

**"THE SCHOOLBOY RAIDERS!"** RIP-ROARING  
ST. JIM'S STORY  
INSIDE!

# The **GEM** 2d



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UP!**

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RESCUE, ST. JIM'S! GORDON GAY & CO. ARE ON THE WARPATH—

# The SCHOOLBOY RAIDERS!



"Klick 'em in!" ordered Gordon Gay. Tom Merry & Co. were helpless. There was nothing for it but to march into the St. Jim's quad bound and labelled as they were. "My heye!" gasped the astonished Taggles, as he opened the gates. "I'll report yer for this!"

## CHAPTER 1.

### The Raggers Ragged!

**L**OOK who's here?" Three youths in school caps stopped suddenly in Rylcombe Lane and uttered that exclamation. And Arthur Augustus of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's stopped, too, and took a slightly tighter hold upon his gold-headed cane.

For the three youths who faced D'Arcy were Gordon Gay & Co., of the Rylcombe Grammar School—deadly rivals and enemies of the St. Jim's fellows.

Gordon Gay, Wootton major, and Gustave Blanc, the French junior—more familiarly known as "Mont Blong"—were the trio. And Arthur Augustus knew that they were capable of anything, from rolling him in a ditch to sitting on his best Sunday topper.

"What a pleasant surprise!" exclaimed Gordon Gay.

And Mont Blong chimed in:

"Oh, vat a vairy pleasant surprise!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy backed away. He had just come round a bend in the lane, and had happened upon the Grammarians quite suddenly.

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Arthur Augustus, the swell of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, was clad in his best—and when Arthur Augustus was clad in his best, Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like the swell of St. Jim's. From the top of his glossy hat to the tips of his gleaming boots, he was a picture. And in his beautiful state, the last thing in the world that he wanted was a ragging at the hands of the Grammarians.

But Gordon Gay & Co. were chuckling with joy. The more magnificently Arthur Augustus was arrayed the more delight there was in ragging him; that was how the remorseless Grammarians looked at it.

And they advanced upon Arthur Augustus, who backed away, and waved his cane.

"Pway keep your distance, deah boys!" said D'Arcy. "I do not want to make myself wuff and dusty thwashin' you now—"

"Go hon!" murmured Gordon Gay.

"I am goin' to the vicawage to tea," D'Arcy explained, with dignity. "Undah the circs, you can wun away and play!"

"We're going to play, but we're not going to run away!" chuckled Gordon

Gay. "We were just looking for somebody to scalp. We haven't slaughtered anybody for days. Now you drop in, like corn in Egypt in one of the lean years. Gentlemen, I suggest a vote of thanks to Adolphus Montmorency D'Arcy for dropping along just when we were looking for somebody to rag!"

"Passed unanimously!" said Wootton major.

"Zat is so, my shums!" said Mont Blong.

"Now collar him!"

Arthur Augustus jumped back and ran. Arthur Augustus was as brave as a lion, and he would have scorned to turn his back upon any number of foes—so far as danger was concerned. But when it was a question of saving his clothes and his Sunday topper from rough handling, Arthur Augustus was willing to stretch a point, and to stretch his aristocratic legs at the same time. He ran, and dashed at top speed round the bend in the lane, whence he had appeared.

"After him!" roared Gordon Gay. "Vite, vite!" shrieked Mont Blong, waving his hands as he ran. "It is zat he vill escape!"

But as the three Grammarians came

## —OUT TO AVENGE A RAGGING AT THE HANDS OF THEIR DEADLY RIVALS!

### By MARTIN CLIFFORD

tearing round the corner there was a sudden shout.

"Here they are! Pile in!"

It was Tom Merry's voice—Tom Merry of the Shell Form at St. Jim's. And Tom Merry was not alone. Lowther and Manners of the Shell; and Blake, Herries, and Digby of the Fourth, were there, too. And they had lined up at the sight of Arthur Augustus fleeing from the Grammarians. Arthur Augustus, smiling cheerfully, stood behind the lines of juniors, his noble "clobber" quite safe.

And Gordon Gay & Co., coming on at racing speed, rushed into the St. Jim's juniors before they knew they were there. For a moment there was a wild and whirling struggle.

"Buck up, Grammar School!" shouted Gordon Gay.

"Pile in, St. Jim's!"

"Give 'em socks!"

"Yaas, wathah, deah boys!" chirruped Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Give 'em socks! I'd pile in and help you like anythin' if I wasn't goin' to the vicarage to tea! Thwash 'em, deah boys!"

And Gordon Gay & Co. struggled furiously.

But there were three against six—and six of the best.

Gordon Gay kept up the struggle longest. Mont Blong went down into the road, with Blake and Herries sitting on his chest, and then Wootton went down, and Lowther sat on his chest, and Manners on his legs. Finally, Gordon Gay himself was bumped into the road, and Tom Merry knelt on him and pinned him down, and Digby laid a strong grasp upon his ears.

The three Grammarians, smothered in dust, and looking considerably dishevelled, were helpless prisoners.

"Bai Jove! The wottahs wan wight into the twap!" chuckled Arthur Augustus gleefully. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Blake. "This is where we smile!"

"Hip-pip! We gloat!" chuckled Monty Lowther.

"Chuck it!" gasped Gordon Gay at last.

"Pway hold them tight, deah boys!" said Arthur Augustus. "They were going to wag me, you know, and wuin my clobber, if you fellows hadn't come along. They came vewy neah to committin' a fighful outwage. I wegard it as up to us to chastise them!"

"They look rather chastised already!" grinned Tom Merry.

"Groogh! Lerrus gerrup!" mumbled Wootton major.

"Pway hold them! I am goin' to whack them with my cane, like naughty little boys!" said Arthur Augustus, with a chuckle. "I wathah think that will be a lesson to them—what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here!" groaned Gordon Gay.

"I—"

"Wats! Woll them ovah!"

Gordon Gay resisted desperately; but Tom Merry and Digby rolled him over, and Arthur Augustus administered a gentle swishing. He did not hit very hard, and the pain was not severe; but the swishing from the hands of the swell of St. Jim's made Gordon Gay roar with wrath. The St. Jim's fellows, too, were roaring with laughter.

"Now the othah fellows!" said D'Arcy. "Wootton next!"

"Hands off!" roared Wootton. "I—I'll— Oh, you rotters! Oh!"

*Swish, swish, swish, swish!*

"Yaroooh! Oh!"

"Now the Fwench boundah!"

Gustave Blanc rolled his eyes wildly, and struggled and yelled.

"Ciel! It is not zat you whack me yiz stick, n'est ce pas? Zat would be ze insult zat only could be viped out with blood!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! Wathah pottay, that Fwench chap!" said D'Arcy. "Woll him ovah!"

"Mon Dieu! I do tell you zat—"

"Wats!"

Mont Blong was rolled over, and as he wriggled the cane swished on him lightly. He raved with wrath.

"I am insult!" he roared. "I have for zat ze satisfaction, n'est ce pas? I am insulted! Ciel! Zat sall in blood be viped out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Even Gordon Gay and Wootton major grinned at the sight of the French junior's wrath. Arthur Augustus finished swishing, and smiled.

"Now make the wottahs wan!" he said.

"We won't run!" growled Gordon Gay.

"Dwibble them along, if they won't wun, deah boys!"

The Grammarians were allowed to

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*When the Grammarians raid St. Jim's, Tom Merry & Co. are quite willing to take it as a joke—until they find that D'Arcy's fiver has disappeared with the raiders!*

rise, and as the St. Jim's fellows prepared to "dribble" them along the lane, they decided to run. And they ran. Mont Blong was inclined to renew the combat, but Gay and Wootton seized him by either arm, and rushed him along.

And Tom Merry & Co. sent a shout of triumph after them?

"Yah! Who's licked?"

"Grammar School!"

"Who licked them?"

"St. Jim's! Hurrah!"

"The rotters!" growled Gordon Gay, as he slackened speed at a distance and began to dust his clothes. "Never mind, we'll make 'em sit up for it! One good turn deserves another, and our turn will come."

And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of St. Jim's went on to the vicarage to tea in a state of complete satisfaction.

### CHAPTER 2.

#### To Speak or Not To Speak!

"I'M going to the Head!"

Percy Mellish of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's made that statement at the top of his voice in the quadrangle, and was replied to with many chuckles.

"I tell you I'm not going to stand it!"

"Rats!"

"It's all in the game!"

"Sure, and ye should take it calmly, Mellish darling!"

"I'm going to the Head. Let me pass, Kangaroo, you beast!"

Kangaroo—Harry Noble of the Shell—did not move. He had stepped into Percy Mellish's way, and barred his path towards the School House. Kangaroo was looking determined, and so were several of the other fellows. Mellish's declaration that he would go to the Head did not seem to meet with their approval.

"Not quite so fast," said Kangaroo cheerfully. "You're not going to sneak about Gordon Gay, my boy. Take it quietly. It's all in the game."

"Blow the game! Do you think I'm going to be ragged for nothing?"

"You've helped rag the Grammarians sometimes."

"Not when there was any risk of doing it, though," grinned Reilly. "Sure, Mellish never did that!"

Mellish snorted with rage. He was looking a far from cheerful object. He had just come in at the gates with his face covered with mud, and a considerable amount on his clothes. He was furious. He looked as if he had been rolled in a ditch.

"Did the Grammarians handle you like that?" asked Gore of the Shell.

"Do you think I rolled in a ditch for fun?" sniffed Mellish.

"I don't quite catch on," said Kangaroo. "It isn't like them to spoil a chap's clothes. It's going too far. What did you do to them?"

"Nothing."

"Didn't put up a fight?" grinned Reilly. "Faith, and we're sure of that!"

"I kicked them when they collared me," said Mellish sullenly. "They were three to one, and they were going to daub my face with mud. Gay said he would send me home as a sample of what Tom Merry was to expect. They all looked pretty ragged, so I suppose they've been rowing with Tom Merry this afternoon, and they took it out of me. I'm not going to stand it. I'm going to complain to the Head, and get them licked."

"You're not," said Kangaroo calmly, "and you shouldn't have kicked. I suppose the truth is you acted like a cad, and then they got mad with you and chucked you into the ditch. Serve you right!"

"Faith, and that's my opinion intirely! You kicked my shins once, Mellish, I remember, and it's a dirty blackguard ye are!"

"Well, I'm going to the Head!"

Mellish started towards the School House, and Kangaroo placed a powerful hand on his chest and shoved him back.

"No, you don't!"

"Look here——" yelled Mellish furiously.

"Hallo, wherefore this thushness?" broke in Monty Lowther's voice, as Tom Merry & Co. came in at the gates. "Has our dear Percy been out mud-collecting?"

"Looks like it," said Tom Merry.

"The Grammar School rotters rolled me in a ditch!" howled Mellish. "I'm going to ask the Head to complain to Dr. Monk and get them licked."

Tom Merry's face became very stern.

"You won't do anything of the sort!" he exclaimed angrily. "You're not going to sneak. Gordon Gay & Co. never whine if they get it in the neck."

"Look at my clothes!"

"Well, that's rather rough, but it's all in a day's work. Go and get a brush down before the masters see you."

"He wants them to see him!" said Blake, with a sniff.

"I'm going to get those cads licked!" said Mellish savagely. "They ragged me because you had ragged them, and I don't want to have anything to do with your rotten rags. I'll make Gordon Gay sit up."

"Bosh!"

"Well, you'll see."

"Yes, we'll see!" said Tom Merry grimly. "Bring him round to the gym, you chaps, and we'll talk to him. We shall be spotted by the prefects here."

"Let me go!" roared Mellish.

But the juniors did not let him go. They rushed him behind the gymnasium in spite of his resistance. There they were secure from observation, and Percy Mellish began to look very much alarmed. He was not of the stuff of which heroes are made.

"Now," said Tom Merry cheerfully, "you've got to give your word not to speak to the Head about the Grammarians!"

"I won't! I'm going to get them licked, especially Gordon Gay!"

"I don't see why he shouldn't report them," said Levison of the Fourth. "They had no right to make his clothes muddy."

"You may not see it, but we do," said Tom Merry, with a curl of the lip; "and I dare say Mellish did something caddish to make them use him roughly. Sneaks are barred in the School House. Figgins & Co. would turn up their noses at this House if we allowed sneaking in it. Mellish is going to keep his head shut!"

"I won't!" howled Mellish.

"Yes, you will, and you'll be bumped till you promise," said Tom Merry calmly. "And if you break your promise afterwards, you'll be ragged by the whole House and sent to Coventry. Now, you're not going to sneak about the Grammarians—honour bright!"

"Rats!"

"One!" said Tom Merry, holding up his hand.

Blake and Kangaroo seized the cad of the Fourth, and he descended upon the ground with a bump that made him utter an ear-splitting yell.

