" said the new boy.

The Terrible Three stared at him.

They were not surprised at him firing up at Manners' remark, but the variety of language he used was a surprise to them.

"My hat!" exclaimed Lowther. "Go it! Where did you pick up that elegant way of expressing yourself? I suppose your noble dad brought it back from the House of Lords."

"Belay your jawing tackle," said the new boy. "I whopped bigger duffers than you are!"

"Well, this is a surprise packet," said Manners. "I suppose you're not pulling our legs, you fellows? This is really Lord Devigne?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Not a tramp you have picked up on the road, and dressed in his lordship's clothes for a jape on us—hey?"

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Oh, he's all right!" said Tom Merry. "Look here, you chaps! As you've got a new fellow with you, and we're in funds, we'll stand a feed."

"That is vevy decent of you!"

"Come along to the tuckshop, then."

The juniors crossed the quad and crowded into the tuckshop. There were a good many fellows already there, refreshing themselves after cricket practice in the summer evening. Figgins & Co.—Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn—of the New House were standing in a row at the little counter, eating ices.

"Make room, you New House bounders," said Monty Lowther.

Figgins & Co. snorted.

"None of your cheek!" said Figgins. "Look here, you School House bounders had better keep out till we've finished. We're rather particular whom we mix with."

"Weally, Figgay!"

Tom Merry laughed.

"Pax!" he exclaimed. "We've got a new chap here, and we're going to stand a feed. You New House chaps can join us, if you like."

"Good egg!" said Fatty Wynn heartily. "That's the talk! On an occasion like this, the two Houses ought to stand shoulder to shoulder."

"On an occasion like what?" demanded Figgins, staring at his fat chum.

"On the occasion of a feed, of course," said Fatty Wynn. "What is it going to be, Tom Merry? I'll begin with pork pies, if you like."

"Have what you like!" said Tom Merry genially. "Hand it out, Mrs. Taggles! What are you going to have, Devigne?"

"Hallo! Is that the new chap?" exclaimed Levison, the new boy of the Fourth, entering the tuckshop with Mellish, with whom he had become friends. "How do you do, my lord?"

The new boy stared at him.

"Lummy, I don't know you!"

"I'm Levison of the Fourth. This is Mellish. We've heard a lot about you," Levison explained. "Welcome to St. Jim's!"

"Thanks! Put it there!" said his lordship.

He shook hands with Levison. Arthur Augustus turned his eyeglass upon the latter. Levison had not been long at St. Jim's, but the juniors had soon discovered that he was a "bad egg."

"I weally fail to see how you can have heard anythin' about my cousin, Levison," remarked D'Arcy.

Levison grinned.

"As a matter of fact, Mellish told me," he said.

D'Arcy's eyeglass glimmered upon the sneak of the School House.

"And how did you know anything, Mellish?" he demanded.

"Oh, I happened to hear—"

"Bai Jove! You've been listenin' at my study door! I wegard you as an uttah wottah, Mellish!"

"We've heard all about Devigne, and we like him all the better for it!" said Levison, with a grin. "We like a chap who can kick over the traces sometimes! I dare say Devigne will get on better with us than with you, Gussy!"

D'Arcy waved his hand towards the door.

"I shall advise my cousin not to associate with two such uttah wascals!" he exclaimed. "And now I insist upon your wetiwin' ffrom the tuckshop!"

"Have you bought up the place?" asked Levison unpleasantly. "I suppose we're at liberty to stay in the school shop if we want to?"

"I should suppose so, too!" said Mellish, with a sneer.

"Then your supposer's out of gear!" said Blake flatly. "You're going out! You can go out on your feet or on your necks—just as you prefer!"

"Look here—"

"Are you going?"

"No!" yelled Levison.

"Bai Jove! I'll jollay soon put you out!"

"Hands off! I—"

The indignant D'Arcy rushed at the cads of the Fourth and hugged them round the neck together, and whirled towards the doorway with them. D'Arcy was, for once in a way, in a temper. Levison and Mellish had learned the reputation of his cousin—undoubtedly by listening at a door—and they meant to take the viscount under their wing. Whatever bad qualities the viscount had were certain to be brought to their fullest development under the care of Levison and Mellish.

And Arthur Augustus meant to nip it in the bud if he could.

The cads of the Fourth struggled violently, but D'Arcy, in spite of his elegant ways, was athletic. The other fellows were ready to lend him a hand, but he did not need it.

Levison and Mellish were whirled through the doorway and sent into the quad, to roll on the ground under the big elm outside the tuckshop.

Arthur Augustus turned back into the shop, with his jacket crumpled, his collar burst, and his tie disarranged—but triumphant.

"Bai Jove!" he gasped. "They're gone!"

"Bravo, Gussy!"

And the new boy clapped Arthur Augustus on the shoulder.

"You're a little terror," he said, "and no mistake! Bravo, cocky!"

CHAPTER 6.

Jim Enjoys a Feed!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY turned his eyeglass upon his cousin with a far from approving expression in his eyes.

"Pway don't be so beastly wuff!" he exclaimed.

"I dislike vevy much havin' my shoudah thumped in that bwatal mannah! Besides, I do not like bein' alluded to as a tewwah or as cocky! I wegard those expressions as vulgah!"

"Lummy!"

"And I don't like that expression, eithah! I uttably fail to see how Lord Westmoor could have allowed his son to pick up such an uttably wotten expwession!"

"My 'at!"

"Pway where have you lost your aspiwates?" demanded Arthur Augustus. "Are you doin' this on purpose, you uttah ass?"

"Doing what?" demanded Jim.

"Dwoppin' your aspiwates!"

Jim looked about him on the floor, as if in search of something. The juniors watched him, with grinning faces. Although the new boy looked very much in earnest, they could not but imagine that he was pulling Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's aristocratic leg.

"I ain't dropped nothing!" said Jim.

"You young ass! Don't you know what an aspiwate is?" asked D'Arcy.

"Well, what is it, then?" demanded Jim defiantly.

"It's an 'h,' you ass!"

(Continued on the next page.)



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"Well, what's the marrer with my blessed 'h's,' then?"

"What are you dwoppin' them for?"

Jim frowned.

"Look 'ere," he said, "if you want me to land you a drive on the giddy smeller, you've only got to say so—see?"

"Smeller! Is it poss that you are alludin' to my nose undah that howwid appellation?" gasped D'Arcy.

"I'm jolly well ready to give you a dusting, anyhow!" said Jim. "I've licked bigger lubbers than you in the fo'c'sle of the Nancy Jane!"

"The—the what?"

"Which I mean, I—I—" stammered Jim, recollecting that he was Lord Devigne now. "Look 'ere, I don't want any of your upper crust, you know!"

"I fail to compwehend!"

"Here, let's get on with the feed!" said Tom Merry. "Besides, it's bad form for relations to quarrel. Remember, he's a new chap, Gussy."

"New chap or not, wrelation or not, he has no wight to dwop his aspivates in that weckless way!" said D'Arcy headely.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see any cause for laughtah. I considah—"

"Have some ginger-pop, Gussy?"

"Yaas. But I considah—"

"What are you going to have, Devigne?" asked Tom Merry, drawing the new boy aside from his indignant relation.

"I was going to 'ave a crust and cheese," he said. "But I reckon I'll get something better than that now. This is better than the grub on a tramp steamer."

Tom Merry started.

"I dare say it is," he said. "But you've never been on a tramp steamer, have you?"

"Ain't I just!" said Jim.

"I understood that you had been educated at home with a tutor," said Blake, giving the new boy a puzzled look.

"I'll 'ave jam tarts," said Jim, avoiding replying to Blake's remark in that way. "I say, these 'ere tarts are simply prime!"

"Dame Taggles makes good tarts!" said Digby. "Pile in! Tom Merry's rolling in money, and we're going to make hay while the sun shines!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Lummy!" exclaimed the new boy, bolting jam tarts at such a rate that he smeared jam over his face, his hands, his cuffs, and his sleeves. "I ain't never 'ad such a treat like this before!"

"I should have thought you'd have plenty of pocket-money," said Kangaroo of the Shell.

Jim had forgotten again. He proceeded to bolt jam tarts to avoid answering. He had a strong objection to telling untruths, and the only way of avoiding them, and of avoiding discovery at the same time, was by not replying.

"These 'ere are ripping," he said.

"They're all right," agreed Tom Merry, looking in some surprise at the jammy viscount. "By the way, do you always get yourself into that state when you eat jam tarts?"

"Lummy, I never noticed it!" said Jim, staring down at his sleeves. "Never mind, I don't get a feed like this every day."

"I should think you could if you liked, at Westmoor Park," said Clifton Dane.

"I'll have some more, please."

Jim ate tarts as if for a wager. He was looking a little pale when he finally desisted. As a matter of fact, accustomed as he was to a plain and wholesome diet, jam tarts in great quantities were a little too rich for him, and he had eaten too many.

"Had enough?" grinned Figgins. "Blessed if you don't beat Fatty Wynn."

"I reckon I'll belay now."

"Bai Jove, I should say it was time you did!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I weckon you had bettah clean yourself before you weport to your Form-mastah. You can't go in to Mr. Linton in that state."

"'Ave I got to see 'im?" asked Jim.

"Of course you have, as a new boy—or the Head."

"Lummy!"

"Haven't you been told so?"

"No," said Jim, truthfully enough.

"I wegard that as vewy wecmarkable. You had bettah take him in, Tom Mewwy, as he is in your Form. I decline to be seen with him in that state."

"Oh, rot!" exclaimed Blake. "He's your relation, and you're going to stand by him; you said so yourself. Why, it isn't two hours since you were saying that blood is thicker than lemonade."

"You uttah ass! I said it was thickah than watah."

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"Better take him to see Linton," grinned Tom Merry. "Linton will have been told to expect him, you know, and he may be ratty about it—he may be even staying in to see him."

"Go along with your cousin, Devigne—he's going to introduce you to your Form-master," said Blake.

"Wotto!" said Jim.

D'Arcy gave him a look of great disfavour. The swell of St. Jim's hardly knew what to think. He had heard from his relations that he was a young rascal and a thorough young blackguard. But he had expected him to have decent manners and customs, even if he was a cad of the deepest dye. The newcomer was a complete surprise to Arthur Augustus. He did not seem a bad sort of a fellow, as far as that went; but his ways—D'Arcy did not know what to think of his ways.

"Well, come on, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, far from graciously. "I suppose I ought to stand by you as you are a relation."

And the jammy new boy followed Arthur Augustus from the tuckshop quite serenely. D'Arcy meant to take him into a dormitory for a wash before he presented himself to Mr. Linton, the master of the Shell, but luck was against the swell of St. Jim's.

As they entered the School House, the form of the Shell master, in cap and gown, loomed up before them, and Mr. Linton turned a frowning eye upon them.

"D'Arcy, is that the new boy—Devigne—your cousin, as I understand?"

"Yaas, sir."

"Why has he not reported his arrival to me before?"

"There has been a delay, sir," stammered Arthur Augustus, hoping that Mr. Linton would not force him to explain what the delay was—the delay having been solely caused by the feed in the tuckshop.

"Oh, very well!" said Mr. Linton. "Goodness gracious, boy, how did you get covered with jam?"

"I've been a-eating of it, sir," said Jim.

"Bai Jove!"

Mr. Linton stared at him.

"Go at once and clean yourself, and then you, D'Arcy, bring him to my study."

"Yaas, sir!"

Arthur Augustus hurried his relation away. Mr. Linton looked after them in great amazement.

"What an extraordinary boy!" he exclaimed.

And Mr. Linton was perhaps the first, but not the last, person at St. Jim's who pronounced the new arrival to be an extraordinary boy.

CHAPTER 7.

Jim's Unhappy Ordeal!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY guided the new boy to the door of Mr. Linton's study, and knocked.

The Shell master bade him enter.

"Pway be careful how you address Mr. Linton," whispered D'Arcy, as he opened the door. "Don't play any of your wotten japes here. Speak pwopahly."

"Ain't I speaking properly?"

"Pway don't be an ass! Mr. Linton is an awfully touchy old beggar."

"D'Arcy!" came a deep and awful voice from the study. Arthur Augustus jumped. The master of the Shell, in his study, had overheard that cautious whisper outside, and the swell of St. Jim's turned cold all over.

"Ya-as, sir!" he gasped.

"D'Arcy! Take five hundred lines for speaking in such a manner."

"With pleasuah, sir—I—I mean, certainly, sir," stammered D'Arcy.

"I shall speak to your Form-master."

"Pway allow me to explain, sir. I did not mean to make any diswepsectful allusion. I was merely cautioning Devigne."

"You will write out the lines."

"Yaas, wathah, sir; I don't mind that, only I should not like you to be under a misappwehension with wegard to me," said D'Arcy, coming into the doorway and looking at Mr. Linton very seriously. "You see, sir, it's wotten bad form to be diswepsectful to a mastah, and I twust I should nevah be guilty of such a howwid bweach of good mannahs." Mr. Linton's face wore a curious expression.

"You may go, D'Arcy. Upon the whole, you need not do the lines."

"Thank you, sir. I twust you exonewate me—"

"Quite—go!"

And Arthur Augustus went.

"Come in, Devigne!"

Mr. Linton turned to the new junior, Lord Devigne, alias

Jim Brown, who stood before him looking very quiet and respectful. Jim had to go through an ordeal now, and he knew it. He guessed that the master of the Shell was going to question him as to his attainments; and these attainments were woefully small.

Jim could scrub a deck down with anybody. He could stand the roughest sea without turning a hair, and was at home in any craft. He could use his fists, not scientifically, but very effectively; and he could expend a shilling to the greatest possible advantage. These things he had learned in following the sea. But he had never even heard of Virgil; he did not know there was such a language as Latin, or ever had been; mathematics was as much a mystery to him as the picture-writing of the Mexicans; and simple arithmetic presented itself to him as a series of Chinese puzzles. Rough-and-ready reckoning he could do,

the deck of the Nancy Jane, and wondering what would happen to him.

"Ahem!" said Mr. Linton at last.

Jim made a movement. He was glad the silence had been broken at all events.

"I understand, Lord Devigne, that you have been a troublesome boy at home," said Mr. Linton. "I am informed, too, that you are backward in your lessons, but are intelligent enough when you choose to exert yourself. Now, I do not mean to allow anything in the past to weigh against you here, so long as you behave yourself at this school, all will be well. But I shall expect you to work and do well."

"Ay, ay,"

"What!"

Jim turned red.



"Where's Jim?" demanded Skipper Ted Higgins, mopping his heated brow. "Weally, my deah sir," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, "I don't quite undahstand." From behind the buttress Jim Brown's anxious face peeped out. Would his old skipper give him away?

indeed, well; for he was quick and intelligent. But book learning of any sort was strange to him; and instead of taking his place in the Shell, he was more fitted to go among the "infants" of the Second Form.

Mr. Linton looked him over with his keen, microscopic eye, which he always turned on new boys. Mr. Linton had known boys ever since he was a boy himself, which was popularly supposed at St. Jim's to have been thousands of years ago, or something like that. Mr. Linton could generally size up a new boy at a glance. But he had to admit that there was something about this new boy that he did not quite "catch on" to at once.

The master of the Shell had been told of Lord Devigne's peculiar reputation; and he was prepared, as Arthur Augustus had been, to see a proud, discontented, sullen lad, insolent perhaps, and hard to deal with. But there was nothing proud or sullen in the round, healthy, good-natured face of Jim Brown. But he was more of a puzzle to Mr. Linton than any new boy ever had been.

Master and pupil stood looking at one another for a full minute, the boy silent and inwardly apprehensive, feeling strangely as if he had been called before the skipper on

"I—I mean, yes, sir," he stammered.

"I understand, too, that you have had very peculiar associates, for so young a lad, and considering your station in life," the Form-master went on. "You will fall into better ways here. Any attempt at improvement will be encouraged, and any wrongdoing will be severely punished. Now, I have been instructed that you are to enter the Shell."

Jim looked round him.

"Where is it, sir?" he asked.

Mr. Linton stared at him.

"I do not understand your question, boy. Where is what?"

"The—The Shell, sir."

"Devigne!"

Jim looked helpless.

"You—you said I was to enter the Shell, sir," he stammered. "I—I'm willing to do anything I'm told, sir. But I don't see any shell."

Mr. Linton frowned.

"Do you mean to say, Devigne, that you don't know

that the Form here between the Fourth and the Fifth is called the Shell?"

"Oh!"

"If you are playing a silly joke, I warn you that it will be wise not to do so," said Mr. Linton in severe tones. "This is not the place for jokes."

"Yes, sir."

"Now, Devigne, we will have a little discussion of what you can do."

Jim quaked.

It had come at last! What was to happen next he did not know; he rather wished that there would be an earthquake.

"Take up that book, Devigne," said the Form-master, pointing to a Virgil lying on the table.