"Yah!"

"What do you say now?"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That isn't an answer!" said Tom Merry severely. "Are you going to promise not to sneak—honour bright?"

"Ow!" groaned Mellish. "Yes—ow! Grool! Leggo, you beasts! Ow!"

"Rats!"

And the juniors walked away grinning, leaving Mellish sitting on the ground gasping. Levison, who was grinning, too, gave his study-mate a hand to rise, and Mellish staggered up.

"Hurt?" grinned Levison.

"Ow! Yow! Yes! You silly ass, do you think I could be bumped like that without being hurt?" snarled Mellish.

"Go to the Head, all the same."

"Rot! I can't! They'd only bump me again, and worse!" groaned Mellish. "Ow! I'll make them sorry for this, and Gordon Gay, too. Gordon Gay—the beast! Ow!"

And Mellish limped away furious, turning over all sorts of plans in his mind for making both Tom Merry and Gordon Gay sorry for what had happened that afternoon, but not finding any plan that appeared practicable.

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### CHAPTER 3.

#### Mont Blong's Challenge!

GORDON GAY grunted as he sank into the armchair in his study in Rylcombe Grammar School.

The chief of the Grammarians was not looking pleased. He pulled up the leg of his trousers, pulled down the sock, and showed a big bruise on the shin. Wootton major and minor and Mont Blong were in the study, and they all uttered angry exclamations. Gordon Gay rubbed the bruise with embrocation.

"Rotten cad!" growled Wootton major. "If I'd known it was so bad as that, I'd have hammered the cad as well as chucking him in the ditch!"

"And I was going to daub him a bit with mud, and turn his jacket inside out," said Gordon Gay, in an aggrieved tone. "We had to do something after being ragged and licked by Tom Merry & Co."

"Of course you had!" said Jack Wootton. "But what silly asses you were to get licked, weren't you?"

"There were six to three!" growled Wootton major.

"And we have been disgraced and insulted," said Mont Blong, in tragic tones.

"Oh, rats!" said Gordon Gay. "No disgrace in being licked by odds of two to one. That's all rot!"

"I did not refer to ze licking. I have been swish."

"Swished!" exclaimed Wootton minor. "Oh, my hat! What larks!"

"It was not a lark!" shrieked Mont Blong. "It was an insult. I have been swished on ze trouser viz a cane!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Zere is nozzing for to laugh. It is a fearful insult to ze blood of ze Blancs, and it sall be avenged."

"You shall swish Gussy some day," said Gordon Gay consolingly.

"Zat is nozzing. Zat insult is to be viped out in blood!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"In my country we vipe out insults in blood!" said Mont Blong, his eyes gleaming. "I have been struck behind viz a cane. Zat is too much. If I do not vipe it out in blood, I no longer respect myself."

Gordon Gay left off massaging his bruise, and looked at Mont Blong. As he saw that the French junior was in deadly earnest, he simply gasped.

"Oh, my hat! Ha, ha, ha! Carry me home, somebody! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors.

Mont Blong glared round the study. As a rule, he was the most good-tempered of fellows; but he was angry, and evidently boiling over. The noble blood of the Blancs was evidently boiling at the deadly insult of being swished on the nether garments with a cane.

"You laff!" shrieked Mont Blong, waving his hands in wild gesticulations. "But I tell you zat I vill have ze satisfaction."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I demand of you, Gay, as my shum, to go to St. Jim's and deliver ze challenge to my foe."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It is zat you refuse? Zen I call you no longer my shum! I shake ze dust of zis study from my feet!"

And Mont Blong swung away towards the door.

Gordon Gay choked back his laughter. The touchy, excitable French youth was stamping away in great wrath, and Gay

had really a regard for him, and did not want him to go off in the sulks. But the idea of Mont Blong waging a duel with Arthur Augustus D'Arcy made the junior gurgle.

"Come back, Monty!" he gasped. "Sit down, old chap, and tell us what you want. Of course, if you're bound to have blood, we'll see if we can get you some."

"By the gallon!" said Wootton major solemnly.

"Zat is my shum!" exclaimed Mont Blong, and he rushed at Gordon Gay joyfully, and caught him round the neck and kissed him with loud smacks on both cheeks.

The Cornstalk wriggled in his grasp.

"Groogh! Chuck it! Stoppit! I shall be seasick!" he roared.

"My shum!"

"Ow! Leggo! Draggimoff!"

Mont Blong released his beloved chum at last. Gordon Gay caught up the poker, in case there should be any further demonstrations of affection. He did not mind being Mont Blong's chum, but he did not like Gallic fervour in friendship.

"My beloved shum!" said Mont Blong. "Zen you vill take my message to zat D'Arcy!"

"Oh, you want a message taken?"

"Oui, oui, et tout de suite—at vunce, I mean!" said Mont Blong. "Ze insult sall not be allowed to grow old before it is viped out in blood! In my country ve avenge the insult comme ça—in zat manner!"

"I never heard that there was much blood in French duels!" grinned Gordon Gay.

"There is sometimes a vound, but nefer to keel," Mont Blong explained. "Ze duel is to satisfy ze honour, zat is all. You English are so practical. However, I meet zat D'Arcy, who have swished me on the trouser, and avenge ze insult. You vill carry ze message?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"My shum vill be my second! You can arrange ze mattair viz the second of zat D'Arcy. I leave ze weapons to him, as ze challenged party."

"Oh crumbs!"

"I prefer swords, as I am a good fencer, and I have ze blades for ze purpose. But ze choice sall be with him."

"Suppose he chooses machine-guns?" said Wootton major.

"You vill go at once?" asked Mont Blong, without taking notice of Wootton major's question, which he perhaps regarded as frivolous.

"What about tea?"

"Vill you consider ze trifle of tea when your shum's honour is at stake?" said Mont Blong reproachfully.

"Well, your honour can stay at stake till I've had my tea," said Gordon Gay. "Then I'll bike over with your challenge, all serene!"

Wootton major and minor stared blankly at Gordon Gay. They had thought that he was pulling the French junior's leg, and that he really had any intention of going over to St. Jim's with such a ridiculous message they did not suppose for a moment.

Gordon Gay closed the eye that was farthest from Mont Blong.

The chums of the Fourth had their tea, and then Gordon Gay went round to the bicycle-shed for his machine. Mont Blong accompanied him, impressing upon him the deadly seriousness of the message he was to take over to St. Jim's. Gay appeared to be duly impressed.

But he grinned as he pedalled away.

towards St. Jim's. When he reached the old school, he waved a white handkerchief as he wheeled his machine in at the gates. And two or three fellows who had run up with hostile intentions, respected the flag of truce.

"What do you want, you bounder?" demanded Kerruish of the Fourth.

"Important message for D'Arcy," said Gordon Gay solemnly. "Anybody know where the image is?"

"He's got a giddy tea-party in his study."

"Thanks!"  
Gay left his bike at Taggles' lodge, and walked across the quadrangle to the School House. He entered quite unconcernedly, in spite of the curious looks that were cast at him, and ascended to the Fourth Form passage, and knocked at the door of Study No. 6.

And from within that famous apartment came Jack Blake's voice:

"Come in!"  
Gordon Gay opened the door and walked in. There was a general exclamation at the sight of the Grammarian leader. Tom Merry and Manners and Monty Lowther were having tea in the study with the chums of Study No. 6.

Arthur Augustus was standing the feed. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, after a period of scarcity, was rolling in funds once more, and, of course, one of his first proceedings was to stand a feed to his study-mates and the Terrible Three.

"Bai Jove! It's that wottah Gay!" exclaimed D'Arcy, jamming his monocle into his eye, and fixing it on the Cornstalk.

"Gay, you bounder—"  
"Looking for trouble?"  
"Collar him!"  
Gordon Gay waved his handkerchief in the air.

"Don't you know what that is?" he bawled.

"A handkerchief," said Monty Lowther, inspecting it curiously; "and not an overclean one at that!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"It's a flag of truce, you ass!"  
Monty Lowther shook his head decidedly.

"Flags of truce are white," he replied.  
"Well, you chump, isn't this white?" howled Gordon Gay.

"Might have been once," said Lowther. "Gentlemen, I vote that we treat this person as a pirate. He pretends he's come here with a white flag, but he hasn't—he's come here sailing under a black flag—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Yaas, wathah! I must remark that it is wathah gwubby," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, turning his eyeglass upon it. "I cannot regard that as a flag of truce!"  
"Oh, cheese it!" said Gordon Gay.

"Pax, you asses! I've come over with an important message from Mont Blong, and the person of a second is sacred!"  
"Oh, second!" shouted the juniors.

"Yes; I'm Mont Blong's second!" said Gordon Gay calmly. "He challenges Gussy to a mortal combat—a giddy duel—Gussy to choose the weapons, and I've come over to make the arrangements with Gussy's second. The arrangements of the undertakers are to be made afterwards."

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Bai Jove!"

Gordon Gay wiped his eyes with the flag of truce. Tom Merry & Co. roared till the study rang, and the only serious face present was that of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

CHAPTER 4.

An Affair of Honour!

"O H, my hat!"  
"Great Scott!"  
"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors were almost in convulsions. Gordon Gay joined in the laughter. Needless to say, he had not been serious in bringing Mont Blong's extraordinary message to the St. Jim's juniors. He intended to administer a lesson to Mont Blong by pulling his leg, with the co-operation of Tom Merry & Co.

"Well, this takes the cake!" gasped Tom Merry. "Has he ever broke out like this before?"

Gordon Gay nodded.  
"Yes, once, and we rotted him with a spoof duel."  
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wats! I should certainly not apologise for havin' chastised the boundah. But I decline to allow the mattah to be tweeked as a joke. My own honah is concerned," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy loftily. "The honah of the name of D'Arcy."

"Oh crumbs!"  
"If this person is serious, I shall certainly not allow him to suppose that I am afraid to meet him with any weapons he may choose to name."

"My hat!"  
"Pwainy take that wey back to your pwpical, Gordon Gay!"

The juniors looked helplessly at one another. At the news of Mont Blong's challenge they had thought only of "rotting" the excitable French youth. But now Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had mounted the high horse, and when Arthur Augustus was once in the saddle,



Lurking in the shadows of the old monk's cell, Arthur Augustus stared in dismay at the extraordinary stranger who had appeared in the doorway. "Who are you, deah boy?" he murmured. "Gussy!" yelled the stranger, in the voice of Mont Blong, the Grammarian junior. "Zen you're not dead!"

"He's a good little ass, and he can't help being a duffer in some things, of course," Gordon Gay explained. "My idea is to rot him, and make him understand that he's a silly, howling ass! Will you fellows help?"

"Yes, rather!" chuckled Blake.  
"Ha, ha, ha! Like a bird!"  
"Weally, you fellows," broke in Arthur Augustus D'Arcy very gravely. "Weally, I'm afraid I cannot allow this challenge to be tweeked as a joke!"  
"Eh?"

"I undahstand that Gay has come ova to bwing me a challenge fwom his fwieend, Mont Blong?" said Arthur Augustus, in the stately manner of the noble casto of Vere de Vere.

"That's it," said Gordon Gay.  
"If that challenge is seriously intended—"

"Mont Blong is serious enough!" chuckled Gay. "He can't get over being swished. But if you like to apologise most humbly the affair can be accommodated."

so to speak, it was extremely hard to get him to dismount.

"Glad to hear you say so, Gussy!" said Gay, at last.

"You approve of my attitude, deah boy?"

"Oh, yes! It's a pleasure to discover that you've got as big an idiot at St. Jim's as we have in the Grammar School," said Gordon Gay cordially.

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Weally," Gay, you cheeky boundah—"

"As Gussy takes this challenge seriously, the only thing is for us to be serious about it," said Tom Merry solemnly. "Gussy, whom would you select as your second?"

"I trust you will be weady to act for me, Blake?"

"Like a bird!" said Blake.

"Vewy well. I leave my honah in your hands," said Arthur Augustus nobly.

"I'd rather you left your fiver there, THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,497.

but I'd do the best I can with your honour," said Blake cheerfully.

"If you cannot be serious, Blake, I will ask Dig to act for me."

"My dear chap, I'm going to be as serious as a professional humorist," said Blake.

"Weally, you know—"

"This isn't a laughing matter," said Herries. "We shall want mourning if Gussy happens to be done in. Or do you think a black band on the hat will do? What do you think, Gussy, as an authority on the subject of clothes?"

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"Then there's the epitaph to be thought of," said Digby reflectively. "I suppose we ought to put Gussy's epitaph in the 'Weekly' if he happens to be polished off."

"You can leave that to me," said Manners. "I'll make a Latin epitaph—"

"Better have it in poetry," said Lowther. "I can make a really good one. Lemme see:

"Here lies our friend Gus,  
Died through making a fuss;  
Our grief is so bad that it couldn't  
be wus!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy turned his eyeglass upon Lowther, and looked as if he were trying to bore a hole in him with his indignant eye. Lowther met the glance with a bland smile, evidently pleased with his epitaph.

"If that silly ass does not wetiah from the study I shall be undah the painful necessity of thwashin' him!" said D'Arcy.

Lowther looked surprised.

"Don't you like that epitaph?" he asked. "I dare say I could make a better one. Lemme see—"

"I wofuse to listen to your silly wot, Lowthah. I considah—"

"Will you kindly get out, Gussy?" asked Blake.

"Weally, Blake—"

"I hope it is not necessary to have to instruct a D'Arcy in the etiquette of an affair of honour," said Blake

severely. "These little affairs have to be arranged by the seconds. The principal has nothing to do but to stand up in the place his second selects, and be killed according to etiquette. You buzz off while I arrange the matter with Mont Blong's second."

"Yaas, that is quite wight, Blake."

"Then clear off!"

"Certainly, deah boy!"

Arthur Augustus majestically left the study. The juniors grinned at one another as the door closed behind him.

"Gussy's on the high horse now," Blake explained. "No good trying to get him down. We will rot him as well as Mont Blong, and make 'em both as ridiculous as we can, though Nature has done a lot towards that already."

"What-ho!" said Gordon Gay. "Now, what about weapons?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't cackle; this is an awfully serious matter. I select rifles," said Blake. "As the challenged party we have the choice of weapons, of course. Rifles are a bit uncommon in affairs of honour. I know; but then we can get rifles, and we can't get pistols and things. We can get a couple of the rifles from the cadet corps, you know. Of course, they won't be loaded, but we won't confide that circumstance to the principals."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Jolly good idea!" said Gay.

"We can get blank cartridges," said Blake. "In fact, it will be easier to get blank cartridges than live ones."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And it will do less harm. Now, about the place—where does your man prefer to be killed?"

"Better make it somewhere in the wood," said Gordon Gay reflectively. "We don't want to be interrupted. Say somewhere near the old monks' cell in the wood—that's a lonely place."

"Agreed!"

"One shot each—and each shot to be instantly fatal!" said Gay. "You fellows can stuff Gussy up that Mont Blong is dead, and we'll stuff Mont

Blong that Gussy is dead. Don't forget to bring some red ink. Then the pangs of remorse will set in, and they will begin to understand what asses they are!"

"Good egg!"

"To-morrow's a half-holiday," said Gay. "Say three o'clock to-morrow in the wood, and you chaps can bring the rifles."

"That's settled."

Gordon Gay rose.

"I think that's about all. I'll bring my idiot along at three to-morrow, and you'll have your lunatic there."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Done!"

And Gordon Gay departed, grinning. When he was gone, Arthur Augustus came back into the study. He turned his eyeglass upon Blake, and all the juniors looked as serious as owls.

"I twust the affair is satisfactorily awwanged, deah boy?" said D'Arcy.

"Quite!" said Blake cheerfully. "To-morrow at three, in the wood."

"Weapons, rifles."

"A la mort!" said Digby.

"A outrage!" added Manners.

"Ahem! Of course, I don't want to hurt the silly ass!" said D'Arcy. "As a fellow of honour, I cannot wofuse a challenge, but I should be sowvy to hurt him."

"Too late to think of that. You will most likely get killed yourself! And what about revengeance—I mean, revenge?" demanded Blake. "For the honour of the school you must imbrue your hands in his gore! You can wash them afterwards."

"Weally, Blake—"

"We've got a lot of affairs to settle," said Blake. "It's the custom for a duellist to settle his affairs before he gets settled himself! You'd better make your will!"

"Oh!"

"And write to all your relations—letters to be posted after your death!"

"Ow!"

"I hope you are not getting funky, Gussy?"

"Certainly not, you ass! But I object to wifes. Affairs of honah should be conducted with eithah pistols or wapians."

"That's for your second to decide. I hope you do not intend to invade the rights of your second?"

"No. But I weally considah—"

"Never mind what you consider! I've settled all that. Now you'd better make your will. Mont Blong is a good shot, and simply thirsting for gore; so you haven't much chance of getting away alive! Here's some impot paper. Start it at once, and we'll help you."

"Vowv well; and you chaps can witness it," said D'Arcy.

Blake shook his head.

"I can't witness it," he said.

"Why not, deah boy?"

"A chap can't witness a will that he benefits under," Blake explained. "Don't you know the law? I want you to leave me your writing-case."

"Weally, Blake—"

"I can't be a witness," said Digby.

"I want you to leave me your watch."

"And your bike to me," said Herries.

"We must have some little things to console us for your demise," Blake explained. "We shall miss you, you know, if—if Mont Blong doesn't miss you."

"Tom Mewv will witness my will, I pwesume?"

But Tom Merry shook his head.

"I want you to leave me your Sunday topper, Gussy. It's my size."

"Then Lowthah—"

"I want you to put me down for your fur-lined coat," said Lowther.



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"Mannahs—"  
 "I'll have the tiepin," said Manners.  
 "Weally, you fellows, I must say it is in watah bad taste for you to be dividin' my pwoperty like this—"

"It's counting our chickens before they're hatched," said Lowther. "I know that—like the chaps who divided the bear's skin before the bear was killed. But, then, you're pretty certain to be killed, you know!"

"Dead cert!" said Tom Merry. "Mont Blong is a terror! I shouldn't wonder if he's been through heaps of duels in his own delightful country. I consider Gussy is practically dead already!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"  
 "It will be a lot of trouble getting rid of the body," said Blake thoughtfully. "Of course, we can't own up about it; duelling is illegal in England, and we might get lines."

"We might," said Herries.  
 "Do you specially want your body to be sent to your people, Gussy?" asked Blake. "If not, we could bury you quietly in the wood, and say nothing about it. That would be the simplest way."

"I—I— Weally—"  
 "Better take a spade!" said Tom Merry. "Nothing like being prepared!"

"Good! I'll arrange that. Now, Gussy, you sit down and make your will, and you can get somebody else to witness it!"

And tea being finished, the juniors departed from Study No. 6, leaving D'Arcy alone—to make his will.

CHAPTER 5.

Preparing for the Worst!

**A**RTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY was very, very thoughtful that evening. An affair of honour was, of course, a very serious thing.

Even in France people had been known to be killed—or, at least, wounded—in duels. Such a dreadful possibility always existed in the most carefully conducted affairs of honour.

Arthur Augustus was as brave as a lion, but, on reflection, it came into his mind that duelling was a custom that was most barbarous and ridiculous. And it was strictly forbidden in England, too—he would be breaking the law.

Under the influence of those reflections, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy realised that he had been a little hasty in accepting Mont Blong's challenge, and he realised that he would have done better to take it in a humorous spirit. But it was now too late to retreat. He could not change his mind and retract his acceptance without giving rise to the suspicion that he was funkng. And that, of course, was impossible.

After all, probably there would be no harm done. Duels were conducted in France without casualties, and why not in this instance? It distressed D'Arcy very much to think that he might hurt Mont Blong. He thought of Mont Blong's danger far more than of his own, as a matter of fact.

In case of accidents, he felt that he ought to make his will. He made it. Then he considered the question of writing to his parents. His heart smote him as he thought what a shock it would be to his pater and mater. He decided to write to his elder brother, Lord Conway—and ask him to break the news gently to them. The letter,



as Blako said, was only to be posted after his death. He confided it to Blake's care when he had written it, and Blake made a note about it in his pocket-book.

"What are you w'itin' there, deah boy?" asked D'Arcy.

"Only making a note—letter to be posted after death," said Blake. "As you meet Mont Blong at three o'clock, there will be time to catch the four collection with it."  
 "Oh!"

The prospect somehow did not seem attractive to Arthur Augustus. And he found the sympathy of his friends very hard to bear. Tom Merry & Co. condoled with him, but pointed out that he would be dying in battle like his ancestors, and that was some consolation.

It gave D'Arcy quite a shiver when Blake brought a couple of rifles into the study that evening. They belonged to the St. Jim's Cadet Corps.

"We shall have to get these blessed things out of the school unnoticed somehow!" Blake remarked thoughtfully. "If we're spotted, they'd want to know what we were taking rifles out for!"

"And that would mean the duel being put off," said Digby. "That's out of the question, now we've made all the plans. I've borrowed Taggles' spade for burying Gussy!"

"Look here, Dig, you wottah—"

"We'll make up the spade and rifles into a bundle, and put 'em in a sack," said Blake. "That's all I can think of. I'll ask Lynn for a sack—he can get me one. I say, Gussy, you are looking rather pale. Not funky—eh?"

"Certainly not, you ass!"

"Right-ho! Keep your pecker up! We're going to do everything we can for you. Of course, it's quite possible that you won't be killed, and that only Mont Blong will get done in. Better for you to get your brains blown out, though!"

"Weally, you ass—"

"You see, if you survive, you will be hanged for murder!" said Blake. "That will be horrible! It will give you a crick in the neck—"

"Bai Jove!"

"Of course, if Gussy survives, he will have to hide away from justice," said Digby. "He can run away to sea and become a pirate!"

"Or a stoker," said Herries.

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"Or a brigand," said Blake. "There are lots of trades open to murderers fleeing from justice—at least, you read about it in novels. Byron's heroes generally become pirates, I think, in his poems. I can fancy Gussy as a pirate—"

"Look here, you wottah—"

"Who leads them on with foreign brand, far-flashing in his red right hand?" quoted Digby. "Just imagine Gussy—"

Arthur Augustus left the study abruptly, and his chums smiled. The prospect of fleeing from justice and being driven to piracy for a livelihood did not please the swell of St. Jim's somehow. If the juniors had been a little less serious, he would really have suspected they were piling up the horrors from a mistaken sense of humour. But they were as solemn as owls, and evidently fully impressed with the seriousness of the matter.

Arthur Augustus' unusual gravity that evening attracted some attention: Several fellows asked whether he had lost a fiver, or whether his people were coming to visit him, or what was the matter, anyway.

D'Arcy astonished Levison and Mellish, of the Fourth, by taking them aside in the Common-room, and speaking to them with a grave and friendly cordiality. The two cads of the Fourth were not on good terms with D'Arcy, but at a time like this, Arthur Augustus felt that he could not part on bad terms with anybody.

"I'm sowwy I haven't been on bettah terms with you chaps," said Arthur Augustus.

Levison and Mellish stared at D'Arcy, and then at one another.

"Whom are you getting at?" Mellish wanted to know.

"What's the little game?" asked Levison.

"I may be goin' away to-morrow," said D'Arcy.

"What!"

"It's quite poss, and I should like to leave on good terms," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gently. "I may have been a little wuff on you. You are awful wottahs, I know; but I may have been a little wuff. If I have been, I am sowwy. Pway shake hands with me!"

"Mad!" said Levison, with conviction. "Mad as a hatter!"

"Mad as a giddy March hare!" said Mellish. "Somebody ought to write to his people about it. He might get violent!"

"You wottahs!" exclaimed D'Arcy. "I was wemarkin'—"

"I say, Blake, did you know that D'Arcy had gone dotty?" called out Mellish.

Jack Blake sat up.

"He's babbling 'all sorts of things," said Levison. "Quite mad! You'd better see about getting a strait waistcoat for him!"

Arthur Augustus was purple with indignation. As Levison and Mellish knew nothing about the intended duel, they were naturally surprised by D'Arcy's friendly overtures, but their feelings did not seem to be touched in the least. Perhaps they hadn't any feelings.

"You uttah, unspeakable wottahs!"

said D'Arcy. "I wegard you as cads and wank outsiders! I wegard you—" "Better telegraph to his father!" said Mellish. "I've seen this coming on for a long time, but I didn't expect it to happen quite so suddenly. Poor chap! Ow!"

Smack!

Arthur Augustus' temper failed him, and he smote Mellish. Then he walked away, majestic and very much on his dignity. Mellish rubbed his nose ruefully.

"I told you he was dotty!" he exclaimed. "Now he's getting dangerous!" Arthur Augustus did not seek to make up any more old quarrels.

He was in a very thoughtful and somewhat worried mood when he retired that night. And he dreamed awful dreams of duels, gunshot wounds, graves in the depths of the woods, and fleeing from justice with detectives on his track—and altogether he came to realise that an affair of honour was not at all an enjoyable affair. But in the morning his resolution was quite unshaken. The meeting had been fixed, and he was going through with it, whatever the consequences—which, fortunately, owing to the kind arrangements of his chums, were not likely to be serious.

## CHAPTER 6.

### Duel to the Death!

**F**IGGINS & CO. of the New House were lounging about the school gates in the afternoon when a party of School House juniors came along. Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn regarded them curiously. Blake of the Fourth carried a large bundle done up in a sack, and the New House juniors stared at it with interest.