Jim did as he was bidden.

"Begin at the first page."

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Don't answer me in that ridiculous way. When you have to reply to me in the affirmative, say 'Yes, sir.'"

"Ay, ay, sir—I mean, yes, sir."

"Now construe."

"Eh?"

"Construe," said Mr. Linton, raising his voice.

Jim stared helplessly at the book he had opened and at the master of the Shell. He had not the slightest idea what the word construe meant.

Frowns gathered on Mr. Linton's face, puckering up his brow like old parchment.

"Will you do as you are told, Devigne?"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"Then construe."

"What is that, sir?"

"Do you mean to say that you do not know the meaning of the verb to construe?" almost thundered Mr. Linton.

THE TEN ST. FRANK'S BOYS WHO FLIRTED WITH DEATH!—

Jim trembled. For the moment he wished he was safely back on the deck of the Nancy Jane, even with the bullying skipper, Ted Higgins.

"N-no, sir," he stammered.

"You cannot construe?"

"No, sir."

Mr. Linton drew a deep breath.

"If this is true, it is not your fault, I suppose, but your education has certainly been most scandalously neglected," he said. "But I must be assured that this is not some absurd joke. To construe is to turn the lines before you into English. Read the first line in Latin."

Jim stared at the book.

Latin, which was not easy to all the juniors at St. Jim's, was not merely hard to Jim Brown, it was an utterly incomprehensible mystery.

He blinked at the line, and blinked at Mr. Linton, and turned the book over, twisting it in his fingers, and turned crimson, and then pale. But he did not construe.

"Devigne, read the first line in Latin."

"I can't, sir."

"Do you mean to say you don't know Latin?"

"I'm sorry, sir, I don't."

"Is it possible that you are quite ignorant of the language, boy?" Mr. Linton demanded in astonishment.

"I—I don't know anything about it, sir," stammered Jim.

Mr. Linton's expression softened. He could see by Jim's distressed look that the boy was genuine enough.

"Very well," he said. "You may put the book down, Devigne. I suppose it is not your fault; but it is extraordinary that you should be put in the Shell, in such a state of ignorance. It will be impossible for you to take your place in my Form. But let us see your state in other branches of knowledge."

In other branches of knowledge Jim proved almost as deficient as in the classics. Mr. Linton's astonishment grew and grew. He could not think that the boy was deceiving him; yet to find an earl's son in such a state of utter ignorance of all book-learning was amazing.

Jim, indeed, could read and write and deal with simple figures, but that was the beginning and the end of what he could do. He had never had any chance of learning more.

"I really hardly know what to make of you, my boy," said Mr. Linton at last. "I must certainly consult the head-master about you. You may go."

"Thank you, sir. I hope you won't be 'ard on me."

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"What do you mean, Devigne?"

"I ain't 'ad much learning," said Jim in distress. "But I ain't 'ad the chance. I want to learn, sir; I'd do anything to get on in that way."

"If you are speaking sincerely, Devigne, you will have every chance here, though certainly you will have to begin at the bottom of the ladder. It is extraordinary to me that your education should have been so neglected, especially if you have the desire to learn. I will see what can be done for you. You may go now."

And Jim went, leaving the master of the Shell in a most puzzled frame of mind.

CHAPTER 8.

A Lesson for "His Lordship."

TOM MERRY came along the Shell passage whistling cheerily. He almost ran into the new boy, who was going slowly along, looking at the studies as he passed. Jim turned round and looked at him and nodded.

"Hallo!" said Tom Merry, pausing. "See Linton?"

"Ay, ay!"

"How did you get on?"

Jim made a grimace.

"I dunno! He's gonner talk to the skipper about me."

"The what?"

"The 'eadmaster, I mean."

"Oh!" said Tom Merry, with a curious look. "Have you been to sea, Devigne?"

Jim grinned.

"I reckon I have," he replied.

"Oh, that accounts for it, then! I think it would give the Head a fit if he heard himself called skipper," said Tom Merry, laughing. "Blessed if I know what a kid of your age was doing at sea, but that's your own bisney. I'm glad you got on all right with Linton. Did he say you didn't know anything. But we will make every effort to fill up this vacancy, boy? That's his usual style."

"Well, he said I didn't know anything—and I don't," said Jim. "I'm going to learn, though. If I could get somebody to 'elp me!"

"I'll help you with pleasure if you like," said Tom Merry at once. "I've heard that you haven't had much chance in that line. But you had a tutor, hadn't you?"

"A tutor?"

"Yes. I understand that you had a tutor, who prepared you to enter the Shell Form here," said Tom Merry. "But I know there are tutors and tutors. I suppose yours let you do as you like, and you like doing nothing. I've seen pupils

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and tutors running the bisney on those lines. Are you very slack in Form work?"

"Look 'ere, can you construe?" asked Jim in lowered tones.

Tom Merry stared.

"Well, I should say so," he replied.

"Ow do you do it?"

"Do you mean to say you don't know?"

"Ay, ay!"

"Look here, you're not pulling my leg, are you?" asked Tom Merry suspiciously.

"Honour!"

"Well, come into my study. By the way, what study have you been put into?"

"I ain't been put in any, that I knows of. Mr. Linton says I was to go into the Shell—"

"That's a Form, ass!"

"But he said afterwards I couldn't. I don't know where I am to go."

"Well, as you're a Shell chap you'll be in this passage, and you can stick in my study for a bit if you like," said Tom Merry kindly, as he piloted the new boy into his own quarters.

"Oh, can he?" demanded two voices at once, and Manners and Lowther glared at the newcomers.

Jim hesitated on the threshold.

"Shut up, kids!" said Tom Merry. "It's a case of taking in the homeless."

"That's all very well!" said Monty Lowther. "You did that with a new chap before, and he turned out to be a lunatic, and gave us a high old time. I don't see why this study should be turned into a home for vagrants!"

"My dear ass, there are fellows along the passage who would simply jump at having a lord in their study," said Tom Merry, laughing.

"Let 'em jump, then—"

"I say, you know, I won't come in," said Jim. "I ain't the sort to intrude nowhere, I 'ope. I'll get hout."

"No, you won't," said Monty Lowther, changing his tone at once. "You'll come in. I was only joking, your young ass."

"Yes, come in," said Manners.

Jim came in.

"You two chaps shut up now!" said Tom Merry. "I'm going to give Devigne some Latin."

"Some what?"

"Latin."

"Potty?" asked Monty Lowther.

Tom Merry laughed.

"No; but Devigne is slow at classics, and I'm going to help him on. See?"

"Well, my hat!" exclaimed Lowther. "I never heard of a junior study being turned into a giddy coaching den before. I'm off!"

"You are—off your giddy rocker!" said Tom Merry. "Good-bye!"

Lowther went out whistling. Manners was cutting films, and he went on cutting them.

"Don't mind me," he said. "I'll listen, and put you right when you get out on the giddy quantities."

"Cheeky young beggar!" said Tom Merry.

He opened his dog-eared Virgil; he sat down and drew a chair to the table with his foot for Jim. Jim sat down.

"Begin now?" asked Tom Merry.

"Please."

"How much Latin do you know?"

"I don't know nothing."

"My hat! That's bad for a start. How did they come to leave Latin out?" asked Tom Merry in wonder. "I suppose your tutor knew it? He must have!"

Jim was silent.

"Well, never mind! We'll begin at the beginning, though I don't see how you're to go into the Shell without any Latin," said Tom Merry.

"I say—" Jim paused.

"Yes?"

"What is Latin?"

Tom Merry laid down the book and stared blankly at the new boy. He had never been quite so astonished in his life.

"What is Latin?" he asked blankly.

"Is it a language?" asked Jim cautiously.

"Yes, it's a language—certainly."

"Oo speaks it?"

"Nobody now; it's a dead language."

"Oh! What's a dead language?"

"A language that has died out of use, of course," said Tom Merry. "Latin was spoken by the Romans and the people of the Roman Empire. It is not a spoken language now."

"Then what does you learn it for?"

"Well, it's a great language, and there are lots of very valuable books written in it," Tom Merry explained.

"More useful to learn a language people speak, I should think," said Jim thoughtfully. "like French, or Spanish, or German."

Tom Merry laughed.

"My dear chap, you've touched on a controversial subject that we won't go into; they've been jawing for dogs' ages on the subject of classics versus hustle," he said. "Look here, if you don't know a word, it's no good beginning with Virgil. We'd better take the first Form book. I'll borrow one."

"Thank you!"

Tom Merry left the study, and returned in a few minutes with an elementary Latin book, which contained the valuable information that the Latin alphabet consisted of twenty-five letters, and that the letters were divided into vowels and consonants, and that there were three genders—masculine, feminine, and neuter. Manners yawned and left off cutting films and departed, as Tom Merry conducted his pupil through the earliest pitfalls of the great language of Horace and Virgil.

The depths of Jim's ignorance on the subject astounded Tom Merry; but he was so keen, so intelligent, and so grateful that the hero of the Shell tried his very hardest to help him. The docility of Jim's character surprised Tom as much as anything else. Was this the reckless, swanking young blackguard he had been led to expect? It really seemed as if someone else had stepped into Lord Devigne's clothes on the way to the school—if such a thing had been possible.

"Thank you," said Jim, when the lesson was over. "It's very kind of you. I don't know how to tell you how good you are!"

(Continued on the next page.)



Do you know a good joke? If so, send it to "THE GEM JESTER," 5, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp). Half-a-crown is awarded to the sender of every joke that appears in this column.

HA, HA, HA!

Johnny had taken his sister to see her first Soccer match, and she had enjoyed it up to the interval. But as the teams lined up for the second half, she rose.

"Come on, Johnny, let's go," she said. "This is where we came in at!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to G. Nicholson, 37, Cross Street, Barrow-in-Furness.

ONE FOR TEACHER.

Teacher: "Why, Tommy, how sticky your hands are! I wonder what you would say if I came to school like that?"

Tommy: "Please, teacher, I should be too polite to say anything!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to L. Buckley, 7, Walerand Road, Lewisham, London, S.E.13.

SARCASM.

Engine-driver (who has overrun platform, to guard): "Shall I shunt her back?"

Guard: "No, don't—we'll shove the platform up to you!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to T. Brady, 23, Emmet Square, Blackrock, Dublin, Ireland.

WAITING FOR A BITE.

Waiter: "Your fish won't be long, now, sir."

Diner: "Tell me—what bait are you using?"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to N. Foster, 12, Cheap Street, Newbury, Berks.

ONE SIZE LARGER!

Lady: "I want a hat for my boy."

Shop Assistant: "Yes, madam. What size does he wear?"

Lady: "Nine ten-elevens."

Shop Assistant: "Nine ten-elevens? I'm afraid we don't stock such a size."

Lady: "Well, the last hat he had was six seven-eighths, and now he wants a size larger."

Half-a-crown has been awarded to B. Carter, High Street, Huttoft, Lincs.

IT GOT BETTER!

Kelly: "What about that chicken you promised me?"

Cohen: "What chicken?"

Kelly: "The one you promised me for my Sunday dinner."

Cohen: "Oh, it got better."

Half-a-crown has been awarded to R. Needes, Brooklyn, Maesderwen Crescent, Pontypool, near Pontypool, Mon.

TOO MANY COOKS—

Father: "Did your teacher notice that I helped you with your homework?"

Son: "I think he did. He said he did not think it possible for one person to make so many mistakes!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to F. Burton, 3, Coastguard Cottages, Sutton-on-Sea, Alford, Lincs.

FRESH EGGS.

Diner: "Hi, waiter! Are these eggs fresh?"

Waiter: "Why, most certainly, sir. They're fresh from the country."

Diner: "Which country?"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to Miss A. Lüff, Last House, London Lane, Great Paxton, St. Neots, Hants.

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"Rats!" replied Tom cheerfully. "As a matter of fact, it does a chap good to go over early ground again, so I score as well as you. If you want any more coaching I'll give you some time every day with pleasure till you get on."

Jim's eyes were moist.

"I'd like it rather," he said, "but I don't want to impose on your kindness."

"Stuff!"

"Then I'll 'ave another lesson as soon as I may."

"I'll give you a quarter of an hour before we go to bed, and see how much of all that you remember," said Tom Merry.

Jim's eyes sparkled.

"You'll see that I remember it all," he said. "Can keep the book for a bit?"

"Yes; shove it in your pocket."

And Jim shoved the book in his pocket and left the study with a bright face.

Manners and Lowther came in and found Tom Merry with a thoughtful wrinkle on his brow.

"Well, how has the giddy lesson gone?" yawned Lowther.

"All serene."

"Like your pupil?"

"Very much. But—"

"But he's a slacker—eh?" asked Monty, with a grin.

Tom Merry shook his head.

"I've never seen anybody less like a slacker," he said. "He's so keen to learn that he simply staggers a chap!"

"Well, that's not what we've heard about him," said Manners. "I had it from D'Arcy that he was a slacker of the first water, and a regular boulder into the bargain."

"Well, he's not a slacker, or a boulder either. If he wasn't what I know him to be I should think he was a poor man's son who'd never had any chance of education and was keen on getting some," said Tom Merry. "I suppose that's impossible, as he's the son of an earl, but I can't understand Lord Westmoo's son being neglected in this way. It's a giddy puzzle."

And Tom Merry shook his head over it and gave it up.

CHAPTER 9.

Lots of Latin!

YOU amaze me, Mr. Linton!"

Dr. Holmes was looking at the master of the Shell in surprise. Mr. Linton was seated in his study some time after the peculiar interview with

Jim Brown.

"I was amazed myself, sir," said Mr. Linton. "I have never been so surprised. If the boy had not come here in a way that placed his identity beyond a shadow of doubt I should really think that some joke was being played, and that he was not really the son of Lord Westmoo at all."

"That is, of course, impossible."

"Yes; he has his box and his linen marked, and D'Arcy's presented him to me as his relation. But I am astounded. The boy's ignorance is utterly without end. He knows nothing—nothing that might not be known by any boy in the street with hardly any education at all."

"It is shocking! He must have been dreadfully neglected."

"Shockingly neglected. He must have run utterly wild. Even his way of speaking is dreadfully uncultured; he drops his aspirates even."

The Head of St. Jim's looked distressed.

"Not exactly a suitable boy to send here," he said, "but I should not care to refuse Lord Westmoo's son. But if that is his state he cannot go into the Shell."

"Yet to put so big a boy among the very small juniors would be absurd, sir."

"Yes, I fear so."

"This is really no place for him. He requires a tutor to prepare him in private to take his place in a Public school."

Dr. Holmes nodded.

"Quite so. But as he is here—"

"As he is here I really do not know what is to be done, sir. He is certainly not fit to take his place in the Shell."

"Perhaps some private coaching would help him on. Some of the prefects might take him in hand; I am sure Kildare and Darrell would find a little time. After all, if the poor lad has been so dreadfully neglected he is an object of pity, and should be helped in every possible way, Mr. Linton."

"I agree with you," said the master of the Shell—after quite a pause, however. "It is a most extraordinary state of affairs, but certainly we must do the best we can for the boy now that he is here."

"I leave him in your hands, Mr. Linton."

"I will do my best, sir."

Mr. Linton quitted the Head's study. The Shell-master's

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brow was puckered in a frown. The strange state of affairs worried him considerably. As he passed down the Form-room passage he caught sight of a diminutive figure on a seat in a window recess.

Mr. Linton paused and looked.

It was Jim.

He was seated there, a book in his hands, devouring the contents, so busy that he did not observe the Form-master. He was mumbling to himself, and Mr. Linton caught a few of the mumbled words.

"The Latin language has six cases—nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, vocative, ablative."

"Dear me!" murmured Mr. Linton.

He looked hard at the boy.

Mr. Linton was a very keen gentleman, and not to be easily imposed upon, and he knew the old dodge of deep youths of assuming extremely studious airs when a master was likely to pass.

But there was nothing of that sort with Jim now. He was so deep in his work that he did not see or hear the Form-master.

Mr. Linton passed on without speaking to him, but strangely touched by what he had seen. Surely if ever a lad deserved to be helped over the rocky path of education, this was the lad.

Jim, quite unconscious of the fact that the Form-master had passed at all, went on wrestling with the elements of Latin.

He was still busily engaged when several juniors came along, and their voices interrupted his study.

"Weally, Blake, I weally wufuse to come and play chess.

I'm lookin' for my wulation."

"Oh, blow your relation!" said Blake crossly. "I tell you you're jolly well going to play chess. You beat me by accident last evening—"

"I uttally wufuse to have it wegardad as an accident. I had you mated quite easily."

"Oh, don't jaw!" said Herries. "I'll tell you what—come down to the kennels with me, and I'll show you Towser begging for biscuits."

Blake and D'Arcy turned withering looks upon Herries.

"You uttah ass!" said D'Arcy.