"Going out for a picnic—eh?" asked Fatty Wynn.

"Something more serious than a picnic," said Tom Merry, with due solemnity. "You'd never guess what's in the sack."

"Grub!" said Fatty Wynn immediately.

"Wrong!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy, you should not tell these New House boundahs all about it!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy severely.

"Oh, Figgins can be trusted with a secret!" said Tom Merry.

"Certainly!" said Figgins, scenting a jape, of which the swell of St. Jim's was the object. "What have you got there?"

"Rifles and a spade."

Figgins & Co. jumped.

"What on earth for?"

"A duel!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Gussy is going to meet another idiot—"

"Weally, you wottah—"

"I mean another chap, in a deadly duel. The rifles are for them to kill one another with, and the spade is to bury them afterwards!" Tom Merry explained.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you laughing at?" demanded Tom Merry, in surprise. "It isn't a laughing matter! Gussy has made his will."

"Oh, my hat!"

"You chaps can come along, if you like, and see fair play."

"By George, we will!" said Kerr. "I've never seen a duel. I don't mind lending a hand at burying Gussy—quite a pleasure!"

And the New House Co. joined the party. Tom Merry & Co. marched out

of the gates, and took their way to the wood. They marched along the footpath, and turned into the track that led to the glade where stood the old monk's cell. It was a lonely spot, and the duellists were not likely to be interrupted there.

The St. Jim's fellows were the first to arrive. There was no sign yet of the Grammarians.

"Not here," said Blake, looking round. "First in the field!"

"Pewwaps they're not comin'?" Arthur Augustus suggested.

And it is just possible that his voice had a hopeful tone.

"Oh, they'll come! Mont Blong is thirsting for gore! You see, he can't get over that swishing—and honour must be satisfied. Anyway, you shan't be disappointed," said Blake kindly. "If he doesn't come, we'll march on the Grammar School, and you shall settle him in his own study!"

"I'm not so frightfully keen about it as all that—"

Blake interrupted him sternly.

"I hope you are not getting chicken-hearted!" he exclaimed. "Remember, this is a duel to the giddy death!"

"Yaas; but—"

"Here they come!"

Gordon Gay & Co. were spotted coming through the woods. There was quite a party of them.

Gordon Gay was Mont Blong's second; but quite a number of Grammarians had come to see fair play. Wootton major and minor were there, and Frank Monk and Lane and Carboy. Mont Blong was looking very serious. Perhaps he had been thinking the matter over as well as Arthur Augustus.

The two parties saluted one another with due gravity.

"We're on time, I think," said Gordon Gay, consulting his watch.

"Just three. You've brought the rifles, I hope?"

"Here they are!"

"And a spade?"

"Yes."

"Good! Nothing more to be arranged, I think. We'll measure off the distance."

"How many paces?" asked Blake.

"I suggest forty, as they're using rifles."

"Forty—agreed!"

The distance was paced off.

Mont Blong took up his position, and Arthur Augustus faced him at a distance of forty paces down the glade.

Both the principals were looking very grave now; but the seconds, although serious, were quite cheerful and composed.

Blake and Gordon Gay loaded the rifles. Both of them inspected the weapons to make sure that everything was in order. Then Tom Merry and several of the fellows did the same, and satisfied themselves that the cartridges were blank. The principals, of course, had nothing to do with the matter. They were quite in the hands of their seconds.

Gordon Gay took one rifle and Blake the other, and the weapons were presented to the unhappy duellists.

"My shum!" murmured Mont Blong. "I have zink about zis. I zink zat if zat D'Arcy apologise, it is all right."

"He won't!" said Gay cheerfully.

"Zen I zink I might pardon him viz-out zat he apologise!"

"Impossible! Honour isn't satisfied!"

"Oui, oui! But—"

"Honour can only be satisfied by blood being shed," explained Gay. "We

English people are satisfied with shedding it from the nose, but you French chaps are more chivalrous. You have to poke rapiers into a chap's ribs, and interfere with his circulation. You're having your way. What more do you want?"

"It is zat I vish not to hurt him."

"Rats! What about satisfaction?" said Gay. "Do you mean to say that you've brought us here for nothing? After we've walked all this way, I suppose we're entitled to see somebody killed, ain't we?"

"My shum—"

"If you're funkung it, Mont Blong—"

"Bah! You sall not doubt my courage, my shum! I vill shoot!"

"That's better. Aim at the chest, and you'll hit him somewhere—perhaps," said Gordon Gay. "We've made all the arrangements for burying you in case of death, and for hiding you if you commit the murder!"

"Mon Dieu!"

"Everything in the garden is lovely. Nothing now to be done excepting the murder. Keep a stiff upper lip!"

"My shum—"

"Stand ready! We're going to give the signal!"

Gordon Gay stepped back. The two wretched youths stood with the rifles in their hands, looking and feeling about as happy as most duellists feel, probably, when their folly and conceit place them in such a ridiculous position. Gordon Gay had a handkerchief in his hand.

"When I drop this hanky, you fire!" he said. "I shall say one, two, and three, and then drop it, and you blaze away."

"One!"

The juniors stood well back out of the line of fire.

"Two!"

The rifles were raised.

"Three!"

The handkerchief fluttered down.

Bang! Bang!

Each of the duellists had fired into the air.

If there had been any bullets in the rifles, they would have clipped twigs from the tree-tops high overhead.

As there were no bullets, no damage was done even to the tree-tops.

But both the juniors staggered from the recoil of the rifles.

For a moment Tom Merry & Co. were nonplussed. The firing into the air had rather upset their plans, but it could not be helped. They rushed towards the principals, and in a moment Mont Blong was surrounded by the Grammarians, and D'Arcy by the St. Jim's fellows. Gordon Gay was following in Mont Blong's ear:

"Fly for your life!"

While Blake bawled into D'Arcy's:

"Run! Run! Run!"

## CHAPTER 7.

### In Deep Disguise!

**A**RTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY dropped the rifle, his face going deadly pale.

He had discharged the weapon into the air, feeling that Mont Blong would be quite safe if he did, and that he would have proved his own courage by facing the enemy's fire.

But the alarm among the juniors showed that it had not gone as he intended. The thought that Mont Blong had been shot made him turn cold all over.

"Bai Jove! Bai Jove! I say, my deah fellows—"



"Run!"  
 "Fly!"  
 "Bunk!"  
 "Travel!"  
 "But weally, you know—"  
 "Cut it!"  
 "Hook it!"  
 "Run for your life!"  
 Monty Lowther, who had run towards the group surrounding Mont Blong, came dashing back.  
 His hands were streaming with red ink. D'Arcy did not know it was ink, and he gazed at the red stream in horror.

"Run!" panted Lowther.  
 "Oh, cwumbs! Is he hurt?"  
 "Look!" Monty Lowther held up his hands. "You've done it now, Gussy! Run! The fellows will get you away before the police come!"  
 "The police! Goodness gwacious!"  
 "Run! Run!" reiterated Blake.  
 "Do you want to be hung?"  
 "Oh, gwreat Scott!"  
 "Bunk!" roared Figgins.

Blake and Tom Merry grasped D'Arcy by the arms and hurried him away into the depths of the wood.

Meanwhile, Gordon Gay & Co. were doing the same with Mont Blong. The French junior was almost in hysterics.  
 "But it is impossible zat I kill him!" he shrieked. "It is zat I have in zo air fired. I tell you zat I fire not at him."  
 "Look here!" said Frank Monk.

He held up a handkerchief stained with red. Mont Blong gazed at it in horror.

"Oh, mon Dieu!"  
 "Run!" said Wootton major.  
 "Buzz off, Mont Blong!"  
 "Run for your life!"  
 "Let me see him! It is zat I must see him before zat I go—"  
 "No, no; there's no time! Run!"  
 "But le pauvre garçon! I must see him! I must beg zat he forgive me—"  
 "Run! Run!"

Mont Blong could see nothing of D'Arcy, the crowd of Grammarians were pressing round him so thickly. He struggled, but Gordon Gay & Co. rushed him away into the wood. The glade was deserted.

Arthur Augustus stumbled along in a fearful state of mind. Remorse and terror ran riot in his breast. Blake & Co. gave him no time to pause. They dashed along with him till the fatal glade was left half a mile behind, and then they halted in a deep recess of the wood.

"Safe, so far," panted Blake.  
 "Lucky the police haven't an idea of what's going on. Of course, it will come out soon, and then Gussy will be hunted for. But we'll look after him."  
 "Yes, rather!"

"We'll stand by you, Gussy!" said Tom Merry. "You're not going to be hung if we can possibly help it. Besides, Mont Blong may not die. I think he may recover! Ahem!"  
 "If he wecovahs, that is all I want!" groaned Arthur Augustus. "I shall nevah, nevah forgive myself if the poor chap was weally hurt!"

"Why, what about honour and satisfaction?" demanded Lowther.  
 "Oh, that is all wotten wubbish!"  
 "Oh!"

"It is wicked and widiculous to fight duels!" gasped D'Arcy. "I wealiso that now. I ought to have laughed at the silly challenge, or punched him on the nose!"

"Gussy's getting quite sensible in his old age," said Tom Merry admiringly. "Pity he didn't think of all this be-



fore he became an attempted murderer!"

"Oh!" gasped D'Arcy. "Gwoogh!"  
 "But we'll look after you," said Blake consolingly. "We've got the disguise in the bag for you to escape in."  
 "Pile in," said Figgins. "No time to lose."

"As soon as you're disguised, you can get to Wayland and catch the express, and you can be in Southampton by to-night," said Tom Merry. "After that, it will be quite simple to get a rakish schooner and become a pirate. Mind you get a rakish schooner. Pirates' schooners are always rakish."  
 "Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"No time for talk," said Jack Blake. "Lend a hand—all of you!"  
 The juniors willingly lent a hand. Arthur Augustus dazedly submitted to their kind attentions.

Jack Blake had the disguises in a bag—"props" that belonged to the junior dramatic society. It did not take very long to disguise Arthur Augustus. A long black beard was fastened to his chin, and long grey whiskers to his face, and a long golden moustache to his upper lip. The different colours looked striking, and the effect was enhanced by a long, curly brown wig. Then Blake dabbed his face with grease-paint, putting in artificial wrinkles with a liberal hand.

"You'll pass for a fine old English gentleman," he declared. "You look about ninety now. Nobody would recognise you as a human being—I mean—your own pater wouldn't know you. This is simply splendid!"

"Ripping!"  
 "First rate!"  
 "I feel vewy haiwy and stickay, deah boys," said D'Arcy dismally.

"Better than being hung, I suppose?"  
 "Yaas; but—"

"Anything to save you from the police," said Blake, closing his bag. "They wouldn't understand that it was necessary for you to play the giddy ox for the honour of the noble blood of D'Arcy de Plantagenet. They'd simply run you in like a common

drunk and disorderly. Now we're ready."

"I—I say, you chaps, I'd rather go back to the school, and—and chance it!"

"Impossible! You must fly for your life!"

"Weally, you know—"  
 "Besides, we can't go back with you," said Tom Merry. "We want to help you, Gussy, but you can't expect us to continue to have anything to do with a bloodstained ruffian."

"What!"  
 "You see, you have committed a murder," Tom Merry explained. "Of course, any chap might do it in a moment of absent-mindedness, I suppose, but we have to draw a line somewhere. I draw it at murderers."  
 "You howwid beast—"

"Hark!" exclaimed Blake dramatically. "What's that?"

"The police!"  
 "Oh crumbs!"  
 "Run!" yelled Blake.

And the disguised junior was bundled along at top speed among the trees again.

"I—I say, we're goin' back to the—the place!" panted D'Arcy.

"The scene of the crime, you mean."  
 "Pway don't use such howwid expressions, Tom Mewwy!"

"Call a spade a spade, you know. That's all right. You'd better hide in the old cell till the coast is clear."

"Yaas, but—"  
 "'Nuff said. You'll catch the express all right."  
 "You uttah ass!"

D'Arcy had rushed back into the glade where the terrible duel had taken place. The old stone cell, half-hidden by the creeping plants that grew over it, was the refuge selected for him. In ancient days it had been inhabited by a recluse, and in recent times an escaped convict from Blackmoor Prison had hidden there. But just now it was quite deserted, and a safe refuge for the unfortunate swell of St. Jim's.

D'Arcy was rushed into the old building gasping for breath.

"Now you stay here," said Blake. "We'll get out and watch for the enemy. When it's quite all right we'll come and tell you."  
 "Yaas; but—"

"Mum's the word!"

And Tom Merry & Co. rushed out of the cell, leaving the disguised junior to himself.

Arthur Augustus remained there, palpating. Even his concern for Mont Blong was banished by his concern for himself now. At the thought that policemen were searching the wood for him, he shivered and shuddered. An affair of honour seemed to him, by this time, as about the most idiotic proceeding a fellow could possibly be guilty of.

Tom Merry & Co. joined the Grammarians under the trees. A fearsome figure stood in the midst of the Grammarians—it was Mont Blong in disguise. Gordon Gay had done the same kind of service for him that had been done for D'Arcy by his devoted comrades. Mont Blong was adorned with a long red beard—whiskers of a sandy colour, and a grey moustache.

"Oh, I am distressed; I suffair very much!" groaned Mont Blong, as the St. Jim's fellows came up. "Is he quite, quite keel?"

"You wouldn't know him if you saw him now," said Tom Merry solemnly.

"Oh, ciel! It is horrible, n'est ce pas!"

"Yes; pretty horrible!" agreed Blake. "But it's too late to think of that now. You've got to hide. Shove him in the old monk's cell till the coast is clear, Gay."

"Right-ho!"

And the disguised French junior was hurried away to the old building, little dreaming whom he was to encounter there.

## CHAPTER 8.

### Both Alive!

**A**RTHUR AUGUSTUS started violently.

There was a footstep outside the stone cell, in the depths of the wood.

Someone was approaching.

Was it one of his chums, or—

D'Arcy screwed his monocle into his eye, and fixed it upon the doorway.

A face came into sight—a face with a red beard, whiskers, and grey moustache.

Arthur Augustus gazed in dismay at the stranger.

He had never seen so extraordinary a man before, and the most remarkable thing about the stranger was that, in spite of beard and moustache, he was dressed like a schoolboy!

The red-headed stranger caught sight of D'Arcy in the cell, and started back.

D'Arcy presented a startling appearance, with a long black beard, golden moustache, and curly brown hair.

"Who—who are you?" murmured D'Arcy, with a dreadful feeling that it was a detective in search of him.

"Mon Dieu. Vat is zat?"

Arthur Augustus jumped. Surely he knew that voice! Was it—could it be possible?

"Who are you, deah boy?"

"Ciel! Who are you?" shrieked the red-bearded stranger. "It is zat I know ze voice! It is ze voice of ze pauvre garçon zat I have keel!"

"Mont Blong!"

"D'Arcy!"

"Gweat Scott!"

"Mon Dieu!"

"Then you're not dead!" yelled D'Arcy.

"Moi! No! But you—you are not dead!"

"Certainly not, you ass!"

"Vat is it zat you do viz that beard, mon ami?"

"What are you doin' with that beard, you duffah?"

"I am in ze disguise to escape—"

"So am I."

"Ciel! It is zat zey have pulled of us ze leg!" yelled Mont Blong. "You are not hurt?"

"Wathah not! But you—"

"I am not hurt, too!"

"Bai Jove! The wottahs! The boundahs! The frightful asses! They have been japin' us both!" shouted Arthur Augustus, divided between relief and indignation. "Bai Jove! I will give them a feahful thwashin' for this!"

"Zen you are not dead!" gasped Mont Blong. "I have not keel you! I have not stained ze hands viz blood!"

"It must have been wed ink, the awful wottahs!" said D'Arcy.

"Oh, my shum!" exclaimed Mont Blong. "I am so happy zat it is not zat I have keeled you. I kees you!"

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And he rushed at Arthur Augustus and embraced him, and kissed him on both cheeks.

"Pway don't be a silly ass!" said Arthur Augustus, struggling to escape. "I wegard you as a wottah, Mont Blong. I am glad I have not hurt you, but I have a gweat mind to administah a feahful thwashin'!"

"My dear shum—"

"Oh, wats! I'm goin' to take this wotten wubbish off!"

Arthur Augustus dragged at the false beard, and pulled it off; but it was not so easy to deal with the grease. Blake had laid it on very thickly. Mont Blong's face was daubed with equal liberality.

"It is a shape," said Mont Blong, probably meaning jape. "A shape of those bounders, mon ami. But I am heureux zat it is no worse."

"Yaas, wathah! But—"

"Ve are saved. Now ve will be friends," said Mont Blong. "I kees you—"

"Gwoogh! Leave off!"

"I kees my shum—"

Arthur Augustus tore himself away, and dashed out of the cell. He looked for the Co., to take immediate vengeance upon them for the fright they had given him. But the juniors had vanished.

Breathing wrath, the swell of St. Jim's started for the school.

He was immensely glad to find that the duel had been only a jape, and that he was not compelled to fly for his life. But his aristocratic leg had been pulled, the dignity of the noble house of D'Arcy had been outraged, and Arthur Augustus was wrathful. And his wrath was increased when he came out of the wood into the lane, and his peculiar visage attracted attention.

Grimes, the grocer's boy, who was passing with a basket on his arm, stopped and stared and gave a wild yell.

"Oh, my heye! Is it a Red Indian, or the Wild Man from Borneo?" yelled Grimes.

D'Arcy gave him a ferocious look.

"Gwines, you wottah—"

"Master D'Arcy," gasped Grimes, "wot 'ave you been doin' to your face?"

"Wats!"

D'Arcy stalked on, leaving Grimes in hysterics. People he passed in the lane stopped and stared, and pointed at him, and grinned and chuckled. Arthur Augustus was in a volcanic state by the time he reached St. Jim's.

There was a yell from the fellows who saw him come in.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What a chivvy!"

"Where did you dig up that mug?"

D'Arcy dashed into the School House without replying, and made for the bath-room, where, with soap and steaming water, he removed the last traces of his disguise. Then he came down to look for vengeance.

"Have those wottahs come in, Kangy?" he asked, as he met Harry Noble.

"What rotters?" asked Kangaroo, in surprise.

"Tom Mewvy, Blake, and the west."

"Yes, they've just come in," said Kangaroo. "I think they've gone to tea in the study. What's happened?"

But D'Arcy did not reply to that question. He stalked away to Study No. 6, where he found Blake & Co. and the Terrible Three at tea. The juniors all stared at him as he stalked in.

"Gussy!" exclaimed Blake, in surprise.

"Yaas, you wottah!"

"Is it quite safe for you to show up here?" asked Blake. "Why aren't you in disguise?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I found that Mont Blong was quite all wight."

"Has he come to life again?" asked Lowther. "My hat! Who was it said that the age of miracles was past?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He was not hurt," said D'Arcy. "You made me believe that he was dead, and the othah wottahs made him believe that I was dead. It was a jape!"

"Go hon!"

"I wegard you as a set of wottahs! I don't believe the wifes were loaded at all!" shrieked Arthur Augustus.

"Only just guessed that?" asked Blake agreeably.

"You—you—you—"

"I call him ungrateful," said Lowther. "He was groaning at the idea of being a murderer, and now he's complaining because he's only an attempted murderer."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You have made a fool of me, you wottahs!"

"Not at all. That was done already."

"You have made me look wicidulous."

"Yes, I think we have," agreed Blake.

"We tried to, anyway. But never mind, you don't look any more ridiculous than the other idiot."

"Not a bit more," said Digby.

"I wufuse to wegard you as fwinds any longah."

"Don't be hard on us!" pleaded Blake. "Don't withdraw the light of your countenance from the study. Don't be cruel!"

"I wegard you as beasts!"

Blake rose to his feet.

"Do I understand you to refer to me as a beast?" he asked.

"Yaas, wathah—a feahful beast!"

"Then I demand satisfaction, Tom Merry, will you be my second?" asked Blake, with dignity.

"Certainly!" said Tom.

"D'Arcy, will you kindly appoint a friend to act for you? Merry is my second, and he will arrange the details with your friend."

"You—you—you—"

"As the challenged party, Gussy has the choice of weapons," said Lowther.

"Anybody got any more blank cartridges?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I shall act for Gussy," said Digby.

"I select pea-shooters as the weapons, at a distance of two hundred paces. Make your will, Blake. Gussy's made his. The same will do for any number of duels."

Arthur Augustus breathed hard through his nose.

"I wufuse to speak to any of you wottahs any more," he said.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Blake. "I haven't posted the letter!"

"The—the lettah?"

"Yes, the one you gave me for your major, you know. I'll run out and put it in the box now."

"You—you wottah! I wufuse to allow you to post that lettah!" shrieked D'Arcy.

"Then I'll pin it up on the wall in the Common-room for all the fellows to read," said Blake.

Arthur Augustus panted. Tom Merry & Co. roared. They could imagine the yells of laughter that letter would evoke if it was read by all the fellows in the School House.

"Give me that lettah, you wottah!"

"Rats!"

"I insist—I ordah you—"

"I'll give you the letter on one condition," said Blake; "and that is, that you apologise to all of us here present for having played the giddy ox."

"I wefuse—I wefuse—"  
 "Then the letter goes up in the Common-room."

"I—I—I— Give me that lettah!"  
 "Apologise first."  
 "I—I—I apologise!" gasped D'Arcy.  
 "Give me that lettah!"

Blake handed over the letter, and D'Arcy hurriedly crammed it into the fire. His last will and testament followed it. He was feverishly anxious to get rid of all documentary evidence of the jape. Then he quitted the study, and closed the door with a violence that was not at all in accordance with the reposeful manner of Vere de Vere. As he stalked away down the passage a roar of laughter followed him from Study No. 6. The Co. were making merry.

And in Gordon Gay's study, at the Grammar School, an equally merry party gathered to tea, and Mont Blong was so mercilessly chipped that he resolved never, never to seek satisfaction again, however deep might be his sense of injury. He had discovered that that kind of satisfaction was likely to prove exceedingly unsatisfactory.

CHAPTER 9.

The Raiders!

FOR several days after that terrible duel in Rylcombe Wood there were strained relations in Study No. 6 in the School House at St. Jim's.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was very much on his dignity. He had stated that he declined to recognise Blake and

Herries and Digby as friends, and he had also dropped the acquaintance of the Terrible Three.

They let him drop it.  
 Arthur Augustus discovered that dignity, although very well in its way, was a somewhat cold and lonely position as a permanent residence.

But he would not give in.  
 His chums waited for him to come round, but he did not come round. Saturday came round, however, and on that day there was a House match between Tom Merry's eleven and Figgins & Co. Arthur Augustus was a member of the School House eleven, and so the circumstances were a little awkward. He was not on speaking terms with his skipper. On Saturday morning, too, Arthur Augustus received a fiver from his noble pater, and the other fellows in Study No. 6 were in a state they sometimes fell into, and which they described as stony.

Arthur Augustus was distressed. He could not offer to share his fiver with fellows he did not know; but he did not want to keep it to himself when his study-mates were right on the "rocks." Under the circumstances, he felt that it was up to him to make the first advances, and after lessons on Saturday morning he spoke to Blake in the passage.

"Blake, deah boy—"  
 Jack Blake stared at him in surprise.  
 "Mr. Blake, please!" he said severely.  
 "Weally, Blake—"

"I don't like this familiarity from strangers," said Blake. "I must request you to address your remarks to a person you are acquainted with, Mr. D'Arcy. I think your name's D'Arcy, isn't it?"

"You uttah ass—"  
 Blake walked away.  
 "Digby, old man—"

"I'm 'Digby, old man' to my friends," said Digby frigidly. "I don't like this kind of thing from strangers."

"I say, Hewwies—"  
 "Hallo! Who are you?" asked Herries, staring at him.

"You wottah, you know who I am quite well!" shouted Arthur Augustus, his temper giving way. "I wegard you as a beast!"

"The opinion of a perfect stranger does not affect me in any way," said Herries; and he walked away after Blake and Digby.

Arthur Augustus breathed hard. The Shell fellows were coming out of their Form-rooms, and D'Arcy hastened to meet the Terrible Three. They looked past him as they came down the passage, apparently unconscious of his existence.

"Tom Mewwy, I suppose you're playin' me to-day?"  
 "Playing you?" exclaimed Tom Merry, in surprise.  
 "Yaas, watah!"

The junior football captain shook his head.

"Impossible! I can't play a fellow I don't know. You ass, a football team, to play well, needs to have all its members personally acquainted with one another. Now, you are a perfect stranger to me—"

"I am willin' to ovahlook your wotten conduct and make fwicnds," said Arthur Augustus.

"Yes; but I'm not willing to overlook your rotten conduct—that's the difficulty," Tom Merry explained.

"I've had a fivah this mornin'!"  
 "Now you're talking!" said Tom Merry cordially. "Why didn't you say that at first? Upon reflection, I'm quite



From his hiding-place under D'Arcy's bed, Mellish watched four feet tiptoe into the Fourth Form dormitory. "Here we are! Right in the enemy's camp!" whispered one of the intruders, Mellish held his breath. It was the voice of Gordon Gay!

ready to renew your acquaintance. By-gones shall be by-gones!"