"Better than your rotten chess, anyway! You should just see Towser—"

"Oh, blow Towser!" said Blake. "After D'Arcy getting the mate quite by accident, of course, I'm going to play him again, and show him that he can't play chess!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"So come on, you ass!"

"I'm thinkin' of my wulation. Of course, he's a howwid, jammy boundah, but blood is thickah than—"

"Jam?"

"Don't be an ass, Blake! Blood is thickah than watah, and I'm bound to stand by my wulation."

"Look here, your giddy relation is getting on all right without you."

"Weally—"

"My hat! There he is—reading all the time!"

The four juniors stopped before Jim. The new boy in the Shell looked at them and nodded, with a grin.

"I'm all serene," he remarked.

"Bai Jove! What on earth are you weadin'?"

"First steps in Latin, by Jingo!" said Jack Blake, with a whistle. "What on earth are you mugging into that for, kid?"

"I'm learning!"

"Learning what?"

"Latin."

"My only Panama hat!"

"It's a dead language," said Jim somewhat proudly. "It was spoken by the Romans, and it has twenty-five letters in the alphabet."

"Go hon!"

"There are six cases—the nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, vocative, and ablative," Jim continued.

"Weally, Devigne—"

"There are two numbers—singular and plural—"

"Bai Jove!"

"The substantive is declined by number and by case."

"My hat!"

"Taking the first declension, you will find that the nominative singular ends in 'a' and the genitive in 'æ,'" said Jim.

"Thanks!" said Digby. "I found that out a long time ago—before I was in the Fourth!"

And Digby walked away.

"Mensa, a table," went on Jim enthusiastically. "There being no article in Latin, mensa may mean a table or the table."

"Pile it on, old son!"

(Continued on page 14.)

COME IN AND SEE ME, CHUMS!



Let the Editor be your pal! Write to him to-day, addressing your letters: The Editor, The GEM, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

HALLO, CHUMS!—We are all set now for the greatest series of St. Frank's stories that Mr. E. S. Brooks has ever written, for the first smashing yarn appears in next Wednesday's wonderful number. From the very first line of the opening story, the series starts off on a thrilling note that is sustained throughout by the clever writing of Mr. Brooks. And added to this is eerie and sinister mystery and nerve-tingling adventure the like of which you have never read before.

I am extremely enthusiastic over this powerful new series—it's really great!

"THE TEN TALONS OF TAAZ!"

is the title, and it simply must be the big sensation of the season! It's unique—it's really thrilling—it compels the interest—and it's super!

When ten juniors of St. Frank's man a lifeboat to go to the rescue of a sinking ship, they little realise the tremendous adventures they are rowing into. For in the stricken ship there are amazing passengers—priests from the Taaaz Temple in Tibet—who refuse to be saved by the St. Frank's boys. Raa-ok, the high priest, whom it is death to look upon, sleeps and must not be disturbed. Hence, with the fatalism of the Oriental mind, the priests await death. But the impetuous Handforth soon alters the course of events, and promptly strips the rich coverings from the all-powerful high priest to wake him! By that action Handy plunges himself and his nine companions into a welter of thrills and perilous excitement!

Make absolutely certain you don't miss the gripping opening yarn—and don't forget to put all your pals wise to this great new series.

In addition to this thriller for next week, Mr. Martin Clifford has also written us a thriller of the chums of St. Jim's. It is entitled:

"THE HOUSE OF FEAR!"

The story centres around a sinister old house on Wayland Moor, where Gussy's Cousin Ethel is staying with a half-insane scientist, who is her uncle. She is virtually a prisoner in a lonely room in a turret—a room in which two people have already mysteriously died! Cousin Ethel lives in fear and dread of hearing the eerie whispering noise that foretold the coming of death to the two unfortunates before her. What is the whispering caused by? Will she hear it? She does, and her danger is acute—her only hope of rescue lying in the Chums of St. Jim's.

This gripping yarn sets the seal on an unbeatable thriller number that will be sure to sell like hot cakes. Order your GEM early, is my advice.

A REMINDER.

Don't forget, chums, about the two grand annuals that are now on sale—the "Holiday Annual" and the "Popular Book of Boys' Stories." Both are such exceptional value-for-money books that they will sell like wildfire. The former is five shillings and the latter 2s. 6d. Most newsagents run subscription schemes whereby these topping gift books can be obtained by small weekly payments. But, of course, if you have a birthday coming along just give mother or father the tip what you want for a present! You cannot beat a good book.

THE BULLOCK THAT "BEAT IT"!

A bullock that ran amuck at Walmer, Kent, the other day added an unexpected thrill to the holiday of a crowd of holiday-makers basking in the sunshine on the

beach. The bullock was bound for the slaughterhouse, but, as if getting a premonition of its impending fate, it suddenly made a break for liberty. It raced along the sea front and crowds of people gave chase. But there was no stopping that bullock until it reached Deal. There, however, it was lassoed, but the animal would not give in without a fight. It kicked and plunged wildly as eighteen men, gripping ropes that held the bullock captive, sought to haul it to safety. But it was the bullock that did the hauling. It ran off again, dragging the eighteen men after it, and its wild career was not checked until it had bumped into a bus and a car and unseated six cyclists. And then the animal, its final fling over, was dragged to the fate that it had delayed for a brief but exciting period.

FATTY WYNN'S RIVAL.

The one and only Fatty Wynn, of St. Jim's, has a big rival at food-stowing in India's champion wrestler. Often enough Fatty has put away enough food for six boys without turning a hair—but read what Gama, the champion wrestler—and trencherman it would seem—does daily in the eating line. He puts away six pounds of milk and whey, five pounds of meat and bread, four pounds of fruit, and two pounds of almonds! That's his normal diet, but when he's in training for a wrestling bout he eats more! Added to usual food, then, is: three ounces of essence of pearls, two bundles of gold leaf, chicken soup from seven chickens, three pounds of almonds, one pound of whey, and four pounds of sugar! That's the lot—and it costs seven pounds—in money, not food—a day extra. But fancy eating pearls and gold leaf! That's something new in food, and Fatty Wynn would jib at that.

MAN'S DEEPEST DEPTH.

The greatest depth that man has reached in the sea, Jack Bowyer, of Gateshead, is 3,028 feet. Two scientists descended to this depth in a diving ball off Nonsuch Island, Bermuda, recently, to discover and film the amazing monsters to be seen deep down in the ocean. The pressure of water on the diving ball at this depth was half a ton to the square inch, and there was a nineteen tons pressure on the windows!

HEARD THIS ONE?

Stout Lady: "Have you any stuff for reducing the weight?"
Chemist's Assistant: "Yes, madam."
Stout Lady: "How much do you think I want?"
Assistant: "You'd better take all we've got, madam!"

THE EDITOR.

PEN PALS COUPON

15-9-34



A free feature which brings together readers all over the world for the purpose of exchanging topics of interest to each other. If you want a pen pal, post your notice, together with the coupon on this page, to the address given above.

Miss Marjorie Ibbotson, 5, Brunswick Street, Huddersfield, Yorks, wants a girl correspondent in British North Borneo, or East Indies; age 14-15.

Roy Ellacott, 29, Harrowby Close, Grantham, Lines, wants correspondents in Australia; outdoor sports; age 11-12.

Miss Dorothy Ibbotson, 5, Brunswick Street, Huddersfield, Yorks, wants girl pen friends in Africa, India, China and Egypt.

A. E. Johnson, 33, Ash Street, Cheadle Heath, Stockport, Ches., wants a pen pal in South America or Africa; age 17-18; tennis, swimming, adventure.

Jack Burton, 33, Herbert Street, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, wants a pen pal keen on ships, the sea, and Scouting; age 12-16.

R. T. Evans, 146, College Street, St. Helens, Lancs, wants pen pals in U.S.A., France, and South Africa; age 14-18; Rugby and Association; cricket, tennis, books, piano.

Miss Yvonne Wallington, Rosmead, Tottenhall Road, Wolverhampton, wants girl correspondents; age 10-12; swimming, sports.

W. G. Wallington, Rosmead, Tottenhall Road, Wolverhampton, wants correspondents in Canada, or New Zealand; age 12-13; sports, stamps, cigarette cards; Public school fellows especially; also wants to join a correspondence club.

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UNDER FALSE COLOURS!

(Continued from page 12.)

"Nominative, mensa, a table; genitive, mense, of a table; dative, mensæ, to or for a table—"

"Mad, of course," said Blake. "It seems to be raining lunatics lately. There was that chap the other day, and there's Gussy."

"Weally, Blake—"

"And now there's this chap! I'm fed-up!"

And Blake and Herries followed after Digby. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy filled with the idea that he must stand by his relation, blood being thicker than water, or any of the liquids Blake had humorously enumerated, remained.

"Devigne, deah boy—" he started.

"Accusative, mensam, a table," said Jim; "vocative mensæ, O table; ablative, mensa, by, with, or from a table."

"Weally—"

"That's the singular. Now for the plural—"

"Look here, Devigne—"

"Mense, nominative, tables," said Jim, unheeding; "genitive, mensarum, of tables; dative, mensis, to or for tables—"

"You uttah ass—"

"Accusative, mensas, tables—"

"You are wight off your silly wockah!"

"Vocative, mensæ, O tables—"

D'Arcy walked away down the passage. He had had enough. Floating after him came the voice of the new boy, in a kind of chant:

"Ablative, mensis, by, with, or from tables."

Jim was getting on with his Latin.

CHAPTER 10.

Good Progress!

LORD DEVIGNE, to give him the name he bore at St. Jim's, without anyone suspecting that it was not his own, made quite a sensation in the Shell Form.

When he took his place in class in the morning, Mr. Linton, knowing what to expect, passed over him very lightly.

But he could not prevent the boy from showing his astounding ignorance of all subjects dealt with in the curriculum at St. Jim's.

The Shell fellows were amazed.

To hear a chap, whose father was in the House of Lords, dropping his "h's" in the most reckless way, was astounding. To discover that, up to the previous day, he had never known that there was such a language as Latin, staggered them.

Had Jim been a poor boy, had he been without relations or influence, it is very probable that his strange ignorance and his curious manners would have caused a set to be made against him.

But ignorance was pardonable in the son of an earl. The viscount had learned nothing, but, at all events, it was not because his people couldn't afford to pay for him to be taught, as Crooke of the Shell put it.

And that propitiated Crooke and fellows like Crooke. There was plenty of money in the Westmoor family, and two or three titles, and so Jim glowed rosylike, as it were, in the eyes of the tuft-hunters.

Crooke was very nice to him—as nice as the cad of the Shell knew how to be—and

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No. 31. Vol. 1. (New Series).

ST. JIM'S BACK-CHAT BOYS

Hallo, readers! Tom Merry speaking! A question of vital import is before the meeting—a question affecting every one of us to our very foundations—a question which goes right down to bedrock—a basic question—

Lowther: Has the bottom fallen out of something?

Merry: On the contrary, the lid has been blown off! The "Holiday Annual" is out! The question is, are we agreed that the "Annual" is the very best five shillingsworth obtainable anywhere?

Lowther: Think, gentlemen. Think—with five shillings, you could buy enough tuck for a good spread—

Fatty Wynn: The "Annual" lasts longer than a spread!

Figgins: Good old Fatty! Even Fatty doesn't always think of his stomach!

Lowther: Wait! I knew a fellow once who bought the "Holiday Annual," and sat up all night for three nights and read it from cover to cover—

All: Yes?

Lowther: And then he complained because he couldn't remember what he'd read!

Figgins: Didn't the silly ass read it again more carefully?

Lowther: No, he didn't think of that! Then I knew another fellow who said he never bought the "Holiday Annual" because September 1st was such an awkward day for him. His brother's birthday came on August 31st, and his sister's on September 2nd; so he really couldn't afford it after buying their birthday presents.

Blake: Poor chap! What did he do?

Lowther: His own birthday came on September 1st, so his brother and sister clubbed together and bought him a copy.

D'Arcy: I move that if Lowthah has finished makin' asinine jokes, we go out an' buy a copy now—

Lowther: Wait! I knew a fellow who said he'd never buy the "Holiday Annual" again because no less than 387 friends borrowed it before the year was out!

Blake: And didn't he?

Lowther: No. But all the 387 bought their own copies the next year, so he borrowed theirs instead!

D'Arcy: I move my pprevious motion—namely, that we go out an' buy a copy before it is sold out!

All: Jolly good idea!

Lowther: Wait!

Merry: Well, Monty, what is it this time?

Lowther: I thought you'd want a copy each, so I ordered them last week. Here they are—in this parcel—don't all rush at once—

All: GOOD OLD LOWTHER!

Stop Press

FOOTBALL IS IN THE AIR—

Mr. Ratcliff has just had one through his study window!

Skimpole asks how can there be a "centre" half?

EASTWOOD FOOTBALL SAINTS' SMASHING START TO

Wally D'Arcy at the Microphone

A good start is half the battle in footer, and Tom Merry and his men are putting the words into action against Highcliffe. Courtenay and De Courey and the rest are pretty good players, but what can they do against the sudden, slashing attack which the Saints are launching now? Watch Merry with the ball—like an eel, wriggling past the opposition. Boomph! That one sped off his foot so fast poor Smithson in goal didn't even have a chance to jump! There's the leather, spinning in the back of the net—first blood to St. Jim's in the first match of the season, with the game only three minutes' old.

Now keep your eyes skinned. Courtenay and his Highcliffians are coming right back at the Saints—retaliation comes in the form of a stinging shot from De Courey which Fatty Wynn only just tips round the upright. Great shot, sir! The "corner," kick lands the leather bang in the goalmouth—now there's a rush! Heads up—and in it goes! Fatty was unsighted; no fault of his that the scores are level. Nine minutes gone, and a goal each!

No respite, though—both sides are at it, hammer and tongs, the play strictly fair but keen as mustard. Highcliffe are standing the strain better than they used to before Courtenay took them in hand. They are firm under pressure now—and their raids are swift and dangerous. Fatty Wynn runs right out of goal to throw himself at Courtenay's feet and deflect a certain goal-scoring shot—oh, well played, Fatty! He got an accidental kick on the shoulder in doing it, but he just rubs it in and carries on. Highcliffe are fierce attackers, though, and danger threatens. Golly! De Courey whipped one in from an impossible angle. It's in the net—two to one for Highcliffe. Buck up, Saints!

Nothing rattles Merry's men, though. Highcliffe have forced the pace. Now they

slacken a bit the picture run down across for pausing in but he's a the shot. Good old C

Saints a Merry effe sends Digby goal, draw home—three That's half

Second v hard witho to Courtena like a Troj which skim Pretty play and leaves A full-back Merry off. pile-driver "keeper." number fou

Saints ar Highcliffe l Gus, my ma and, cuttin He feints n five for St. the bag" have the ga brilliantly f Merry crow great goal goal. Six minutes le spairingly, them. Fatt Kildare blo games seen Something

ST. FRANK'S LAST-MINUTE VICTORY

St. Frank's led off at a terrific pace against Greyfriars, running them off their feet during the first half, and putting on three goals through Nipper, who was in his best form at centre-forward. Friars rallied and showed their true colours in the second half, and for a time Handforth was the only stumbling block in their path. Even he let three "sizzlers" through, two from Harry Wharton, and one from Bob Cherry. Towards the finish St. Frank's came into the picture once more, and Nipper netted the fourth and deciding point after a sustained attack, with barely a minute to go. Greyfriars never fully recovered from the whirlwind start of St. Frank's, who, though on strange soil, showed superb confidence,

ST. JIM'S Merry (3) Digby, D

GREYFRIARS Wharton

RIVER HO BAGSHOT T. JUDE



Merry's Weekly



Week Ending September 15th, 1934.

FOOTBALL LEAGUE START TO SOCCER SEASON



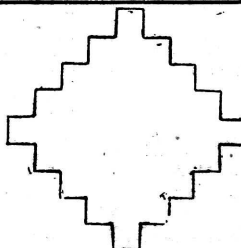
JUST MY FUN

Monty Lowther
Calling

Hallo, everybody! Here to-day and gun to-morrow, as the gangster remarked! Summer ripe, and summer over-ripe—but don't blame me! As the learned judge announced: "The jury are all of one mind—temporarily insane!" Talking of the law, a reader wants to know what a lawsuit is. A lawsuit is so called because when it has been "pressed," both sides are "cleaned"! "Who was the hero of the play?" asked Digby, when Blake had been to an amateur performance. "I was one," answered Blake. "I sat through it!" As the Rylcombe barber said to old Isaacs, who is quite bald. "Trim or polish, sir?" Young Gibson must have been feeling nervous when Mr. Selby barked at him: "What is a mountain?" "A field with its back up, sir!" gasped Gibson. As the mother of the "new kid" said to the Head: "My little Archibald is so nervous. Just punish the boy next to him, and that will frighten Archibald!" We can imagine it. Mr. Selby asked D'Arcy minor to give him an example of the stinger being stung. "What about a bee wandering into a wasp's nest?" suggested Wally. I met Kerr in the quad. "A Scot in any position is irreplaceable," said Kerr. "How would a Scot ever be able to go on holiday, then?" I asked. "A friend of mine," answered Kerr coolly, "vangled it by leaving four Englishmen and three Welshmen in his place!" Farmer Blunt has missed several of his ducks lately. He thinks his wife has fed them with some of her suet pudding—and he fears they've sunk! Did you hear of the country bumpkin who thought the fire brigade was a service to save you the trouble of lighting your own fire? And then there was the fellow whose motor-boat "conked out," and who dived underneath to see what was wrong. S'fact! As the professor said when the rhinoceros charged at him: "Really, I must remember to bring a gun next time!" An undergraduate friend of Kildare's had "gone down" heavily in his exams. "Well, did you pass everything?" inquired his anxious parent. "Yes, everything but a Bentley," responded the young man. "I really must get a faster car!"
Enjoy yourselves, chaps!

CALIBAN'S PUZZLE CORNER

Can you, by dividing this figure into four parts, make four sections that will fit together to form a perfect square?



Solution of
Last Week's
Puzzle

slacken a little—enough to let the Saints into the picture. D'Arcy shows us a dazzling run down the touch-line, flashing the ball across for Blake to trap and shoot without pausing in his stride. See Smithson leap—but he's a split second too late to intercept the shot. Goal, sir—oh, well shot, Blake! Good old Gus!

Saints are getting steam up now. Tom Merry effects a surprise overhead kick which sends Digby clear away. "Dig" slants in on goal, draws Smithson, and slams the ball home—three to two for St. Jim's—pheeep! That's half-time, but who cares?

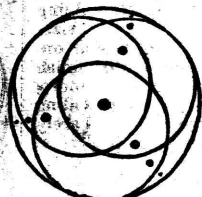
Second venture sees both sides struggling hard without slackening. I take off my hat to Courtenay's men. Courtenay himself works like a Trojan, and goes very near with a shot which skims the crossbar. Now watch Merry. Pretty play deceives Benson at centre-half, and leaves the St. Jim's captain a clear path. A full-back pounding across does not put Merry off. Steadying himself, he lets fly a pile-driver which would beat an England "keeper." Smithson gets nowhere near it—number four is rammed home for St. Jim's!

Saints are still full of fire forward—I think Highcliffe have had about enough, though. Gus, my major, you know, flits along the wing and, cutting in, evades a back with ease. He feints neatly and crashes home number five for St. Jim's. Guess the points are "in the bag" now, barring accidents. Saints have the game well in hand. Smithson saves brilliantly from Blake and Lowther, but Tom Merry crowns a great display by heading a great goal from amid a melee in front of goal. Six to two for St. Jim's, and four minutes left to play. Highcliffe rally despairingly, but even Courtenay cannot rouse them. Fatty Wynn saves the last shot, and Kildare blows the closure to one of the fastest games seen on Little Side!

Something like a start, what?

FULL RESULTS.

ST. JIM'S .. 6	HIGHCLIFFE .. 2
Merry (3), Blake, Digby, D'Arcy.	Courtenay, De Courcy.
GREYFRIARS 3	ST. FRANK'S .. 4
Wharton (2), Cherry	Nipper (4).
RIVER HOUSE 3	ROOKWOOD .. 3
BAGSHOT .. 1	ABBOTSFORD .. 0
T. JUDE'S .. 1	RYLCOMBE
	GRAM. SCHOOL 2



Levison and Mellish of the Fourth chased him up hill and down dale, so to speak.

But Jim did not take to them. He liked Tom Merry better than anybody else, and Tom Merry's chums—he rather took to D'Arcy and he liked Figgins & Co. of the New House.

But the black sheep of the Lower School he did not take to at all, and all the blandishments of Crooke & Co. were in vain.

And as soon as Crooke & Co. discovered that—and Jim put it bluntly enough—their regard changed to dislike—and they consoled themselves by sneering at the new boy's ignorance, and at his defective pronunciation.

Which Jim did not mind in the least. Some of the best fellows at St. Jim's had taken to him in the friendliest way, and with their friendship Jim was satisfied.

It was curious how soon he had dropped into his new way of life.

After the first surprise was over, he felt as if he had lived the part for a long time, and certainly as if he would like to go on living it.

And why not? Lord Devigne had changed with him of his own free will; indeed, had asked him as a favour to make the change.

Surely Jim was justified in taking what had been given him freely, or, rather, had been thrust upon him.

At all events, he thought so now. Other considerations might come in later, but for the present he was too busy picking his difficult path to be able to give much thought to the future.

Even if the worst came to the worst, and he had to leave, at all events he would be able first to realise part of his ambition—to leave St. Jim's with his education at least commenced, and with some knowledge of how to continue it.

That would be so much clear gain, whatever happened afterwards.

And Jim stuck to his work with a diligence that could not fail to gain the attention, and win the sympathy, of the masters.

Tom Merry helped him in leisure hours, and other fellows, when they saw how keen he was to learn, lent a hand also.

Manners took him in geography, Tom Merry in classics, and Kerr of the New House in mathematics. Kerr was a terror at maths, as Figgins said, and he was quite willing to impart his knowledge to the new boy. And the strides the new boy made amazed Kerr, who was quick at learning himself.

"Blessed if I can make that chap out," Kerr confided gravely to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy a day or two later.

"What chap, deah boy?" asked the swell of St. Jim's.

"Your cousin."
"He is not exactly my cousin, deah boy—"

"Well, whatever he is, then. He's awfully clever."
"Weally, is he?"

"Picks things up vevy quickly, and remembers them, too. He's got brains, you know."

D'Arcy smiled placidly.
"It wuns in the family, you know," he remarked.

Kerr stared.
"What does?"
"Bwains."

"Rats! That's just what gets me!" said Kerr. "I naturally expected a relation of yours to be a silly ass—"

"Weally, Kerr—"
"And he turns out to be quite a brainy chap. He might be a Scotsman, by the way he understands things at a glance!"

"You uttah ass—"
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"Are you sure there isn't some mistake?" asked Kerr gravely. "I tell you the chap's got brains! Are you sure he's a relation of yours?"

And Kerr dodged away just in time to escape a drive from the indignant swell of St. Jim's.

Mr. Linton, when he mentioned the new boy to the Head again, mentioned him in terms which showed what a good impression Jim had made upon him.

"The boy is extraordinarily deficient in education, and extraordinarily keen upon supplying the deficiency, sir," he said. "The progress he has made in a few days is amazing."

"I am very glad to hear it, Mr. Linton."

"It is the strangest case I have ever known of," said Mr. Linton. "I am giving the lad some private instruction in my study every day now, and other boys are helping him on in a generous way. I think that, in the long run, Lord Devigne will be a credit to his Form."

"That will be a very gratifying report to send home to his father," said the Head, looking very pleased.

"Yes, indeed."

And Mr. Linton was very kind to Jim. The lad thrived under his kindness, and after a week at St. Jim's his progress was so great that it almost amazed himself.

"How do you like it, kid?" Tom Merry asked him one morning, as the Shell came out of the Form-room after lessons.

Jim's eyes gleamed.

"Oh, it's ripping!" he said.

"You like the lessons?"

"Lummy! Yes, rather!"

Tom Merry laughed.

"I've never seen a swot quite so keen as you are," he

said. "Why, fellows don't work as you do even when they're mugging up for an exam and a big prize!"

"It's easy work to me after what I've been used to," said Jim.

"Eh? What work have you done, then?"

Jim coloured. He had been thinking of the hard toil of a deck hand on board a tramp steamer on coasting work.

"Well, it's a big change," he said.

"Yes, I suppose it is. I understood that you had led a very idle life before you came to St. Jim's."

"I take to it all serene," said Jim. "I don't see how you chaps can think so much about football when you might be getting on like steam with your work."

"My hat! Well, you are keen, and no mistake. When you've been at it a term or two you'll slacken down a bit, I expect," said Tom Merry, laughing. "Besides, football keeps you fit and in good condition to work."

"Ay, ay!"

"Come out for a run now—it will do you good."

Jim hesitated.

"I was going to do deponent verbs," he said.

"Ha, ha, ha! Leave the deponent verbs over and come out and have a run—you need it, you're looking quite seedy with work."

"Oh, all serene!"

And Jim walked off with his arm linked in Tom Merry's.

CHAPTER 11.

The Fight!

LEVISON of the Fourth looked after the two juniors with an ugly frown.

"Looks jolly, doesn't it?" he sneered, turning to Mellish. "Tom Merry seems to have adopted the giddy viscount. Blessed tuft-hunter, I say."

"Of course, he's after his money and crawling up to his titled relations," said Mellish.

"Yes, of course."

The two cads of the Fourth agreed with one another in words, though in their hearts they knew perfectly well that they were speaking falsely. Tom Merry would have made no distinction between the son of an earl and the son of a chimney sweep. There was nothing snobbish about the hero of the Shell.

But it was a kind of pleasure to them to malign the fellow they disliked and envied and feared.

"It's rotten," went on Mellish. "When I heard what a reputation Devigne had I thought he was exactly the fellow for us."

"So did I. I thought he was a chap like Lumley-Lumley—like Lumley-Lumley used to be, I mean, before he was taken away after his illness."

"Yes; and he must have jolly near as much money as Lumley-Lumley, besides being a lord," said Mellish. "It would have been a catch for us."

"Yes; but it hasn't come off."

"Those rotters have nobbled him," said Mellish. "I don't know what the chap means by all this swotting; it's not natural."

"It's a game of some sort, of course."

"I dare say it's a scheme to get into the good books of the masters and prefects so that he won't be suspected when he does break out," Mellish suggested.

Levison nodded emphatically.

"My hat, I shouldn't wonder!" he exclaimed. "Of course, when you come to think of it, that's his game. He's taking Tom Merry in with the rest."

Mellish grinned.

"Then there's still a chance for us," he remarked.

"Yes, rather!"

Levison thought it out, and he decided that Mellish had certainly hit upon the true explanation of a remarkable state of affairs. And Levison determined to let the new boy know that he was discovered, and to suggest to him that it was time to take other fellows of the same kidney into his confidence.

Tom Merry and Jim came back from their run, looking very ruddy and healthy. After dinner Jim went out with a book under his arm, and Levison followed him.

Jim crossed the road and passed over the ditch by the plank bridge, and entered the quiet, shady wood.

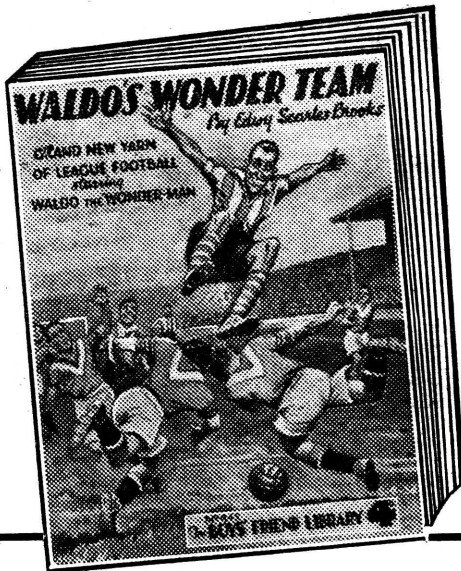
There, with the wind whistling in the branches over his head, and birds twittering round him, he sat down to wrestle with deponent verbs.

"Hallo!"

Jim started, and frowned a little as Levison came up.

The cad of the Fourth threw himself upon the deep, rich grass at the foot of the big tree where he was sitting.

He nodded to Jim, affecting not to see the knitting of his brows. The new junior was very far from pleased at being



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interrupted in his work, especially by Levison of the Fourth.

"Well?" he said, as politely as he could.

"I want a little jaw with you, old man."

"Buck up, then, please," said Jim; "I've got a lot of work to do."

Levison smiled sneeringly.

"Oh, we're all alone here!" he said. "You needn't keep up that rot to me, you know."

Jim looked at him steadily.

"What rot?" he asked. "I don't understand you."

"Oh, ring off! I tell you it doesn't work with me!" said Levison impatiently. "The studious air for the masters is all right, and always carrying a Latin book round under one's arm looks well, I know. But you can't pull the wool over my eyes, and I don't see why you should want to when I'm prepared to be your friend."

"I don't quite catch on."

"Look here, you used to have a giddy time—smoking and gambling, horses and cards, and so on," said Levison. "I've heard all about it from more than one quarter."

The new boy smiled in a peculiar way.

"I've never had a giddy time, as you call it," he said, "but supposing I had, what then?"

"Well, I know you are only lying low now, waiting for your chance," said Levison. "You are playing a little game to pull the wool over the eyes of the powers that be. I know it, you see."

Jim laughed.

"Oh, you know that, do you?" he said.

"Yes, I know it quite well! So you may as well be candid with me," said Levison. "I'm ready to be your friend. I, and two or three more, have a gamble sometimes. We can have a gay time, if you like. What do you say?"

"No!"

"You refuse?"

"Certainly!"

Levison's eyes gleamed with rage.

"Then what do you mean?" he exclaimed. "You don't want to join us. Does that mean that the Sixth have taken you up—Knox and Sefton and that lot?"

The new boy shook his head.

"It don't mean that anybody has taken me up," he said.

"I simply don't want to do as you suggest. I have never gambled in my life, and I don't intend to. And it would be mean to deceive the Head when he is so kind to us. That's all I've got to say."

"You—you puppy!" said Levison huskily, hardly able to speak for rage. "You dare to lecture me!"

"I don't mean to lecture you; but I mean what I say—I'm not going to join your party. Besides, I haven't the time; I have work to do."

"Oh, don't tell lies!" said Levison roughly. "I know that's only a blind!"

Jim's eyes flashed.

"I'm not used to being called a liar!" he said curtly.

"You'd better get back. I don't want your company."

That's plain enough, I 'ope!"

"You 'ope," said Levison, with a grin. "Where did you leave your h's, you low cad?"

"Will you buzz off?"

Levison rose to his feet.

"I know you're lying," he said. "It stands to reason you're lying; but you can't take me in, you confounded cad!"

Smack!

Jim came to his feet, and his open hand caught Levison across the face, and the cad of the Fourth reeled back.

"You've been calling me some pretty names," said Jim.

"Now you can put up your hands, if you've got the pluck, you lubber!"

Levison came at him like a tiger. He was bigger than the new boy, and he meant to give the viscount a thrashing which should make him sorry he had refused the high honour of going "on the razzle" with Levison & Co.

But small as he was, Jim was wiry and strong, and he had heaps of pluck.

He met Levison's rush steadily, and in a moment they were going it hammer and tongs. There was a shout from the wood.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Jack Blake, coming on the scene. "Chuck that! If you want to have a mill why can't you have the gloves on?"

Neither of the combatants replied. They had closed now, and were grappling with one another, fighting furiously.

"Look here, I'll go and get you the gloves, and you're going to fight like decent chaps, not like giddy hooligans!" shouted Blake.

And Blake ran off.

(Continued on the next page.)

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The two juniors seemed hardly to have heard him. Levison was in a furious and savage temper, and Jim's blood, too, was up. They fought furiously, hitting hard, and both of them getting pretty severe punishment.

There was a pattering of footsteps under the trees, and a crowd of juniors rushed up, with Blake at their head, and Tom Merry carrying the boxing gloves.

"Here you are!" shouted Blake.

"Yaas, wathah! Here are the gloves, deah boys."

There was no answer.

Levison and Jim were hitting out furiously, and as the juniors came up Levison went rolling on the greensward with a loud gasp.

Jim stood panting, waiting for him to rise.

But he did not.

The cad of the Fourth lay winded, gasping, bruised, and beaten. He turned an evil eye upon Jim, but he did not attempt to rise.

"Are you done?" gasped Jim.

"Hang you! Yes. Hang you!"

"Too late for the blessed fun!" growled Monty Lowther.

"Next time you have a mill, young shaver, go into the gym, where we can watch you."

Jim grinned—a peculiar-looking grin, as his nose was swollen, his mouth cut, and his face spotted and lined with crimson.

"All serene!" he gasped.

"What was it about?" demanded Tom Merry.

"Oh, just a row!" said Jim.

And he said no more than that.

CHAPTER 12.

The Skipper!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY stood at the gates of St. Jim's.

It was the day after the fight in the wood, when

Jim had shown his mettle, thereby considerably enhancing the respect the juniors had for him. He had given Levison a record licking, and it was agreed on all hands that Levison had wanted a licking. And although Jim said little or nothing, it was pretty clear to the chums of the School House what the row was about.

Levison had hardly made a secret of his intention of gaining Lord Devigne as a member of the "fast set" in the Lower School, and it was pretty clear that it was upon this subject that the two had fallen out.