"As long as the fiver lasts," said Monty Lowther.

"And you shall play this afternoon," said Tom Merry. "I'm expecting a remittance myself, but it hasn't come. I'll help you change your fiver after the match, and you shall stand a feed for all of us. I agree."

"I did not say—"

"That's all right. We all agree. Say no more."

And when the Terrible Three went down to the footer ground Arthur Augustus went with them. Blake & Co. met them there, and regarded D'Arcy with surprise.

"Who's that chap?" asked Herries.

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"You're not putting a perfect stranger into the House team, surely, Tom Merry?" exclaimed Blake, in astonishment.

"Gussy has had a fiver!" Tom Merry explained.

"Oh," said Blake cheerfully, "that alters the case! Come to my arms, Gussy! Let me fold you to my waistcoat buttons and weep."

"Wats! Pway don't play the giddy ox," said Arthur Augustus, very much relieved to be on friendly terms with his chums again. He knew that it was not the fiver that caused it; that was only their little joke. "We'll change the fivah aftah the match, deah boys, and have a feed in the study, and ask the New House boundahs. Upon the whole, I'm wathah glad that that wotten affair the othah day was not sewious."

"Hear, hear!" said Monty Lowther. "Never shall it be said that we refused to help an old chum change a fiver."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Figgins & Co. arrived on the ground, and the juniors went into the field. Levison and Mellish were lounging by the ropes, and exchanged glances.

"I wish I could swap my pater for D'Arcy's!" Levison remarked. "Jolly seldom I get a fiver from home."

"Never, in fact!" grinned Mellish.

"Rather a joke to shove it away somewhere where they can't find it," said Levison, sinking his voice. "That would be a very pleasant surprise for them when they go in for a feed."

"I suppose he's got it about him," said Mellish.

"Not in his football clobber, fathead. He changed in the dormitory; and I'll bet he left the banknote in his pocket there."

"Mellish grinned.

"We'll look," he said.

"Yes. Wait a bit, till they've started; all the fellows will be watching them, and then the coast will be clear."

And Levison and Mellish looked on until the match was under way. The House matches at St. Jim's, both junior and senior, were keenly contested, and most of the fellows not otherwise occupied had gathered round the ground. There was a roar of cheering as Tom Merry scored the first goal for the School House. Gore of the Shell came sauntering down to the ground, and called to Levison.

"I've got the tickets for the matinee at the Wayland Empire, Levison. Coming?"

"Yes, rather," said Levison.

"But I say—" began Mellish.

"You know what to do," said Levison.

"You don't want me."

And without more ado he walked away with Gore.

Mellish hesitated a few minutes, and then went into the School House. He was always ready for an ill-natured

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joke when there was no risk attached to it, and there did not seem to be much risk in this case. The House was utterly deserted; he did not pass a single fellow as he made his way to the Fourth Form dormitory.

Arthur Augustus had changed there, and his elegant clothes still lay on his bed, just where he had left them. Mellish ran his fingers through the pockets, and found the handsome Morocco-leather pocket-book, and found the banknote in it. He abstracted the banknote and replaced the pocket-book.

He chuckled as he held the crisp, rustling note in his fingers. He did not intend to keep it, of course. His intention was to hide it, and disappoint the chums of the School House when they came in for a feed, hungry after the football match. He knew that the other fellows, in Study No. 6, as well as the Terrible Three, were stony.

But as he stood with the banknote in his hand there was a sudden footstep outside the door of the dormitory. Mellish started. It flashed into his mind that if he were caught there with the banknote the fellows might not believe that he had not intended to steal it. The circumstances were decidedly suspicious, and his reputation was not good. There was no time to replace the note—the handle of the door was already turning. Mellish did not stop to think; he dived under the bed, and lay palpitating.

From where he lay, hidden from sight, he saw the door open and two pairs of feet come in. That was all he could see of the newcomers. It struck him that they were walking very softly. The door was quietly closed, and there was a chuckle. Then came a voice that made Percy Mellish start with utter astonishment.

"Here we are! Right in the enemy's camp!"

It was the voice of Gordon Gay!

## CHAPTER 10.

### A Little Surprise!

MELLISH'S eyes gleamed as he lay quiet under the bed.

Gordon Gay!

He understood that it was a raid of the Grammarians. They had taken advantage of the fact that the football match had attracted all St. Jim's to the playing fields, and with amazing coolness they had slipped into the school, evidently with the intention of perpetrating a rag upon their rivals. There was no doubt that the chums of the School House were caught napping this time.

It did not occur to Gordon Gay and his companion for a moment that there was anyone hidden in the dormitory. That was not a thing he was likely to suspect.

"Safe as houses!" said another voice—the voice of Wootton major. "It will be rather a surprise for the bounders when they come in."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mellish lay still. If he had shown himself, he expected a ragging at the hands of the Grammarians. Gordon Gay was not likely to have forgotten that kick on the shin. And a spiteful, treacherous thought had come into Mellish's cunning mind. The chums of the School House had prevented him from complaining to the Head about the way the Grammarians had handled him a few days before. But his malice against Gordon Gay & Co. had not diminished. And now he thought he saw a way of paying off that old score with interest.

He lay without making a sound, hardly breathing.

Gordon Gay's voice went on: "Here's Gussy's clobber. I'd know it anywhere. I'll sew up his bags!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And the sleeves of his jacket," went on Gordon Gay. "You do the same for the others. Lucky I remembered that they changed in the dorm last time we came over here to play them. When we've finished, we'll give their study a look in."

"What-ho!"

Gay sat down on the bed, his feet within a few inches of Mellish's head.

The cad of the Fourth did not move.

The two Grammarians were occupied in the dormitory for about ten minutes. During that time they did a great deal. They left as quietly as they entered. Mellish waited till they had been gone for five minutes, and then he crept out from under the bed, flushed and breathless.

He opened the dormitory door and looked out. The passage was deserted. He tiptoed away, and descended by a back staircase. He did not want to enter the Fourth Form passage. He knew that the Grammarians were there. He left the School House, and strolled down to the football ground.

The match was still going strong.

Soon after Mellish's arrival on the ground the first half ended, the score being level, one to one. The play had been hard, and both sides looked a little breathless as they lined up for the second half.

"How's the score?" asked Lumley-Lumley of the Fourth, joining Mellish by the ropes. He was Mellish's study-mate, and so on speaking terms with him, though they were far from being friends.

"One to one," said Mellish.

"Taken to watching the games—eh?" said Lumley-Lumley, looking at him curiously. "Well, that's the next best thing to playing yourself. You're improving, I guess."

"I've watched it from the start," said Mellish; "but I'm getting fed-up. Coming to the tuckshop?"

"I guess not. I'm going to see the rest of it."

Mellish stayed, too. In case of inquiries, he wanted to have it established that he had watched the football match that afternoon; though, as a matter of fact, there was not much danger of inquiries being made. No one knew anything about his visit to the dormitory.

The School House kicked off in the second half, and the play was soon fast and furious. Tom Merry & Co. attacked with vigour, but Fatty Wynn in goal was hard to beat. And from the New House crowd there came a roar as Figgins scored another goal for his side.

"Goal! Goal! Bravo, Figgys!"

"Play up, School House!" shouted Lumley-Lumley.

The School House played up hard; but Fatty Wynn was too strong for them in goal. Again and again the ball went in, only to find a fat fist or an active foot ready for it. And when the whistle went the New House juniors still kept their lead.

Figgins & Co. smiled sweetly as they came off the field. The New House had won, which, in the opinion of Figgins & Co., was exactly as it should be, though from the point of view of the School House it showed that the age of miracles was not past. But Tom Merry & Co. took their defeat cheerily; they had won often enough to be able to stand a whopping now and then. Indeed, Tom Merry was decidedly pleased by the great form Fatty Wynn had displayed in goal.

Fatty would be a mountain of strength for the St. Jim's juniors when they played the Grammarians—on such occasions the team being picked from both House elevens.

"You chaps played up wathah well, Figgay, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus, as he shoved on his elegant coat and muffler. "Of course, it would have ended differently if Tom Mewwy had succeeded in twappin' that wippin' pass I gave him—"

"You passed it over my head," said Tom Merry.

"Wats! But I was goin' to say, we should be honahed if you New House boundahs will come to tea in Study No. 6. It will be wathah a good spread."

"What-ho!" said Fatty Wynn, before Figgay could speak. "Now you're talking, Gussy. We'll come the minute we've changed. Buck up, Figgins; it's dangerous to hang about catching cold after playing footer."

And the juniors walked away to change. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy and his chums went up to the Fourth Form dorm, where they had changed before the match, Tom Merry and the Shell fellows going to the Shell dormitory. D'Arcy threw off his coat and muffler and his somewhat muddy footer garb, and rubbed down his elegant person, and then began to put on his handsome "cllobber." A moment later he gasped with surprise, as his noble legs came to a sudden stoppage before they reached the ends of his elegant trousers. He tried to ram his feet through, but they would not go, and he regarded his trousers in amazement.

"Bai Jove! What's w'ong with these twousahs!" he exclaimed.

"What's wrong with my jacket?" roared Blake. "Some silly ass has sewn up the sleeves."

"Look at my bags!" hooted Herries. "They're sewn up!"

"Sure, and look at mine!" howled Reilly.

"And mine!" roared Digby.

"Bai Jove! Some fwightful duffah has actually sewn up my bags!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, inspecting them in indignation and surprise. "I vegard this as uttally wotten. A fellow's clothes ought to be vegarded as sacwed."

"What howling ass was it?" said Blake sulphurously. "It isn't a New House jaw this time."

Herries gave a roar as his sleeve burst in a desperate effort to get his arm in it.

"I—I—I'll pulverise him!" he roared.

"What idiot was it?"

"Levison, perhaps—"

"Yaas, it would be like that wot-tah—"

The exasperated juniors spent half an hour upon their clothes before they could put them on. Then the Terrible Three looked in at the doorway, with excited and wrathful faces.

"Do you know who's been playing tricks in our dorm?" asked Tom Merry.

"Bai Jove! Has your clobber been sewn up, too, deah boys?"

"Yes, bags and jackets sewn up!" snorted Tom Merry. "I wish I could find the cheerful idiot who has been so funny."

"Must have been Levison, I should think!" growled Blake. "It's just one of his tricks. We'll hunt him up and bump him, anyway."

"That would be wathah unjust, Blake, without any pwoof."

"I'm not looking for justice; I'm looking for someone to bump!" grunted Blake.

"Weally, deah boy—"

"Fatty Wynn's arrived," said Tom Merry. "He's been calling up the stairs for some time, to ask whether tea's ready."

The juniors descended to the Fourth Form passage. Figgins & Co. were there, waiting for them. Fatty Wynn was looking a little exasperated. The time the School House juniors had taken to change seemed intolerably long to the fat Fourth Former, who was hungry.

"Oh, here you are!" said Fatty Wynn. "My hat! I could have changed five hundred times in the time you've taken."

"Some awful wottah has been sewin' up our clothes, deah boy. I am sowwy to have kept you waitin'. Pway come into the study!"

D'Arcy threw open the door of No. 6. Then a yell burst from the juniors. The aspect of the study was surprising.

The table had been turned over, and the carpet was curled up round its legs.

On the inverted table and the carpet, the study chairs were arranged in a pile, and on top of the chairs were piled the clock, the fireirons and fender, and heaps of books. The bookcase lay on its back, and the books had been shifted out, but it was not empty, as ashes had been emptied into it. On the looking-glass was an inscription traced there by a finder, dipped in soot:

"YOURS TRULY,  
GORDON GAY & CO."

"Bai Jove!"

"The Grammarians!" roared Tom Merry.

"Oh, the awful bounders! Then they've been here!"

"I shouldn't wonder if they've been at our study, too," gasped Lowther.

"My hat!"

The Terrible Three raced along the passage and looked into their study, and gave a yell of wrath. The visitors had evidently been there; it was a replica of Study No. 6. A howl of rage from Reilly's study showed that his room was in the same state. And in the Shell passage Kangaroo was raging from a similar cause. The raiders had done their work thoroughly.

"Oh, the fwightful wottahs!" said Arthur Augustus. "They must have sneaked in here while we were playin' footah, deah boys."

"If we could only have caught them," growled Blake.

"Just as likely to catch a weasel as Gordon Gay!" said Digby. "What are you New House bounders grinning at?" he added indignantly.

Figgins & Co. did not seem to share the indignation of the School House fellows. They were smiling loudly.

"Excuse us!" said Figgins. "Of course, this is very rotten! Ha, ha, ha! They didn't try this game in the New House. Ha, ha, ha!"

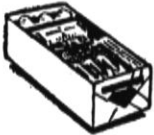
"They'd have been spotted and chucked out," grinned Kerr. "They know better than that."