The chums of St. Jim's did not want any further proof that the new boy was a decent fellow. Whatever he had been before he came to St. Jim's, it was clear that he wanted to run straight now, and in that Tom Merry & Co. were prepared cordially to back him up.

D'Arcy was beginning to feel a little proud of his new relation. Jim still dropped his aspirates in a very extraordinary manner. His customs at table were not all that could be desired. But he was evidently a fine fellow, and as decent at heart as Arthur Augustus himself was.

D'Arcy was going out with Jim that afternoon to buy a pair of football boots, and he was waiting at the gate for the new boy to join him.

Jim was with Mr. Linton, getting a little extra instruction, and D'Arcy had agreed to wait for him if he was late.

Arthur Augustus occupied the time by polishing his eyeglass, which certainly did not need polishing.

"Ahoj, there!"

Arthur Augustus looked up in surprise.

A big, burly sailorman in a peaked cap, looking like the mate or skipper of a coast tramp, came rolling down the road from Rylcombe towards the school gates. Arthur Augustus looked at him with interest.

Although St. Jim's was not very far from the coast, sailormen seldom came so far inland.

"Ahoj, young shaver!"

"Good-afatnoon!" said Arthur Augustus, with a great deal of dignity.

He did not particularly like being addressed as "young shaver," but he was willing to make allowances for the freedom of sailormen's ways.

The burly man halted before the swell of St. Jim's and looked past him at the school. From the gateway there was a view of the grey old buildings and porches with clinging ivy.

"Ahoj! Is this 'ere the school?" demanded the sailorman.

"This is St. Jim's."

"Ho! This is St. Jim's, is it? Then 'e's 'ere."

"Weally—"

"You don't know who I am, maybe," said the burly man. D'Arcy shook his head.

"I do not wemembah havin' met you before," he said.

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"I twust I have not committed such a bweach of mannaahs as to forget a gentleman I have once been intwudoced to. If so, I am extwemely sowwy."

"I'm Captain Ted 'Iggins, of the Nancy Jane."

"Yaas?"

"That's me," said Mr. Higgins, nodding his head—"that's me!"

There was a distinct scent of strong rum as the skipper came closer to the swell of St. Jim's.

Arthur Augustus backed away a little.

"Pway don't come so close, my deah sir," he expostulated "I am not at all deaf and I can hear you vewy well, you know."

"I'm Ted 'Iggins—"

"Yaas, you have already informed me of that. I am sure I am vewy pleased to make your acquaintance, my deah sir."

"I'm lookin' for 'im."

"Yaas?"

Arthur Augustus could see that the gallant captain had had a little too much rum before he started on his walk; or perhaps he had refreshed himself at wayside places en route—not wisely, but too well.

"'E's 'ere," said the skipper, nodding his head confidentially. "'E's 'ere."

"Is he weally?" said D'Arcy, without having the faintest idea what the skipper was driving at, but thinking it best to humour him.

"You bet! 'E's 'ere!"

"Vewy well!"

"I've come to speak to 'im," said Mr. Higgins. "'E was rather a young rip! You'll allow that?"

"Certainly!"

"But I ain't goin' to see 'im shown hup and done in without speakin' a word of warnin', all the same," said the skipper. "That's me—Ted 'Iggins."

"I am sure that is vewy considewate of you, Mr. Higgins," said Arthur Augustus, still humouring the stranger. "It would certainly be howwid for him to be shown up and done in without a word of warnin'—vewy howwid indeed!"

"The other chap," said Mr. Higgins, "sailed on the Nancy Jane. 'E came down instead of Jim, and I took 'im on."

"Weally!"

"Ay, ay! I took 'im on—and a lazy, slackin' spiteful, careless, insolent swab 'e was!" said Mr. Higgins with emphasis. "Tork about lazy scum—'e took the cake, 'e did. 'E took my belt around 'im, too, I tell yer. At every port 'e wanted to bolt ashore—'e'd had enough of it. But I says to 'im, says I—'My fine gentleman,' I says, 'you came on the Nancy Jane to please yourself,' I says, 'and you'll stay on it to please me,' I says. 'I'll eddicate you afore I done with you,' I says."

"Bai Jove!"

"Ay, ay! I put 'im through it—a slap for a back answer, and a beltin' for laziness, and it improved 'im wonderfully," said Mr. Higgins. "You should 'ave seen the change in 'im afore we'd been coastin' a week."

"Weally—"

It was all Greek to D'Arcy. He hadn't the faintest idea what the skipper was driving at, though the boy he was waiting for could have told him. Had not the gallant captain imbibed liquid refreshment so liberally that warm afternoon, he would not have confided all these particulars to the first chance stranger, especially as he had evidently come to the school with some hazy idea of doing Jim Brown a service. But the rum had been a little too much for the skipper's wits.

"I says to 'im, says I," went on the skipper, who was gradually coming closer and closer to D'Arcy, and edging his way in—the swell of St. Jim's retreating from close contact with him—"I says to 'im, says I, 'You changed with the other chap of your own accord, according to your story,' I says, 'an' you'll stick this till we git back to Southamp-ton,' I says."

"And then, I says, 'I'll leave my mate instructions to keep you aboard,' I says, 'till I've 'ad time to go and warn Jim,' I says, 'so that 'e can get into the offing,' I says. 'E ain't goin' to be shown up by you,' I says, 'you spiteful young scoundril,' I says."

"Bai Jove!"

"An' that's 'ow it is," said Mr. Higgins, beaming upon D'Arcy with an expansive and odorous smile. "That's the course, sir. You savvy?"

"Weally, I don't quite undahstand, but it's weally of no consequence. Good-afatnoon!"

"But I've come 'ere to see Jim."

"Weally—"

"Where is 'e?"

"My deah sir—"

"That young bounder's comin' back, you see," the skipper explained. "'E's as full of spite and malice as an egg is

of meat, and I must say that 'e's bin through it while 'e's bin aboard with me. 'Cause why, I've been larnin' 'im."

"I am sure that was vewy pwaiseworthy of you, my deah sir—"

"Now I want to see Jim. I'm goin' to see Jim."

D'Arcy looked round helplessly. He could only imagine that the rum had so influenced the skipper of the Nancy Jane that he imagined that some old shipmate of his was at the school.

Arthur Augustus wondered how he was to get rid of the man.

"Where's Jim?" demanded the skipper, his voice rising.

"Weally, my deah sir—"

D'Arcy looked round for help. A junior was coming towards him from the School House with a book under his arm. D'Arcy waved his hand to him, and the new boy

"Look 'ere," he roared. "I want to speak to Jim!"

"Pway don't make a wov, my deah sir— Oh!"

Arthur Augustus staggered back as a big fist was brandished in his face.

"Bai Jove!"

"Where's Jim?"

"Gweat Scott! Help!"

Kildare of the Sixth ran up, and Taggles, the porter, came along. The skipper glared at them, evidently quite prepared for war.

"What on earth are you doing here?" exclaimed Kildare.

"Get outside the gates at once!"

"I've come to see Jim!"

"Jim who?"

"Jim Brown—my shipmate, Jim Brown."

Kildare laughed good humouredly.



"Sure you ain't made a mistake?" asked Taggles with heavy sarcasm. "You ain't the Duke of Westminster by any chance, are you?" "I tell you I am Lord Devigne!" shrieked the viscount, shaking the bars of the gate in rage. "The other fellow is a liar—an impostor!"

at St. Jim's looked at him quickly, and caught sight of the skipper.

Captain Ted Higgins was mopping his heated brow with a red handkerchief, and did not see him.

For a moment Jim stood still, petrified, as he recognised his old skipper.

Then he darted behind a buttress.

D'Arcy viewed this proceeding with amazement. But he had no time to think about it; the skipper had finished mopping his brow, and was talking again.

"Take me to Jim," he said. "I've got a good cargo aboard, but I can follow a course, you bein' the pilot, you see. 'Eave a'ead!"

"My deah sir—"

"Look 'ere!" roared the skipper. "Where's Jim? What I says is, where's the boy? Tell 'im 'e can come back to the Nancy Jane, if 'e likes—'e's all right."

"Weally—" said D'Arcy feebly.

Jim's pale face looked out from behind the buttress. Then it disappeared, as the new boy trod cautiously away.

Captain Higgins was growing excited now. He clenched a big, hairy fist.

"Well, your shipmate Jim Brown isn't here," he said. "You're much more likely to find him at the Green Man, down the road. Come, sir, you can't stay in here."

The skipper blinked at him uncertainly.

"Jim Brown ain't 'ere, ain't 'e?" he asked.

"No, he certainly isn't. There isn't a fellow of that name in the whole school, I give you my word," said Kildare.

"Then 'e's gone."

"Well, he's not here."

"Then I can't warn 'im about the other chap?"

"No," said Kildare, laughing, "you can't. This way out!"

"If you see 'im, you'll tell 'im old Ted 'Iggins came to see 'im, and 'e's welcome to come back to the Nancy Jane, and we sail to-morrow."

"I'll tell him with pleasure—if I see him."

"Thank you kindly, young gent. P'r'aps you'll come along to the Green Man and 'ave a rum with me."

Kildare grinned.

"Not just now," he said. "Thank you very much, but I can't just now. Good-bye!"

"So-long! Don't forget my signals to Jim Brown, if you see 'im."

"Right-ho!"

And the gallant skipper went rolling down the road, leaving Kildare grinning in the gateway of St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 13.

Gussy Gives Up!

JIM touched Arthur Augustus D'Arcy lightly on the arm, as the swell of St. Jim's went into the School House.

D'Arcy was still looking very flustered.

"Bai Jove! I've been waitin' for you," said D'Arcy. "Why didn't you come?"

"Sorry! But—"

"I have had a most excitin' expewience," said D'Arcy. "A big, howwid man, smellin' of wum, vevy nearly committed assault and battewy on me—weally."

"What did he want?" asked Jim.

"He was talkin' a lot of wot—about a shipmate named Jim Brown who was here—and sayin' that Jim could go back to the Nancy Jane if he liked," said D'Arcy. "Of course, the wuffian was intoxicated."

Jim grinned a little.

"He always could shift it," he remarked.

"Eh? Have you seen the man before, then?"

Jim coloured.

"I am ready to go out if you are, D'Arcy," he said. "We shall have to buck up now."

"Vevy well; come on."

During the walk to the village Jim learned all he could of what the sea-captain had said to D'Arcy. But it was evident that Ted Higgins had not given him away. Jim gathered that he had talked a great deal about some "other chap," and who the other chap was Jim, of course, guessed easily enough. But the captain had not come with hostile intent, and he was sailing again on the following day, and from that Jim took comfort.

For the lad had quite fallen into the ways of St. Jim's now, and if exposure had come, and he had been compelled to leave, it would have been a bitter blow to him.

He had feared rather injudiciousness than malice on the part of the skipper, but he was glad that he was gone. On the part of the real Lord Devigne he feared nothing.

It did not even occur to Jim that the viscount might repent of his bargain, and callously undo it, as he could with a word.

If Jim had made a compact of his own free will, he would have stood by it through thick and thin. He had not learned much in his rough life as a sailor-lad, but he had learned that.

That a fellow would break through a solemn compact, made by his own wish, and bring unhappiness upon another who had trusted him—that was not one of the things Jim's life had led him to expect.

And with the captain of the Nancy Jane safely gone, Jim's brief alarm subsided, and he felt secure again.

The five pounds Lord Devigne had given him was still mostly in his pocket. Jim was a careful lad with his money. He expended some of it now on the purchase of football boots, under the sage counsel of D'Arcy, and he felt considerably elated as he walked back to St. Jim's with the boots under his arm.

Of football Jim knew little, but he was eager to learn, though he placed sports second to "swotting," in that differing from most of the other fellows, who put outdoor games first on the list.

Tom Merry had promised to coach him in football, and Jim was keen to learn. And that afternoon, after lessons, he started, and acquitted himself very creditably.

Tom Merry patted him on the shoulder as they walked back from the playing fields.

"You'll get on like anything if you stick to it," he said. "I shouldn't wonder if you have a chance for the Junior Eleven by the end of the term."

Jim's eyes glistened.

"Lummy," he ejaculated, "that would be spiffin'!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy jammed his eyeglass into his eye and turned it upon the new junior.

"Pway excuse me, Devigne," he remarked. "I would not think of offewin' instwuction, of course, to a fellow of my own age, but would you mind sayin' wippin' instead of spiffin'?"

"Lummy!" said Jim.

"And if you don't weally mind, you might say 'My hat!' or 'Bai Jove!' instead of 'Lummy!'" suggested Arthur Augustus. "It would weally get much less on my nerves, you know. I'm sure you don't mind my mentionin' it."

"Crikey!"

"Ow!"

"What's the matter?" asked Jim in astonishment.

"That lowwid, vulgah word gwates on my nerves like—like a nutmeg on a gwater! Would you mind sayin' 'Gweat Scott!' instead?"

"Anything to oblige," said Jim. "You're mighty particular, that's all! But I don't mind, so long as you're 'appy!"

"Eh?"

"What's the hodds," said Jim philosophically, "so long as you're 'appy?"

D'Arcy shuddered.

"Of course, I weally wouldn't think of cowwectin' a chap," he said. "Cowwectin' anybody is pwiggish, and in weally bad taste. But if you wouldn't mind leavin' out the 'h's' where Providence nevah intended them to be, as in the word 'odd'—"

"Lummy!"

"Oh, cheese it, Gussy!" said Tom Merry. "Look here, why shouldn't Jim drop the front letter of a word, if you drop the final one? I don't see that it's any worse to drop a final 'g,' as far as that goes."

"Weally, you ass—"

"Rats!"

"It's orlright," said Jim. "I'm going to do my best; but, lummy, it's 'ard!"

"Say 'hard,' you chump!" corrected Arthur Augustus.

"Hard, you chump!" said Jim innocently.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, you fellows!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Hard, you chump!" yelled the juniors.

And Arthur Augustus sniffed, and gave up his attempts to improve his relation for that occasion.

CHAPTER 14.

Denounced!

TAGGLES, the porter, sat outside his lodge in the pleasant sunshine. Taggles was feeling very comfortable.

Most of his work was over, and he had taken advantage of the fact that Mrs. Taggles was busy in the tuckshop to sample the contents of a green bottle he kept behind the clock in his little parlour.

Taggles was feeling very happy, and smelling slightly of strong drink, when a figure entered the gates of the school.

Taggles sat bolt upright.

The figure was that of a boy about fifteen, in rough sailor clothes stained with tar and grease and the dust of travel. He had a stick and a bundle in his hand, and had evidently tramped far on a dusty road.

His face was not overclean, being clotted with perspiration and covered with dust, and its expression was not prepossessing.

The brow was wrinkled in an ugly frown, the eyes were gleaming with bad temper, and the lips looked as if they were snarling.

A more unpleasant specimen of a youthful tramp Taggles had never looked upon.

The boy came in at the gates of the school as if he belonged there, and Taggles viewed that proceeding with amazement and indignation.

"Ho, you there!" he shouted.

The stranger glanced towards him.

"Well?" he rapped out.

"Houtside!"

"Eh?"

"Get hout!"

"Oh, don't be a silly ass!" said the stranger. "I'm coming in!"

"My honly 'at!" muttered Taggles.

He jumped up and placed his bulky form in the path of the newcomer. The boy stopped, looking at the school porter with a venomous glitter in his eyes.

"You just go hout!" said Taggles, pointing to the gate.

"Hout you go! You hear me?"

"Oh, get out of the way!"

"Wot!"

"Let me pass!"

Taggles smiled unpleasantly. He had not the slightest doubt that he had to deal with an unusually cheeky specimen of a tramp, and Taggles was annoyed. He did not like his repose disturbed, and he did not like the wayfarer's insolence.

"You 'ear me?" he said emphatically. "Tramps ain't allowed in 'ere. There ain't nothin' to be given away. You get hout!"

"Tramps, you old fool! I'm not a tramp!"

Taggles simply staggered.