Blake snorted.

"I dare say they forgot there was such a place as the New House at all," he growled, "or they may not have cared to enter such a mouldy old show. Shurrup, and help us get this blessed study to rights."

(Continued on the next page.)

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And the juniors laboured to restore the study to order, the School House fellows breathing deadly threats of vengeance upon the raiders, and the New House juniors smiling, and persisting in regarding the matter as funny.

## CHAPTER 11.

### The Missing Fiver!

**T**OM MERRY came into Study No. 6, looking very warm and a little dusty.

Order had been restored, and the juniors were ready for tea, very ready. Tea was an hour later than had been intended, owing to the kindly visitation of Gordon Gay.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was looking dusty, too. Clearing up the study after the visit of the Grammarians was dusty work.

"Finished now, deah boys!" said D'Arcy, with a sigh of relief. "I shall have to have a wash and a bwush down."

"Then we'll go and change the fiver before you have any wash and brush down," said Blake.

"I am wathah dusty, Blake—"

"Rats!"

"I feah that I could not go out into the quad in this dustay state—"

"Fatty Wynn is getting dangerous," said Digby. "He will be taking a bite out of one of us soon if you don't feed him."

"Well, I'm a bit hungry," said Fatty Wynn. "I haven't had anything to eat since dinner excepting a cold fowl and a couple of saveloys and a dozen tarts."

"Buck up with the fiver, Gussy, before Fatty perishes of hunger!"

"We'll change it," said Monty Lowther. affably; "you can go and wash up and brush down, or brush up and wash down, or any old thing, and we'll change the fiver. You can rely upon us to lay in a really ample stock of tommy."

"Certainly!" said Manners heartily. "We'll spend the fiver to the last penny, if necessary, old chap. Rely upon us!"

"Weally, Mannahs—"

"Hand it over!" roared Blake.

"Vewy well, deah boy. Here it is."

Arthur Augustus took out his pocket-book and opened it. He looked through the various compartments, and a puzzled look came over his face.

"Bai Jove!" he murmured.

"Well—lost it?" said Blake.

"Certainly not. I placed it in this compartment with the catch; I always keep my banknotes in that," said D'Arcy.

"Then it is there?"

"Yaas, I suppose so. It certainly ought to be there, as I placed it there. But the remarkable thing is, deah boy, that the compartment is empty."

"Look through the blessed pocket-book—and buck up!" growled Blake.

"I have looked through it, deah boy!"

"Isn't it there?"

"No."

"Let me look, fathead!"

Blake searched through the pocket-book. The banknote was certainly not there. Fatty Wynn gave an audible groan. It meant more delay, and the fat Fourth Former was really in a famishing state.

"Well, it isn't here," said Blake.

"Where did you put it?"

"In the pocket-book, deah boy."

"Opened the pocket-book since?"

"No."

"Then it couldn't have dropped out?"

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"Certainly not."

"And it isn't there now?"

"Appawently not."

"Then that proves that you didn't put it there," said Blake. "Now, the question is—where did you put it?"

"I put it there."

"Do you think banknotes have got wings to fly away with?" asked Blake pleasantly. "If you do, pray allow me to point out, in the most respectful manner in the world, that you are labouring under a delusion."

"Quite right," said Monty Lowther. "Birds have wings, and buildings have wings, but banknotes haven't—ergo, the banknote has not flown away. It only remains for Gussy to discover which waistcoat pocket he put it in."

"I did not put it into a waistcoat pocket, Lowthah. I put it into this pocket-book, and I haven't opened the pocket-book since."

"Now you know what an ass you are," said Blake patiently. "You lost a banknote once before, and it turned up in an old pocket, after you'd worried us all nearly into our graves. Try to think what you did with it."

"I put it into this pocket-book."

"Blessed if he isn't like a parrot!" exclaimed Blake in exasperation. "He makes the same answer every time."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gussy being generally admitted to be an ass, we must have proof that he put it in the pocket-book," said Tom Merry. "Did anybody see you, Gussy?"

"Yaas."

"Who was it?"

"Weilly and Kewwuish were with me when I opened my wogistah lethah this mornin'. They had lethahs, too."

"Let's ask 'em," said Manners.

"If you cannot twust my memow in a simple mattah—"

"Just what we can't do," said Blake. "Come on, you fellows, and let's ask Reilly and Kerruish if they saw the lunatic lunaticking. They're in the next study."

Reilly and Kerruish and Ray were in that study, putting it to rights after the Grammarian raid. They were not quite finished yet, and they were not looking in the best of tempers.

"Just a minute, you chaps!" said Blake. "Gussy has forgotten what he did with his banknote—"

"I have not forgotten, Blake—"

"Shurrup!"

"I put it into this pocket-book—"

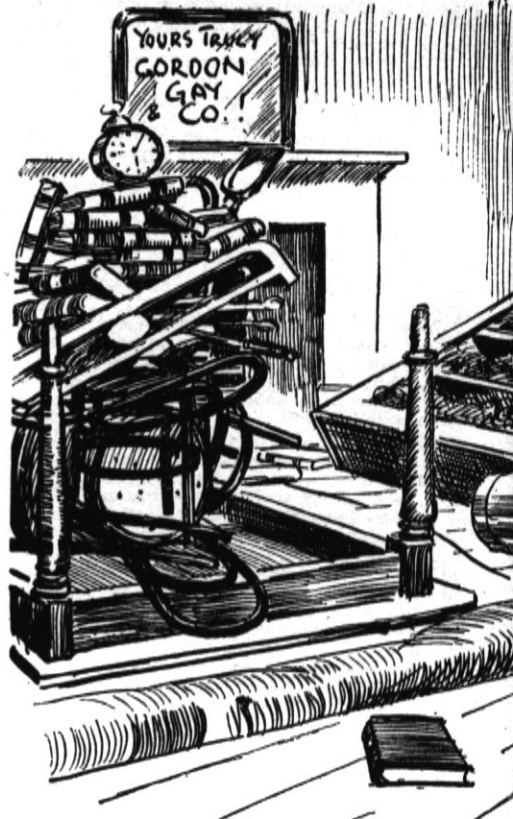
"Will you leave off playing parrot?" demanded Blake wrathfully. "I tell you I'm fed-up with that! Put on a now record!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Did either of you chaps see what our champion ass did with his silly banknote?" asked Blake.

"Sure, and I did!" said Reilly. "He put it into his pocket-book."

"Yes, I saw him," said Kerruish. "I remember I offered to change it for him,



As D'Arcy threw open the door of Study No. 6, a star Tom Merry. "Oh, the

and he accepted the offer—till he found I had only nincence."

"Yaas, I wemembah that wotten joke, Kewwuish. You saw me put the banknote in my pocket-book, didn't you? And you saw me put the pocket-book in my pocket?"

"Yes," said Reilly and Kerruish together.

"Thanks!" said Blake. "I suppose somebody has been japing him, and hiding his silly banknote somewhere—just before tea, too."

The Co. returned to Study No. 6. If it was a joke with the banknote, it was a very foolish joke. A fellow handling another fellow's money was liable to be suspected of wanting to appropriate it.

"I am awfully sowwy for this, you chaps," said D'Arcy. "Of course, I could not guess that the banknote would be missin' when I asked you to tea. And I feah that we have no othah wources."

"Same here," said Tom Merry. "Broke to the wide. I must say that you might be a bit more careful with your blessed banknotes!"

"Excuse me," said Fatty Wynn. "I've got an appointment. You can let me know if there is going to be any tea. You'll find me in the tuckshop."

And Fatty Wynn disappeared.

"It's weally wotten!" said D'Arcy in distress.

"You chaps had better come and have tea with us," said Figgins. "We've got a few shots in the locker."

"Thanks! We will, if the giddy banknote doesn't turn up," said Blake. "But this is rather serious. It's got to be



burst from the juniors. "The Grammarians!" roared  
"Unders! They've been here!"

found. If it's a joke, it's an idiotic one. Fellows oughtn't to play jokes with money. Now, when was it taken, Gussy? Do you remember anybody taking your pocket-book out of your pocket and taking out the banknote?"

"You uttah ass—"  
"It must have been taken while Gussy had his jacket off," said Tom Merry, laughing. "Now, when did he have it off? And where did he leave it?"

"I took it off when I changed for the footer, and I left it on the bed in the dorm," said Arthur Augustus at once.

"Now you've got to find out who went into the dorm during the footer match and collared the banknote," said Tom Merry. "We needn't suspect anybody of stealing it; I don't think there's a thief in the place. Some utter idiot has done this for a joke—that is the explanation. But we can't find the fiver till we find out who did it. Question before the meeting—who went into the dorm and larked with the clobber?"

And the answer to that question came from every lip at once:

"The Grammarians!"  
"Gordon Gay!"

CHAPTER 12.

Mellish's Perfect Alibi!

"GORDON GAY!"  
The name came to every tongue at once.

The Grammarians had "larked" with the clothes in the dormitory—they had sewn up the sleeves of the very jacket in which the pocket-book reposed.

The juniors looked at one another.

The force of evidence compelled them to think the same thought—that the Grammarians had carried their joke to the extent of opening D'Arcy's pocket-book, taking out the banknote, and hiding it.

"I can't understand it," said Tom Merry, after a long silence. "Gordon Gay isn't idiot enough to play a rotten joke like that. He wouldn't open a fellow's pocket-book. There might have been private letters in it—"

"There are private letters in it," said D'Arcy.

"Gay isn't the chap to do it," said Blake uneasily.

"Japing with the clobber is one thing, but rummaging among private papers is quite another. And only a fool would meddle with a chap's money."

"And Gay isn't a fool!" said Digby.

"Other chaps were with him—we don't know how many," said Lowther.

"It doesn't seem like Gay," Tom Merry said. "But if it wasn't the Grammarians, who was it? The banknote has been taken out. You see, in handling the jacket to sew up the sleeves, the chaps must have felt the pocket-book there, and might have opened it. But—"

"How many fellows knew you had a fiver there, Gussy?" asked Blake.

"Only Kewwuish and Weilly."

"They wouldn't play a silly trick like that; besides, they couldn't have," said Tom Merry. "Reilly was playing in the team, and Kerruish was a linesman. They were both out of the House as long as we were."

"Nobody else knew, Gussy?"

"No, deah boys. And I didn't mention the fivah to anybody but you fellows, eithah."

"Somebody might have heard you mention it," said Manners musingly.

"Lots of fellows might," said Blake. "But—"

"Where are Mellish and Levison?" asked Figgins. "They're the kind of chaps that would play a rotten joke like this."

"Levison's gone out with Gore—they went soon after the match started," said Digby. "I happen to know they've gone to a matinee at the Wayland Empire."

"That disposes of Levison. Mellish?"

"He was watching the match," said Kerr. "I saw him there several times, and he was always in the same spot. He was with Lumley-Lumley, I think."

"It's hardly fair to suspect even those cads without a particle of proof, and they seem to have a pretty good alibi apiece," said Tom Merry thoughtfully. "I can't think that Gordon Gay would play a silly trick like this. But one of the fellows with him might have done it. They may have hidden the banknote in the study or the dorm. Shall we look for it?"

"Look for a needle in a haystack," said Lowther.

"No, it wouldn't be much good. We'd better go over to the Grammar School and ask Gay what they've done with it."

"Might see Mellish first," said Blake.

"It's possible—"

"Right-ho!"

The juniors looked in at Mellish's study. Mellish, Blenkinsop, and Lumley-Lumley were at tea together. Levison had not yet come in. The three juniors grinned at the Co. They had all heard about the raid of the Grammarians.

"I guess you've been having a cheery time," Lumley-Lumley remarked.

"We have!" said Tom Merry. "But something serious has happened. Some silly ass has taken a five-pound note out of Gussy's pocket-book while his jacket was in the dorm. We want to know who did it."

"My hat! Do you expect to find the chap in this study?"

"Looking for me?" asked Mellish disagreeably. "Well, I didn't know D'Arcy had a five-pound note—and I don't believe it, either, unless he can produce it and show it. We hear a blessed lot of his fivers, but I've always thought there was a lot of swank about it. It's easy enough for a fellow to say that he's had a fiver and lost it!"

Arthur Augustus turned crimson with indignation. "Swanking" about his wealth was the very last breach of taste that the swell of St. Jim's would have been guilty of.

"You uttah wottahs!" he exclaimed. "Pway wait a few minutes, you fellows, while I give Mellish a feahful thwash-in'!"

Blake jerked back his excited chum.

"That can stand over for a bit," he said. "We've got to settle about this blessed banknote. Look here, Mellish, if you've been larking about the banknote, hand it over, and we'll say no more about it!"