"Wh-what!" he gasped. "What did you call me?"
 "Old fool—old idiot! Get out of the way!" said the other savagely.
 "Well, I'm blowed!" said Taggles.
 "Will you let me pass?" shouted the lad.
 "I rather think not, you cheeky young scoundrel!" said Taggles.
 "Hout you go! You march straight hout, or I'll kick you through the gates! You 'ear me?"
 "Don't be a fool!" said the boy. "I'm not a tramp! I belong here, and I'm coming in. Get out of the way!"
 "I'm blowed! I never 'eard anythin' like this—never!"
 The stranger attempted to push by Taggles. The big, strong hand of the school porter closed on his shoulder. The boy's eyes blazed with rage. It was pretty clear that he had a savage and violent temper, which he never even tried to control.
 "Let me go!" he shouted.
 "Not that I knows of!" said Taggles.
 And, exerting his strength, he dragged the boy to the gates. The lad kicked savagely at his shins, and Taggles uttered a cry of anguish.
 "Oh! Ow! Oh!"
 "Now let me go, you old fool!"
 Taggles did not let him go, but with his disengaged hand he boxed the lad's ears and pitched him out into the road.

isn't me—isn't Lord Devigne at all, I mean. I'm Lord Devigne!"
 "Well, you do it well," said Taggles admiringly. "You orter go on the stage! I suppose you belong to a show, hey?"
 "I tell you I'm Lord Devigne. I changed clothes in the train the day I was supposed to come here with a sailor-lad called Jim Brown. I'm going to change back now."
 "Pile it hon!"
 "I tell you I'm speaking the truth!" shrieked the boy.
 "Take me to your headmaster. I will prove it to him."
 "Go it!"
 Lord Devigne shook the gate in mad anger. Taggles was laughing loudly, very much amused by the preposterous claim of the stranger.
 "Will you let me in?" shrieked the viscount.
 Taggles shook his head.
 "Which I won't let your sort in 'ere if I knows it!" he replied. "Your proper place is a reformatory, young fellow-me-lad! That's my opinion."
 "Let me in!"
 Taggles turned the key in the lock.
 "If I let you in I should give you a licking for your cheek," he said. "Go away!"
 "I must come in!"
 "Oh, run along!" said Taggles impatiently.

YOU SIMPLY CANNOT FAIL TO BE THRILLED BY—



"Kill—kill!" screamed the priests. "The unbelievers have gazed upon the face of Raa-ok! Kill—kill!" In that second death seemed inevitable to the ten St. Frank's boys, for each one of the priests had whipped a wicked dagger from his robes, and every dagger was raised to strike death! The faces of the priests were distorted with such malevolent hatred that they no longer looked human. Murder blazed from the fanatical eyes! The gleaming daggers hovered over the boys, ready to plunge. "Klaa!" It was a sharply spoken word, and came from the withered mouth of Raa-ok, the high priest. "Kill them not! The unbelievers have gazed upon my sacred face and the punishment is death. Yet they shall live on. The Ten Talons of TAAZ shall strike. Each of you, my children, shall be tested—each one shall undergo the ordeal!"

—From Edwy Searles Brooks' great new series featuring Ten Boys of St. Frank's. Whatever you do, don't miss one story of this smashing series. The first yarn appears in next Wednesday's number.

DON'T FORGET TO ORDER YOUR "GEM" EARLY!

The youthful tramp rolled over in the dust, spitting with rage like a cat. Taggles proceeded in a leisurely way to close the gates, limping a little as he did so.
 The boy staggered up in the road.
 He came back towards Taggles, his eyes blazing with rage and hate and malice and every evil feeling.
 "I tell you I must come in!" he exclaimed, in a choking voice. "I belong to this school!"
 Taggles sniggered.
 "New boy, I suppose?" he remarked. "New boys generally come to this 'ere college in that state, with a stick and a bundle—I don't think!"
 "Yes, I am a new boy."
 "Har, har, har!" chortled Taggles, as he closed the gates, and proceeded to insert the ponderous key in the lock. "Har, har, har! I don't think!"
 "You old idiot!"
 "Oh, pile it hon!" said Taggles. "You'll be run in by a policeman afore you're much holder!"
 "I belong to this school—"
 "Go hon!"
 "My name's Lord Devigne."
 "What?"
 "I'm Lord Devigne."
 "Well, of all the cheek!" said Taggles, in amazement.
 "When I knows Lord Devigne as well as I knows Master Merry or Master Figgins! Well, I'm blowed!"
 "I'm Lord Devigne!" howled the boy, shaking the bars of the gates from the outside in passionate wrath.
 "Har, har, har!"
 "I tell you the fellow who came here as Lord Devigne

"I tell you—"
 "Sure you ain't made a mistake?" asked Taggles, with heavy sarcasm. "You ain't the Duke of Westminster, by any chance are you?"
 "I am Lord Devigne!"
 "You don't 'appen to be the Archbishop of Canterbury, I suppose?" pursued Taggles, in a vein of canter.
 "I tell you I am Lord Devigne!" shrieked the viscount.
 "The other fellow is a liar, an impostor, a thief! I am Viscount Devigne!"
 The boy spluttered and spat with rage. His look was like that of a wild cat. He raged at the gates, shaking the bars passionately, while Taggles turned and tramped back to the lodge without deigning to look back at him once.
 "Most peculiar tramp," said Taggles to Dame Taggles as he went in. "Most peculiar indeed! A mere kid, and 'owlin' hout that 'e's a lord, or somethin'! Haw, haw!"
 The boy outside the gates shook at the bars savagely till Taggles disappeared into his lodge. Then he ceased, choking with rage.
 "Hang him! Hang him!" he muttered. "I must get in! I must get in! The headmaster will believe me—he must believe me! He cannot believe that uneducated young ruffian is Lord Devigne when I confront him! Oh, what a fool I've been—what a fool! But I'll make that low cad suffer for it!"
 The amiable viscount, whose heart was seething with hatred for the boy who had impersonated him—though at his own request—passed along the school wall, looking for a likely place to climb over.

In a place where the ivy grew thickly and hung down over the road, he climbed easily enough, and in a couple of minutes dropped down the inside of the school wall.

He drew a deep breath.

He was within the school grounds. It only remained to find the impostor and denounce him, and state his case to the headmaster. Punishment might await him, but that was nothing compared with what he had been through. For his week on board the Nancy Jane under the hard-fisted skipper, Captain Ted Higgins, had been like a nightmare of horror to the spoiled and petted viscount.

He had not known what to expect when he changed clothes with Jim Brown, and he had not known how to make the best of his new lot. He had been as insolent and idle on board the Nancy Jane as in his father's house at Westmoor Park, and Skipper Ted Higgins had made him simply squirm.

Blows and hard words, hard words and blows—that was the programme, until the viscount learned to curb his insolent tongue and to turn to work with the other hands.

It was an experience that Lord Devigne was not likely to forget as long as he lived.

It had done him little good. Only, it had embittered his temper and filled him with a savage longing to be revenged upon somebody. Utterly unreasonably and unjustly, he had come to look upon Jim Brown as the cause of his woes, and he was looking forward with spiteful eagerness to denouncing him at the school as an impostor and getting him kicked out in disgrace from St. Jim's.

With these thoughts in his mind the viscount looked about him, and, having got his bearings, started for the School House.

A crowd of boys were just coming out, and they stopped in surprise to look at the strange, rough-clad figure.

Lord Devigne's eyes blazed as he caught sight of a familiar face among them—the face of Jim Brown.

He sprang forward, his right hand raised to point.

"That's the cad! I'm Lord Devigne, and that fellow is a liar and an impostor!" he shrieked.

CHAPTER 15.

The Cad's Triumph!

JIM BROWN stood on the steps of the School House petrified.

The blow had fallen with the suddenness of summer lightning, and he had not had a second to prepare for it.

But for his unfortunate weakness for rum, Captain Ted Higgins might have succeeded in conveying a warning to the unfortunate lad. But he had not succeeded.

Jim was taken utterly by surprise.

He stood staring blankly at the viscount, his brows contracted, his eyes gleaming wildly, his heart thumping against his ribs.

He was betrayed!

This wretched fellow had gone back on his bargain, and he was betrayed—exposed—ruined! All was over!

Those thoughts came hammering through the unhappy lad's brain.

He could not speak. His tongue clove to the roof of his mouth. His eyes were fixed upon the viscount, as the eyes of an unhappy bird might be fixed upon the serpent about to devour it.

Lord Devigne's face blazed with triumph. He had expected denial, defiance, a struggle on the part of the fellow who was sailing under false colours. He had anticipated having to prove his identity. But it was evident that he had little or no resistance to look for.

There was a buzz round Jim, but he did not hear it. He seemed to be stunned, lost to his surroundings.

Tom Merry shock him by the arm.

"Do you hear what this chap says, Devigne?"

Jim did not reply.

"Devigne!" shrieked the viscount. "You call him Devigne! I tell you I'm Lord Devigne—I! He is a liar—an impostor!"

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, turning his regliss upon the infuriated viscount. "I must say that that is an extraordinary statement. And if appearances were not against you I should strongly doubt that you were a relation of mine. It is howwibly bad form to fly into a wage, and you are actin' like a howwid blackguard, whether you are in the wight or the wong."

The viscount shouted again:

"I tell you—"

"Hold on!" said Jack Blake. "Let's hear what the fellow has to say. Of course, there can't be anything in it."

"Of course not!" said D'Arcy. "It's all uttah wot, of course!"

"Kick him out!" said Herries.

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"I tell you I am Lord Devigne!" yelled the viscount. "Ask that hound! He won't deny it!"

"If you're Lord Devigne what are you doing in those clothes?" asked Tom Merry.

"And what is this chap doing here in these?" asked Blake.

"Yaas, wathah!"

Devigne panted for breath.

"I'll tell you," he said. "It was my idea. I was sent to school against my will. I didn't want to come, and I couldn't bolt without being followed. I suggested to that cad to change clothes with me in the train and come on here in my name, while I went to Southampton as Jim Brown, to go to sea."

"Bai Jove!"

"And did you?" asked Tom Merry, in wonder.

"Yes. I went to Southampton and shipped on a horrible tramp steamer called Nancy Jane, with a fearful ruffianly beast called Ted Higgins for a captain."

"Bai Jove!" ejaculated D'Arcy, remembering his visitor. "Was Ted Higgins a big, wuff chap, with a loud voice?"

"Yes."

"Gweat Scott! It's the same chap, then!"

"I've been a week on that horrible steamer," went on the viscount. "What I've gone through among the low brutes is unspeakable. I only got away this afternoon. The skipper had left orders with his mate to keep me on board till he'd had time to come here and warn Jim Brown that I was returning."

"Bai Jove!"

"I'll make them all suffer for it!" said the viscount, grinding his teeth. "When I'm of age I'll use my money and influence to ruin that captain, and to get all his crew punished, somehow."

Tom Merry's lip curled.

"You utter rotten cad!" he said. "If that's the sort of brute you are, I hope you got a good few lickings while you were on the steamer!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

The viscount gritted his teeth.

"And you've repented of your bargain, then, as you've come back?" asked Jack Blake, forced against his will to believe that the strange story was true.

"I've changed my mind."

"Then what have you got your rotten back up against this chap for?" Tom Merry exclaimed. "He only appears to have done what you asked him to do."

"I hate the low cad! I hate all of them! As for him, he shall be kicked out of the school!"

"Cad!"

"Worm!"

"Rotter!"

The viscount's eyes flamed defiance as those uncomplimentary remarks were hurled at him.

"Where's the headmaster?" he exclaimed. "I'm going to see him and expose that low cad! I'll soon show him!"

Tom Merry turned to the unhappy junior beside him.

Jim's face was deadly pale.

"Is this true, old lad?" said Tom Merry softly.

Jim's lips moved, and he tried to speak, but no words came. The juniors looked at him in silence.

"If it's true, tell us," said Tom Merry. "It would account for a lot of things we can't understand; but it won't make us think badly of you, kid. You didn't do right in coming here under false colours; but you've been a thousand times better than that utter cad who got you into this and has now rounded on you!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Is it true, kid?"

Jim's voice was broken and husky as he answered at last.

"It's true!"

The words were almost inaudible, and only a few of the fellows caught them.

"What does he say?" exclaimed Clifton Dane.

"It is true."

The viscount sneered triumphantly.

"Now kick the cad out!" he exclaimed.

Smack!

The back of Jack Blake's hand came with a mighty swipe across the sneering mouth of the viscount, and he sat down at the foot of the steps with a gasp of rage.

CHAPTER 16.

Not Wanted at St. Jim's!

LORD DEVIGNE struggled to his feet, white with rage.

"You cad!" he howled. "You insolent hound!"

"I—"

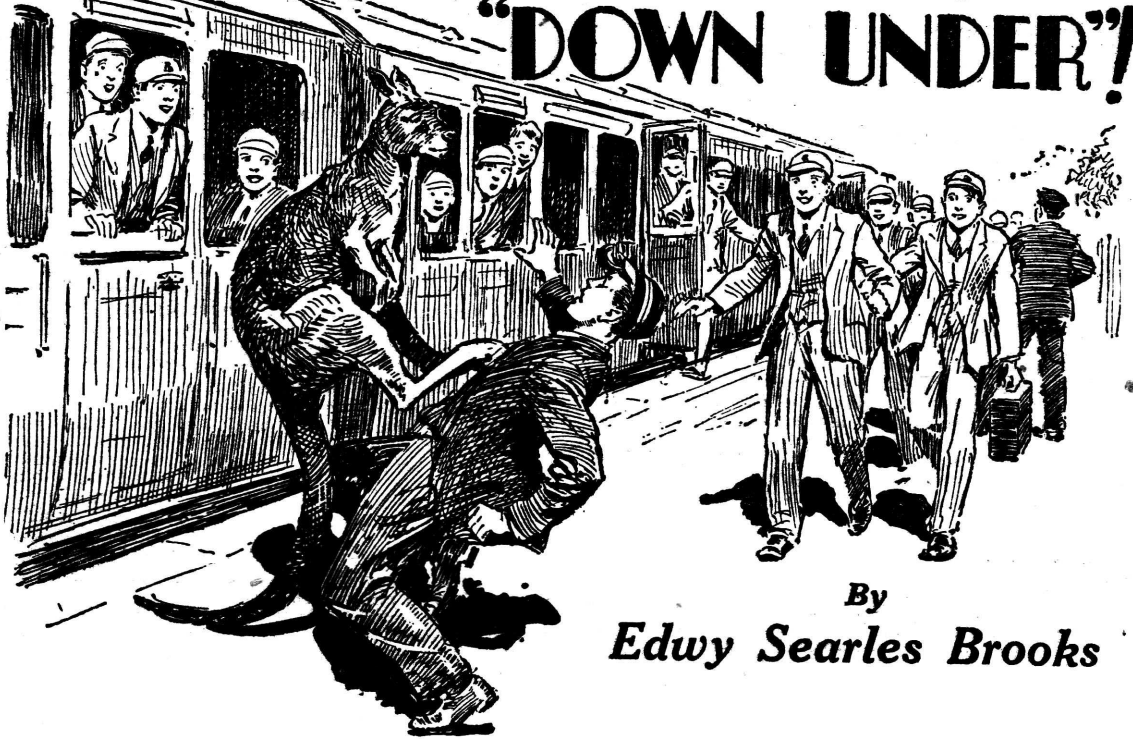
Jack Blake pushed back his cuffs. His eyes were gleaming.

"Come on, you worm!" he said. "This chap is worth a

(Continued on page 23.)

THESE CHAPTERS ARE FULL OF THRILLS AND SURPRISES!

THE SCHOOL FROM "DOWN UNDER!"



By
Edwy Searles Brooks

The Alarm!

"**B**ARTHOLOMEW EASTON!" ejaculated Jerry Dodd, in amazement. "Eh?" said Handforth, who was standing beside the telescope.

"I'd know that face in a thousand!" went on Jerry breathlessly. "What's he doing here? It's staggering! I can't believe it! Old Easton himself in England!"

William Napoleon Browne strolled over.

"When you have amused yourself sufficiently by talking in riddles, Brother Dodd, perhaps you will be kind enough to amuse us by expressing yourself in plain English?" he suggested kindly. "I must confess that, keen as my wits are, I am, at the moment, baffled by your observations."

Jerry Dodd explained.

"I only saw the face at the window for a moment," he concluded, "but I'll swear it was the face of old Bartholomew Easton!"

"Admitting that you are right in your identification, I am nevertheless at a loss," confessed Browne. "If this elderly Australian gentleman elects to reside in a charming Sussex cottage, who are we to criticise?"

"That's not the point," said Jerry quickly. "Mr. Easton has come to that cottage because he's suspicious—because he wants to keep his eye on this young rotter who calls himself Jim Sayers—and who isn't Jim Sayers at all!"

Handforth, at the telescope, announced that Nipper and Church and McClure were now hurrying towards the ruins in the dusk. Owing to Jerry Dodd's excitement, Handforth was, perhaps, a little careless. Otherwise he might have spotted, some distance behind the hurrying trio, another figure. Yet that figure kept well behind.

Even Nipper, astute as he was, knew nothing of the shadower.

When the three Removites reached the abbey ruins, they found everything quiet and peaceful. They mounted quickly to the tower-room, and were greeted by Browne and his companions.

"Wait a minute!" said Nipper. "There's a new development. Two mysterious men are in that little cottage by the river."

"We saw a face!" said Church impressively. "A horrid, villainous-looking face—"

"Gee, take it easy, chums!" protested Jerry Dodd. "I saw the face, too—through the telescope. The old man in

the cottage is Mr. Bartholomew Easton—the real Jim Sayers' guardian and uncle!"

"So that's it!" said Nipper, with a whistle. "You know Mr. Easton, of course?"

"Know him! I've known him since I was a kid in a go-cart!" said Jerry. "Listen, coppers! I'm going to that cottage. There are all sorts of things I want to tell Mr. Easton, and there's no time like the present."

"Better let me go and make inquiries," said Nipper. "You're supposed to be incarcerated in the dungeon, Jerry."

"Bother that for a tale!" retorted the Australian junior. "I know Mr. Easton. You don't. Better for me to go. That crook, Rutter, isn't likely to come anywhere near the ruins until the night is well advanced, so I shall be safe enough." He glanced out of the narrow window. "It's nearly dark now; there are black clouds coming up, too."

"All right, Jerry—you'd better go," said Nipper. "We'll wait here until you get back."

"Don't worry—I shan't be long," said Jerry Dodd, as he made for the staircase. "And I'll keep my eyes peeled."

The boy who called himself Jim Sayers was panic-stricken with fear. Catching sight of Nipper, Church, and McClure in the evening dusk, curiosity had made him follow them. He had seen them enter the abbey ruins; they had done so stealthily, cautiously. Knowing the secret of the ruins as he did, Jim Sayers came to the only possible conclusion. The secret of the dungeon was known to the St. Frank's fellows!

With his heart thudding like a hammer, with terror at his heels, the impostor ran for the River House School. Overhead, the black clouds were massing; in the distance thunder rumbled, and occasionally a flash of lightning would flicker on the horizon. It was a still, sultry, ominous evening. Sayers knew, as he ran, that the game was up, and he was terrified.

When he burst into Mr. Rutter's study some minutes later his pallid face was streaming with perspiration; his eyes were charged with alarm. Rutter, who was sitting at his desk, leapt to his feet at the sight of his visitor.

"What's happened?" he demanded sharply. "What's wrong with you, boy?"

Sayers, with his back to the closed door, fought for his breath.

"We've got to quit!" he panted hoarsely. "The game's up, Rutter!"

"You young fool! What do you mean?"

"I mean what I say—the game's up," mumbled Sayers. "Three St. Frank's chaps have gone to the ruins—I saw them!"

For a second an expression of fear came into Rutter's eyes; then he swore.

"Your nerves have gone, Sayers!" he said harshly.

"There's a thunderstorm brewing, isn't there? Ten to one those boys went to the ruins for shelter. They know nothing of—"

"But they do—they do!" broke in Sayers desperately. "Look here, Rutter! I meant to tell you before. I went to the ruins in the night and had a look at Dodd and Handforth. They were in the dungeon all right, but on Handforth's sleeve I saw a scrap of brown creeper."

He went into details, and Rutter listened with growing alarm.

"I thought, perhaps, it was my fancy," concluded Sayers. "But that scrap of creeper would only have caught in the buttons of Handforth's sleeve while he was out of the dungeon. The ghost voice I heard, too. The St. Frank's chaps must have tricked me. Don't you see that we've got to bolt? Dodd and Handforth aren't prisoners at all. Those other chaps are helping them—and they've been fooling us! They're playing a deep game—luring us on. I knew it was madness to put those two fellows in the dungeon. I told you so from the first—"

"Keep calm, you young fool!" snarled Rutter. "Ninety-ninths of this crazy story is sheer imagination. You've been brooding over it, and getting yourself worked up. Anyhow, we'll make sure."

He pulled open a drawer of the desk, and Jim Sayers was horrified to see a wicked-looking automatic pistol in his grasp.

"What—what's that for?" panted the boy.

Rutter did not answer. With set lips he strode to the door. Sayers seized his arm.

"What are you going to do with that gun?" he asked fearfully. "You're mad, Rutter! You told me this business was only a big practical joke—"

"It may have been a joke to start with, but with those two boys in the dungeon, we're up against trouble unless we safeguard ourselves!" interrupted Rutter harshly. "Don't be a young fool. I'm not going to shoot anybody!"

His voice was almost a snarl, and he looked so dangerous that Sayers trembled. Clearly the man was desperate. But he managed to pull himself together.

"You're coming with me," he said, seizing Sayers by an arm. "Now, brace yourself up! I tell you, there's nothing to worry about. We're going to the ruins to satisfy ourselves—that's all."

Sayers pulled himself together.

"All right," he gulped. "But I know you're wrong. We'd better bolt while we've got the chance!"

They met nobody in the passage as they left the room. The cheery voices of Curly Baines & Co. sounded from the Common-room. One of the senior Australian boys ran into the departing pair as they were descending the steps.

"Better take your mac, sir," he said. "The storm's coming over."

"Thanks," said Rutter, in an easy voice. "We're not going far."

Thunder rumbled as they walked across the quad. They left the school grounds, and were soon on the towing-path next to the river. Lightning blazed, and Jim Sayers came to a sudden halt, clutching at his companion's arm.

"What's wrong with you now?" snarled Rutter.

"Didn't you see?" panted the boy. "There's somebody coming! Back, back!"

The thunder crashed in the distance and rumbled over the countryside. Sayers dragged his companion back to the shelter of a clump of bushes.

And, sure enough, in the silence which followed the thunder they heard the sound of hurrying footsteps on the towing-path.

From their shelter they saw a dim, vague figure, and when it was nearly opposite them another flash of lightning came.

It was an illuminating flash; for it revealed the face of Jerry Dodd! The Australian schoolmaster almost betrayed himself, for he drew his breath in with a sharp hiss.

Jerry Dodd—free!

Jerry left the towing-path a few yards farther on, and, making his way towards a little rural lane, he was clearly bent upon visiting the trellis-covered cottage which stood near by. Rutter, after that first moment of surprise, followed. He saw Jerry Dodd reach the cottage, open the little white gate, and walk up the neat path.

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"Well?" came Jim Sayers' frightened voice. "Are you satisfied now?"

Rutter dragged his young companion down.

"Not so loud, you fool!" he hissed.

"It's Dodd—and he's out of the dungeon!" whispered Sayers tremulously. "I was right all the time, Rutter!"

"Yes, you were right," said Rutter, his voice hard. "Dodd has escaped—and it means that the other boy must have been out of the dungeon in the night. Yes, there's something fishy about all this, and I'm going to find out what it is!"

A Shock for Rutter!

JERRY DODD, intrigued by the knowledge that old Bartholomew Easton was in the little cottage, walked up to the creeper-covered trellis porch and knocked on the door. The door was opened, after a brief wait, by the placid, elderly angler whom Nipper and Church and McClure had seen earlier. He beamed smilingly upon the young visitor, although for a second he had seemed half inclined to shut the door in Jerry's face.

"You are afraid of the storm?" he asked amusedly.

"No, sir," replied Jerry; "I want to see Mr. Bartholomew Easton."

A startled exclamation sounded from within the cottage parlour, for the front door opened straight upon the room.

"That's his voice!" said Jerry quickly.

The man at the door had no opportunity of denying the schoolboy admittance, for Jerry wriggled past, and a moment later he was standing within the room. An old-fashioned oil-lamp with a big white globe was standing in the centre of the table. Beyond, Mr. Bartholomew Easton had just risen to his feet, his face expressive of anger.

"How did you know I was here, young man?" he demanded.

"I saw your face at the window, sir," said Jerry eagerly.

"I warned you to be careful, Mr. Easton," said the other man, with mild remonstrance.

"It doesn't matter a bit, sir," put in Jerry quickly. "If Mr. Easton doesn't want it to be known that he is here—"

"Why, bless my soul!" interrupted Bartholomew Easton. "Surely it is young Jerry? I didn't recognise you at first, my dear boy. It's all right, Maxwell. Jerry and I are old friends. It's not so many years since I rocked him in his cradle."

"I hope you don't mind me butting in, sir," said Jerry, as he took the old man's hand, "but I had to see you. There's a fellow at the Australian School here who calls himself Jim Sayers. But he's not your nephew at all!"

Mr. Easton nodded.

"I know it, Jerry," he replied quietly. "That's why I'm here—that's why I decided to come quietly, in the night, unknown to anybody in the neighbourhood."

"But I don't understand, sir," said Jerry. "I've been puzzled for weeks—I've been trying to get to the bottom of the mystery. Jim and I are old coppers. This impostor is a rank wrong 'un."

"I believe you," said Mr. Easton. "I am most anxious to learn his game. I thought I might make a few discoveries if I came here secretly. Mr. Maxwell here, my good friend, has been kind enough to take me into his holiday cottage."

"I've got a lot to tell you, sir," said Jerry eagerly. "There's a man mixed up with this boy who's masquerading as your nephew. He imprisoned me in an old dungeon, and—"

Jerry Dodd told his story.

Outside in the oppressive darkness Rutter stood motionless. He had seen Jerry Dodd enter the little cottage—which, Rutter knew, had been empty until a day or two ago.

What fresh development was this?

Rutter, thinking of the St. Frank's boys who had gone to the ruins, came to the conclusion that the little cottage was being used by them as a local meeting-place. The very fact that Jerry Dodd had gone there was sufficient evidence of this, proof enough that the boys were playing a deep game of their own. Otherwise, Dodd and Handforth, having gained their liberty, would have dashed to the police with complaints against Rutter.

"Yes," muttered the man, as though speaking his thoughts aloud, "there might be time yet. These fool boys have kept the secret—and that gives me my chance."

Jim Sayers plucked at his arm.

"Better be careful, Rutter—" Sayers began.

"I know what I'm doing!" snapped the other.

"But, listen—"

"This is no time for listening—it is time for action!" said Rutter, moving away.

Sayers was intent upon telling him about the two men who had taken possession of the cottage; Sayers had seen them arrive during the night. But Rutter would not listen. He was impatient.

So, without listening to Sayers' breathless words, Rutter strode to the cottage and burst right in—for when he turned the handle the door opened at once.

"Now, my young friends, we'll talk this thing over——"
Rutter stopped, his jaw gaping. For in that second he had recognised Bartholomew Easton. For some moments there was a tense, dramatic silence—broken only by a crash of thunder from the heavens above.

Rutter, in fact, was stupefied with consternation—and he realised, too late, that he had been a fool to burst into the cottage in this way. Until that second he had believed Mr. Easton to be in Australia. The shock was stunning.

"Perhaps it is as well you came, Mr. Rutter," said the old man grimly. "The sooner we straighten things out the better."

Rutter was tongue-tied. He could only stand and stare like a man bereft of his wits. Behind him the false Jim Sayers was trembling with fright.

showed on his face; he swayed, staggered towards a chair, and collapsed into it.

"My—my heart!" he muttered feebly.
The shock, evidently, had brought on a sudden heart attack. He slumped into the chair, half fainting.

"You rogue!" shouted Mr. Easton, in alarm. "If you think——"

"Stand just where you are, Mr. Easton!" rapped out Rutter, his voice strained and harsh. "I'm beaten. I know it. You're the last man in the world I expected to see. Well, I'm clearing out—but I'm going to make sure before I go that you can't set the police after me. Boy, bind him up."

"Just a minute——" began Jerry Dodd, who had been a silent and amazed spectator.

"You, too!" snarled Rutter. "Put your hands up and keep still! Jim, bind them both! I've got this gun trained on them——"

He broke off, for Jerry Dodd was not the kind of fellow to tamely knuckle under. With one swift right-hander he sent the false Jim Sayers flying. Crash! The blow caught Sayers on the point of the chin, and he fell like a log.



"You haven't got me yet!" cried Rutter wildly. With a sudden wrench he tore himself away from Nelson Lee's grip. But instead of making a dash for the door to escape, he rushed at the table and, with a heave, sent table and lamp crashing over.

"You may well be silent," said Mr. Easton sternly. "You are an infernal scoundrel, Rutter. You tricky rat, the time has come for you to answer to me. What have you done with Jim, my nephew?"

"Nothing—nothing!" panted Rutter. "Your nephew is safe and well—in Australia."

"And you, the paid tool of my elder nephew, Charles, brought this rascally impostor to England in Jim's name?" said Mr. Easton accusingly. "But make no mistake, Rutter. The laws of England are as rigid as the laws of Australia; you shall suffer the full penalty for your wicked treachery."

Rutter seemed to be turned to stone. When movement came back to his limbs he half turned, like a frightened animal, towards the door. But the placid Mr. Maxwell was standing there. He had walked into a trap.

"You haven't got me yet!" he snarled savagely.
And with a quick movement he whipped out his gun. The lamplight glistened on the blue steel as the barrel of the weapon jerked round towards Mr. Maxwell.

"Good heavens!" panted that individual.
The sight of the gun, pointing straight at him, had a marked effect upon Mr. Maxwell. Horror and consternation

"You young fool!" shouted Rutter, in panic.

He hit at Jerry Dodd with the butt end of his gun, and the blow, catching Jerry on the temple, effectively knocked him out. Jerry sank to the floor with scarcely a groan. Mr. Maxwell had half started to his feet, but he had collapsed again, groaning. Jim Sayers was just staggering dazedly to his feet.

"It's just as well!" snapped Rutter. "The kid is 'out.' Leave him where he is. Take this tablecloth and bind the old man."

"But—but——" began Sayers, white to the lips.
"Do as I say!" thundered Rutter.

Mr. Easton remained calm.
"Very well, Rutter, you win this trick!" he said angrily. "I'm not fool enough to resist an armed and desperate man!"

Sayers, with trembling hands, removed the tablecloth, and Mr. Easton was ordered to sit back in his chair. Then Sayers, using the tablecloth like a rope, bound the old man securely to the chair.

"You're a fool as well as a rogue, Rutter!" said Mr. Easton.
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Easton contemptuously. "I believe Charles to be the instigator of this contemptible plot, and if you had chosen to be frank with me, I might have let you go free. But now you shall certainly spend the next few years within an English convict prison."

Rutter ignored him.

"Tie something round the boy," he said to Jim Sayers. "You'd better find some rope. We'll bind them all up—even this poor specimen who has collapsed. It might be two or three days before they escape, and, meanwhile, we can—"

"I think you have made a little mistake, Mr. Rutter," said a cold, decisive voice.

Rutter spun round, his jaw dropping. He stared in

GIVE ALL YOUR PALS THE TIP ABOUT—

sudden fear; for Mr. Maxwell, far from being the victim of a heart attack, was standing next to him, and one of Mr. Maxwell's hands was gripping Rutter's arm. That grip felt like a steel vice.

"I'll trouble you for this," said Mr. Maxwell easily.

With one quick, deft movement he wrenched the automatic pistol out of Rutter's hand.

"But—but I thought—" began Rutter, aghast.

"Sometimes, my friend, we make mistakes; and we must pay for our mistakes," said Mr. Maxwell crisply.

Jerry Dodd, who was recovering, and who had now sat up, stared oddly.

"I know that voice!" he panted, clutching at the table, and rising. "Why, gee! It's Mr. Lee—Mr. Nelson Lee!"

He spoke the name in a joyous shout. Bartholomew Easton chuckled, and "Mr. Maxwell" nodded in agreement.

"I saw no reason, Jerry, why I shouldn't put an end to this scene," said the great detective. "Hope you weren't hurt much just now. I had no time to prevent Rutter's blow."

Nelson Lee! Rutter shivered as he realized that he was facing that world-famous detective—that grim, relentless man-hunter. Panic took him in its grip—stark, blind panic.

"You haven't got me yet!" he cried wildly.

With a sudden wrench he tore himself free from Nelson Lee's grip. But instead of making a dash for the door, as Lee expected, he rushed at the table, and, with a heave, he sent it toppling over.

Crash!

The oil lamp struck the floor, and the globe shivered to a thousand fragments. There was a flickering flash, and then a tongue of livid, yellow flame leapt to the ceiling, within a foot of the spot where Mr. Easton was bound helpless to a chair.

Rutter spun round, dashed to the door in the confusion, and flung himself out into the night—to the accompaniment of a blaze of lightning and a shattering crash of thunder.

Bartholomew Easton Explains.

BUT luck was against the elusive, desperate Mr. Rutter. For five St. Frank's fellows were at the white gate of the little cottage as Rutter hurled himself out into the night, to be shown up vividly by that lightning flash.

"It's Rutter!" yelled Handforth excitedly. "Grab him!"

Once again it was Browne's good telescope which had

—"THE TEN TALONS OF TAAZ!"—

led up to this climax. For the watchers in the old abbey tower had kept Jerry Dodd under observation until he had entered the cottage. Then, soon afterwards, they had seen Rutter and Sayers creep up, and enter the cottage, too. Nipper had decided, then, that immediate action was necessary. He and the others had left the ruins, and had raced to the cottage.

They arrived at a crucial moment. They leapt at Rutter before he could even dodge, and their united onslaught bore him to the ground. They swarmed over him and held him down.

"Got him!" roared Handforth.

A figure appeared in the cottage doorway.

"Well, done, boys!" said a familiar voice. "Bring your prisoner indoors, will you?"

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"Guv'nor!" yelled Nipper gladly.

"Mr. Lee!" shouted the others.

They hauled Rutter roughly to his feet, and now every scrap of fight had left the man.

They entered the cottage. Nelson Lee, by swiftly throwing a heavy rug over the burning lamp, had quickly extinguished the flames. A number of candles were now burning—some on the mantelpiece, and others on the table, which had been righted. Mr. Bartholomew Easton, free, was looking just a bit flustered.

"Upon my word, Mr. Lee, you turned the tables very surprisingly," he said. "I knew, of course, that your 'heart attack' was a fake, and I tamely surrendered to Rutter when I saw your wink. All the same, you have astonished me."

"Gee, fellers, everything seems to have happened all at once!" panted Jerry Dodd. "How did you get here so quickly? And look! It's Mr. Lee!"

"Which means everything's all right," said Nipper confidently. "You old fraud, guv'nor! You come down here in disguise, and you don't tell me a thing!"

"I've scarcely had the opportunity," smiled Nelson Lee. "Mr. Easton and I only arrived last night. We were prepared to find out things for ourselves. But you have precipitated the climax. Well, so much the better."

By now Lee had hastily removed his disguise, and, except for his old-fashioned Norfolk suit, he was himself.

His first act now was to take some gleaming handcuffs from his pocket, and to walk across to Rutter, who was held firmly by Browne, Nipper, and Handforth. With two sharp movements Lee clicked the "bracelets" over the man's wrists.

"You can't do this!" panted Rutter violently.

"I have done it," retorted Lee.

"But—but it's absurd!" said Rutter desperately. "I'm not a criminal! It was Charles Easton, in Australia, who paid me to bring this boy over, and palm him off as Jim Sayers. It was only a joke."

"A joke, my friend, which will land you in prison," said Nelson Lee, nodding. "You are a party to a criminal

—OUR WONDERFUL ST. FRANK'S SERIES

act—the kidnapping of Jim Sayers, and keeping him in confinement, while this impostor has been using his name!"

"They told me there was no harm in it, sir," babbled the false Jim Sayers. "They told me that Sayers would be well looked after. All I had to do was to have a good time—"

"And behave like a young hooligan during your stay in England—eh?" said Mr. Easton sternly.

"Gee! I don't get the hang of it at all," said Jerry Dodd.

"Yet the explanation is quite simple," said the old man. "I am getting on in years, Jerry, and I think you know that I have the reputation for being a bit eccentric."

"Why, yes, sir!" admitted Jerry.

"I am a rich man—the owner of a very great sheep station in New South Wales," continued Mr. Bartholomew Easton. "I am a bachelor, and I had decided that one of my nephews should inherit my property. Charles Easton, my elder nephew, has long hoped that he would be my heir; but he has known that I have not trusted him. He has known, too, that Jim, my sister's child, was my favourite. When I sent him to England with the Australian school, I decided to put him to the test. I told Charles that if young Jim acquitted himself well during his stay in England, I would make him my heir. If, on the other hand, he behaved badly, I would cast him off. I even went to Jim's school, and made a secret arrangement with this man—this treacherous schoolmaster whom, at the time, I trusted. I arranged with him that he should keep his eye on Jim, and that he should report on the boy's conduct."

"Well, Jim left the station, and went off on his trip. Everything seemed normal at first. Weeks passed—months. Then Rutter's reports started coming in. They were all bad. Jim had disgraced himself on the ship during the voyage to England; at the school, here, he continued to behave badly. Rutter sent newspaper cuttings as evidence of his own statements. I was shocked and disappointed. But it was the attitude of my other nephew, Charles, which aroused my suspicions. For Charles was openly pleased, and told me that Jim was worthless."

"So I decided, at length, to make a rapid trip to England to find out things for myself. I went to Sydney, apparently on business—and in Sydney I arranged with a friend of mine to send letters, which I had previously written, at regular intervals, to Nephew Charles, whom I have placed



Mr. E. S. Brooks welcomes letters from readers. Write to him c/o The Editor, The GEM, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

THE names of all the prominent people at St. Frank's, including the masters, will appear in the "Names List," G. Bennett and T. Affleck (Liverpool). However, as you ask me a definite question in your letter, there's no reason why I shouldn't tell you at once that the four House-masters at St. Frank's are: Ancient House, Mr. Alington Wilkes; Modern House, Mr. Arthur Stockdale; West House, Mr. Beverley Stokes; East House, Mr. Barnaby Goole. Pleased to hear that you like the serial so much. The one to follow, upon which I am now working, is very different—something, in fact, rather novel and packed with thrills. But don't worry. I'm not taking Nipper and Handforth and all the rest of the gang away from St. Frank's.

in charge of the cattle station. Charles, therefore, thinks I am still in Sydney."

"But how did you get to England so quickly, sir?" asked Jerry.

"I came by plane," replied the millionaire sheep farmer. "I chartered the finest machine in Australia, and hired the finest pilot—the famous Sir George Walston-Brown. We took it in easy stages, and did the trip in ten days. On my arrival in London, I went at once to the finest private detective in the Empire's capital."

Nelson Lee smiled.

"You are very kind, Mr. Easton," he said dryly. "At first, I admit that your case struck me as being trivial; but it so happened that Nipper had sent me some details concerning this affair. As soon as you came to me I knew something of the truth. I knew that this boy at the Australian School was an impostor—for Nipper had written and had told me so. You thought it advisable, then, to come to the district quietly. Under the name of Maxwell I took this little cottage—the owner of it is a personal friend of mine, and he readily fell in with my arrangement. As I have said, we intended watching developments, but the necessity for that is no more."

"Mr. Easton, I beg of you not to prosecute," pleaded Rutter, his manner very earnest. "It was your nephew, Charles, who led me away. He paid me big money, and he swore that there was no real harm in it. It's not a criminal offence. Charles took Jim to a lonely shack in the bush, and he has two men there looking after him. The boy hasn't come to any harm."

"Do you know the exact locality of this shack?"

"Yes."

"Then I will send an immediate cablegram to Australia and have Jim freed," said Mr. Easton. "At the same time, I shall have Charles arrested. As for you, Rutter, I am inclined to drop proceedings—if I get a reply from Australia to say that Jim is unharmed."

Rutter's eyes glittered.

"You'll never regret it, Mr. Easton," he panted. "I've had my lesson—"

"Unfortunately, Rutter, this charge of conspiracy is a minor one," interrupted Nelson Lee, his voice very hard. "There is another charge against you."

"I—I don't understand," gasped Rutter.

"No?" said Lee, holding something under Rutter's face. "Do you know what this is?"

Rutter turned as white as a sheet.

"No!" he shouted hoarsely. "It—it looks like a stone to me!"

"It is one of the missing Booma diamonds," said Nelson Lee sternly. "The rest of those diamonds are in your possession."

"It's a lie!" screamed Rutter.

"Keep your hair on!" growled Nipper. "I saw you take the diamonds from their hiding-place—behind the skirting in your study. You dropped that single diamond, and I grabbed it. That's surprised you, eh? But I've been on your trail for a long time, Mr. Rutter!"

Glad you think that my chat is a good idea, "Reader" (Lancaster). When you write to me again, I hope you'll make your letter a bit longer. The "Monster Library" was a special monthly publication, price 1s., which contained many of the old earlier series of St. Frank's stories in book-form. As regards the "Popular," I don't think this will ever be revived. It was replaced by that spanking weekly treat, "The Ranger."

* * *
"Names List" No 10. East House, Fourth Form. Study No. 15: David Merrell, Frederick Marriott, Enoch Snipe. Study No. 16: William Freeman, Eric Dallas, Arthur Steele. Study No. 17: Arthur Kemp, Cyril Conroy. Studies Nos. 18, 19, and 20 are waiting for occupants. This reminds me. Some weeks ago, I believe, in answering a reader, I wondered what had happened to that chap, Kemp. Of course, he's in Study No. 17 with Conroy Minor. I had rather lost track of him.

* * *
Sorry about that "Names List" No. 6, N. H. Copeland (Orpington). It appeared in the August 25th issue, and I've no doubt that you have seen it by now, and that everything is now O.K. As regards the occupants of Studies No. 6 and No. 7 at the River House School, these will appear in due course, in their right place. For after I have dealt completely with St. Frank's "Names List" I'll carry on with Hal Brewster & Co. of the River House. Then, I suppose, some of you will want me to continue with the Moor View School for Girls, and perhaps even a list of the prominent tradesmen and other residents in Bellton village. I'm very bucked to know that you are "completely satisfied."

EDWY SEARLES BROOKS.

"Three years ago a large consignment of uncut diamonds from the famous Booma Mine, in Victoria, was stolen," said Nelson Lee. "The Australian police could never trace them. When Nipper sent me this single diamond I was able to discover its history. I knew, therefore, that you were in league with the diamond thieves—that you had been paid to bring the stones to England and dispose of them. It's a very serious charge, Rutter."

At that, Rutter collapsed. He knew that he was "for it" with a vengeance.

"I knew nothing of this, sir," panted the boy who called himself Jim Sayers. "What are you going to do with me? I belong to Sydney—my name's Torn Ogden, and it'll kill my mother if I go to prison. She thinks I'm at sea, working on a cargo boat. Rutter promised me a lot of money, and I haven't done anything against the law."

"You will be sent back to Australia—and no charge will be made against you," said Lee quietly. "You have been a tool from the first. At the same time, you knew that it was your job to bring discredit upon the honourable name of Jim Sayers, and you are unworthy to mix with decent schoolboys. I shall have you sent to London at once—and there you will wait until an escort can take you back to Australia."

So the little mystery was cleared up, and Curly Baines and the other Australian schoolboys now understood why "Jim Sayers" had never played cricket, and why he had always been such an outsider. There was a minor sensation at St. Frank's, and Edward Handforth and Jerry Dodd were the heroes of the hour. For it was soon known that they had not taken "French leave" as everybody had believed—but they had been imprisoned in the old dungeon at the abbey ruins. Handforth, naturally, made the most of it, and he had a fine time until the edge of the sensation wore off.

Very quickly Mr. Bartholomew Easton had cablegrams from Australia, informing him that the real Jim Sayers had been freed, unharmed. Also, Charles Easton was under arrest, and he would certainly go to prison for conspiracy.

Before the Australian School left the neighbourhood of St. Frank's, there was another great "Test match," and it proved to be a thrilling and exciting game. The Australians pulled off a grand victory at the eleventh hour, and the St. Frank's fellows were full of admiration for the splendid and sporting game they had played.

Everybody at St. Frank's—particularly in the Junior School—was sorry when Curly Baines and his high-spirited "cobbers" left in order to return to their native country. It would be many a long day before St. Frank's would forget the keen rivalry which had existed between them and the "School from 'Down Under.'"

THE END.

(Next week: "THE TEN TALONS OF TAAZ!"—a super new St. Frank's series. Don't miss the powerful first yarn.)

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UNDER FALSE COLOURS!

(Continued from page 22.)

thousand of you! I don't care what he is—he couldn't grow to be such a rotten cad as you are if he lived to be a thousand years old! Come on, if you want some more!"

"Yaas, wathah!" exclaimed D'Arcy. "I have always said that blood is thickah than watah, and that it's a chap's duty to stand up for his welahns; but I uttably wefuse to stand up for such a feahful wottah as Devigne! I wegahrd him as a wank outsidah and an uttably unspreakable cad! If he has the feahful cheek to claim me as a welahon, I shall have no wesource but to give him a feahful thwashin'!"

Jim made a movement.

"I'm going!" he said brokenly. "It's no good waiting to be kicked out. I can see now that I did wrong in coming here—it was sailing under false colours, anyway, though, goodness knows, I meant no 'arm! But I never thought a nobleman would break his word and round on a chap like this. I'm going!"

"I suppose you can't do anything else," said Tom Merry miserably. "Give us your list before you go, anyway!"

Jim shook hands with Tom Merry, and then with Arthur Augustus and Blake and several more of the juniors, and went slowly and heavily down the steps.

The viscount watched him go with scintillating and pitiless eyes.

Tom Merry gave him a scornful look.

"As for you, you cad," he said, "I hope you won't be allowed to remain at St. Jim's after this rotten trick! But if you do remain, we'll cut some of the cheek and spite out of you, I promise you that!"

"Yaas, wathah! As a chap who is disgwaced by bein' your welahon, I shall make it a point to give you a feahful thwashin' whenever you are caddish, deah boy!"

Lord Devigne gritted his teeth.

"Let me pass!" he said. "I'm going in!"

He thrust his way through the juniors, shoving right and left. Tom Merry & Co. were not likely to take that patiently from Devigne.

In a moment the viscount was collared and sent spinning into the Hall, where he alighted, sprawling.

"Oh!"

"What is this? What does this disturbance mean?"

It was the Head.

Lord Devigne staggered to his feet.

"I have been assaulted!" he shouted. "I have been treated brutally by those young ruffians! I demand that they shall be flogged!"

The Head stared at the dirty, ragged lad in blank amazement.

"Are you mad?" he said. "How did this wretched boy get in here, Merry?"

Tom Merry came up.

"He's Lord Devigne, sir!" he said.

"What!"

Tom Merry explained. The Head listened, with utter amazement and consternation in his face.

"Good heavens!" he exclaimed. "Is it possible that such a trick has been played upon us?"

"It's true!" snarled the viscount. "I am Lord Devigne!"

"And the other lad—that strange boy? Ah, I understand now! Yet his keen desire to improve his education was most praiseworthy. Where is he?"

"He has gone, sir," said Tom Merry.

"Did he admit the truth of this boy's statements?"

"Yes, sir."

"It is most extraordinary! Lord Devigne, you have acted in a rascally and disgraceful manner! I am glad that

the truth has been exposed," the Head continued; "but nothing in the matter reflects credit upon you, Lord Devigne! You have acted in an utterly discreditable and dishonourable way all through! I shall certainly not permit such a boy to remain at this school to contaminate more decent boys with his presence! You will remain here, just as long as it takes me to explain matters to your father, and no longer! This school is not for such as you! Kildare!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Will you see that this wretched boy is kept safe and looked after till I am prepared to send him home under escort? He cannot be trusted alone. Let him have what he may need, but see that he plays no tricks."

"Yes, sir!"

The Head turned to Tom Merry.

"You say that the other boy—the boy we have known as Lord Devigne—has gone?" he asked.

"Yes, sir!"

"I wish to see him. Fetch him back!"

Tom Merry hesitated a second.

"Are—are you going to punish him, sir?" he faltered. "I—I hope, sir, you won't. He was such a decent chap, sir—thoroughly decent all through!"

"I am glad you have a good opinion of him, Merry. I have myself. No; I am not going to punish him. I think he has done wrong to some extent, but he was led into it, and his chief motive evidently was a desire to improve himself. He cannot remain at St. Jim's, but I shall send him to a more suitable school, and in the future, perhaps, he may come here. You may repeat what I have said to him."

Tom Merry's eyes danced.

"Oh; thank you, sir!" he exclaimed.

And the juniors rushed out of the School House in search of the boy who had gone.

Tom Merry ran down the road as if he were on the cinder-path competing for a prize.

"Stop!" he shouted, as he saw Jim walking down the road with a slow and dejected gait.

Jim stopped and swung round.

Tom came up to him, gasping for breath.

"Jolly glad I caught you!" he exclaimed.

"What is it?" asked Jim despondently. "Does the 'Ead want to cane me? I don't care if he does! I don't care much for anythin' now!"

"My dear old chap," exclaimed Tom Merry, "the Head doesn't want to cane you, but he wants to see you!"

"What for?"

"To be a friend to you, kid—to look after you!" said Tom Merry joyously. "He's the best old sport you ever heard of, the Head is!"

Jim's eyes sparkled for a moment.

"You're to be sent to a school, and afterwards, perhaps, you can come to St. Jim's to stay," said Tom Merry.

"What do you say to that?"

Jim tried to speak, but a sob came instead.

"Come on, kid!" said Blake. "We're going to take you back. It's all right."

"Yaas, wathah!"

And Jim Brown was marched back into the school in triumph in the midst of a crowd of gleeful juniors.

Jim Brown went to school and Lord Devigne went home, the latter unregretted by anybody at St. Jim's, especially Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. Blood might be thicker than water, but D'Arcy had had quite enough of his noble relation.

But Jim was remembered, and he remained in correspondence with the St. Jim's fellows, who had become his good friends while he was at St. Jim's, though sailing Under False Colours.

THE END.

(Next Wednesday — "THE HOUSE OF FEAR!" — a great St. Jim's Thriller that you'll reel in.)

<h3>FOOTBALL JERSEYS</h3>		
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