"I don't know anything about the banknote," said Mellish. "And I suppose I couldn't take it out of D'Arcy's pocket without him knowing—if he had it at all?"

"You wottah—"

"It must have been taken while the jacket was in the dorm," Tom Merry explained patiently. "It was there an hour and a half while we were playing footer."

"Oh," said Mellish, with a sneer, "as it happens, I was watching the match, and I was there all the time!"

"Well, I don't want to doubt your word," said Tom Merry. "But—but, you know, you're a bit of an Ananias! Was anybody with you?"

"I don't see why I should answer your rotten questions!" said Mellish suddenly. "If you accuse me of stealing a banknote, I'm willing to go with you to the Head, and have it out before him!"

"We don't accuse anybody of stealing it," said Tom Merry quietly. "Some silly ass has been larking with it, that's all. Nobody in his senses would steal a banknote, I suppose, that could be traced by the number."

"Yaas, wathah! I could easily get the numbah frowm my patah—"  
"And anybody who tried to pass it could be easily traced," said Blake. "It's not a question of stealing. Some ass has been larking with it. We want to know who it was. So tell us whether anybody was with you this afternoon!"

"I refuse to answer any questions!"

"I guess I was with him most of the time," said Lumley-Lumley. "You were  
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still playing the first half when I got on the ground, and Mellish was there then."

"And he stayed till the finish?"

"Yes."

"Was anybody with you till Lumley-Lumley came, Mellish?"

"Levison was with me till he went off with Gore," said Mellish. "I don't see why I should tell you, though."

"I remember seeing him there, too, before Lumley-Lumley came," said Kerr, with a shake of the head.

The juniors were silent. The time had been narrowed down. If Mellish had taken the banknote, he must have run to the School House, remained there not more than twenty minutes at the most, and then hurried back to the football ground. It was likely enough, but—

"I think you're acting like rotten cads!" said Mellish coolly. "You know the Grammar School chaps were in the dorm meddling with the clothes. But you don't suspect them; you come straight to me!"

"Well, we know them—and we know you!" said Tom Merry.

"We can sift it out," said Kerr. "If Mellish was in the dorm, it's queer that he didn't run into the Grammarians. They were there during the match. It must have taken them some time to sew up your bags, and then they were some time in the Fourth Form passage, fooling in the studies. As a matter of fact, considering how much they did, they must have been here pretty nearly all the time we were playing footer. Didn't you see anything of the Grammarians, Mellish?"

"How could I see anything of them when I was on the footer ground?"

"We've got to see the Grammar School chaps about it," said Kerr. "Now, let's have the exact time that Mellish could have gone to the dorm if he wanted to. What time did Gore and Levison go to the matinee?"

"They left here at a quarter past two," said Lumley-Lumley.

"Sure?"

"Yes. They asked me to go with them, but I didn't go."

"What time did you get on the ground and find Mellish there?"

Lumley-Lumley reflected.

"Lemme see! I walked down the lane with Gore and Levison, and then came back. I got to the ground before you'd finished the first half. About twenty minutes to three, I guess. Yes; I remember hearing the quarter to. It struck after I was there."

"We kicked off just after two," said Blake.

"Right!" said Kerr. "So if Mellish sneaked into the dorm—"

"Look here—" began Mellish.

"If Mellish sneaked into the dorm," said Kerr calmly, "he must have done it between a quarter past two and twenty to three. Now we've got to find out what time the Grammarians were there. If they were there at that time, we can take it as certain that Mellish wasn't there."

"Don't he work it out just like a giddy Sherlock Holmes!" said Figgins, with an admiring glance at his Scottish chum.

"Good egg!" said Tom Merry.

"Let's get the bikes out and go over and see Gordon Gay."

"All of us?" asked Blake.

"Yes. There may be trouble."

"Right-ho!"

And the juniors left the School House, and five minutes later they were pedalling away in the falling dusk towards the Grammar School.

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## CHAPTER 13.

### At Grips!

GORDON GAY & CO. were at tea in their study.

The Grammarian chums were very cheerful.

The successful raid on St. Jim's had made them extremely elated. The Grammarian juniors had roared over the account Gordon Gay and Wootton major gave them of their doings in the School House at St. Jim's. Gordon Gay had only one regret—that there had not been time to pay a visit to the New House as well. He would have been very pleased to leave souvenirs of his visit with Figgins & Co. as well.

"But we've done them in the eye, my sons!" said Gordon Gay cheerfully. "The Saints will have to admit that we're the top-dogs this time."



Airman: "Do you know anything about an aeroplane that's come down near here, sonny?"  
Tommy: "N-n-no, sir! I've only been shooting at birds!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to R. Poole, 22, Hidsen Road, Marsh Hill, Erdington, Birmingham.

"What-ho!" said Frank Monk. "If we'd gone, we should have done the New House as well; but you haven't done so badly!"

"If you'd gone, you would have been caught and bumped!" said Gordon Gay serenely. "It takes your Uncle Gordon to work a little game like this!"

"Zat is so!" said Mont Blong. "Mon Uncle Gordon is a great man!"

"Hear, hear!" said Wootton major and minor heartily.

"I wonder whether they've got their studies in order yet?" grinned Gordon Gay. "I expect we shall hear from them about it."

Thump!

It was a loud knock at the study door. "Come in!" sang out Gordon Gay.

The door opened, and Gordon Gay & Co. jumped up in surprise at the sight of a crowd of St. Jim's juniors. Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther, D'Arcy and Blake and Digby, and Herries and Figgins and Kerr—nine of them in all. They crowded the passage outside the door of Gordon Gay's study.

"My hat!" exclaimed Gay, in astonishment. "St. Jim's bounders! Line up!"

The Grammarians were on the defensive at once.

They supposed immediately that it

was a raid in return for their little visit to the School House at St. Jim's. But they marvelled at the recklessness of the Saints in venturing into the lions' den in that way. It needed only a call from Gordon Gay to bring unnumbered foes swarming round the invaders.

But Tom Merry held up his hand in sign of peace.

"Hold on!" he said. "We haven't come for a rag!"

"You don't want satisfaction?" grinned Gordon Gay.

"Weally, Gay—"

"My shum!" murmured Mont Blong.

"You came over to St. Jim's to-day, some of you," said Tom Merry.

"We did!" chuckled Gordon Gay.

"I hope Gussy was able to get into his bags?"

And the Grammarians yelled with laughter.

"Pwaw don't wot, Gay; this is a serious mattah!" said Arthur Augustus. "Was it you who played silly twicks with my clobber?"

"It was—it were!" said Gordon Gay.

"It's the first time I've ever been a sempstress, but I think I did it pretty well. Don't you?"

"How many of you came?" asked Tom Merry.

"Two—myself and Wootton major. We thought two of us would be enough to handle you if you spotted us—one for each House!" explained Gordon Gay airily.

"You cheeky wottah—"

"Look here—"

"Order!" said Tom Merry. "Never mind the gas. Would you mind telling us just what time you were playing tricks in the Fourth Form dorm, Gay?"

Gay looked puzzled.

"I don't quite see how that matters," he said. "But we don't mind telling you. We got over to St. Jim's soon after you started footer—"

"About ten past two," said Wootton major.

"Then we got into the School House," grinned Gay. "We did the Shell dorm first, and then the Fourth Form, and the studies afterwards."

"How long did it take you to do the Shell dorm."

"About ten minutes, I suppose."

"Then you got into the Fourth Form dorm about twenty past two?"

"Roughly, yes. We weren't taking note of the time," said Gay, considerably mystified by the questions. "I don't see how it matters. The important point is that we've done you in the eye, and you have to sing small!"

"That narrows the time down," said Tom Merry, unheeding. "If Mellish got into the dorm, you fellows, he must have done it before twenty-past two, and after a quarter-past. I think we can safely leave Mellish out of it, unless he was there at the same time as the Grammar School rotters! I suppose Mellish of the Fourth didn't happen to be there while you were there, Gay?"

"No."

"He would have given us away, I fancy, if he'd spotted us!" grinned Wootton major.

"Then," said Tom Merry, "we want to know what you've done with the banknote?"

Gordon Gay stared at him.

"Is that a conundrum?" he asked.

"No; it's a question, and we want an answer!"

"You'll have to make it a bit clearer, then!" said Gordon Gay. "You're all looking jolly serious. Has anything

(Continued on page 18.)



# The Editor's Chair

Let the Editor be your pal.  
Drop him a line to-day,  
addressing your letters:  
The Editor, The GEM,  
Fleetway House, Farring-  
don Street, London, E.C.4.



**H**ALLO, Chums! I had a letter from an old reader recently, in which he says: "I feel ashamed to confess that, having reached the age of forty, I am still a reader of a boys' paper—the GEM. I have been an ardent admirer of Martin Clifford's stories for twenty-seven years, and I always shall be, even when I'm drawing the Old Age Pension!"

I wish to thank this reader—"Anonymous," of Reading—for his letter, and I admire the loyalty and enthusiasm which he has shown towards the GEM for so many years. But why feel ashamed to say he still reads the old paper? Of all the boys' papers on the market there cannot be one which has such a large adult following as the GEM.

I frequently get letters from readers who say that their parents greatly enjoy the St. Jim's stories! I am always hearing from married men and women with families who still follow the adventures of Tom Merry & Co. just as keenly as they did when they were boys and girls.

The fact is, that these popular schoolboy characters, endowed with perpetual youth, bring back happy memories to these older readers of their own care-free youthful days. The St. Jim's stories provide a pleasant link with the past, besides giving many hours of happy entertainment.

The GEM is a paper which is widely read by old and young alike, and I

feel sure that in almost every home into which it finds its way, the old paper is read by nearly all the family. The reason for this is not far to seek. The stories are, as I've said before, clean and wholesome, and no parents could ever raise any objections to them. On the contrary, many parents welcome Martin Clifford's yarns.

One which all readers will certainly welcome is:

## "THE LAST LAUGH!"

—next Wednesday's rollicking, long St. Jim's yarn. In it the long-standing rivalry between the School House and the New House breaks out afresh, with added zest, liveliness, and high-spirited fun.

First, Tom Merry & Co. give their rivals the "kybosh," then Figgins & Co. just as promptly return the compliment—with interest! And so it goes on throughout the story, each party growing keener to triumph in their jape "war."

Which of them gets the last laugh, and how it is done, I will leave Martin Clifford to describe to you in his very best and most amusing style next week. See that you don't miss the fun!

PEN PALS COUPON  
24-10-36

## PEN PALS

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

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Readers will also enjoy a hearty laugh, at Billy Bunter's expense, in the next chapters of this tip-top Greyfriars yarn. Bunter's brain-wave for a fishing competition has rather fallen on deaf ears in the Remove, but in spite of the lack of interest shown by his Form-fellows, Bunter pegs away, seeking entrants to make it a going concern.

The Owl makes a display of showing what he can do in the angling line, and he fairly "brings down the house" when he fishes for a pike in a pond—little knowing the sort of pike he is trying to catch! Frank Richards certainly "makes the bell ring" with this amusing story. He is at his best again, too, in:

## "HIS SCAPEGRACE BROTHER!"

—the powerful and dramatic yarn which appears in our popular companion paper the "Magnet." The story features Dicky Nugent, a thoughtless young scamp, who gets mixed up in the blackguardly ways of a shady Fifth Former. In consequence, Dicky finds himself in all sorts of trouble, and it is left to his brother, Frank Nugent, to save him from disgrace.

Trot round to your newsagent's to-day and ask for this gripping, cover-to-cover story of the chums of Greyfriars. It's too good to miss.

## THE EDITOR.

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gone wrong—besides the clothes and the studies? Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes. Someone took a five-pound note out of Gussy's pocket while his jacket was in the dorm."

"What?"

"You sewed up the sleeves of that jacket. You must have felt the pocket-book in the pocket while you were handling it."

Gordon Gay nodded.

"I felt something in the pocket, naturally; but I didn't look to see what it was," he replied. "It was no business of mine. I sewed up the sleeves of the jacket, and the legs of the trucks, for a joke. I suppose you don't think I would look into a chap's pocket-book."

"I hope not; but—the banknote's gone."

Gordon Gay's eyes gleamed.

"What do you mean by that exactly?" he asked, in a dangerously quiet tone. There was no laughter in the study now. All the fellows, Grammarians and Saints, realised the seriousness of the matter.

"I mean exactly what I say!" said Tom Merry steadily. "The banknote was taken out of Gussy's pocket. We don't suspect anybody of stealing it, so you needn't mount the high horse—we think it was hidden for a joke—an idiotic joke. But we want to know where it is, and to give you our opinion about playing jokes with money. We think that of all the silly fool things to do, that is the silly fooliest."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Quite right!" said Gay. "If I touched anybody's money, I should be as big a fool as any St. Jim's chap present, which is saying a great deal. But it happens I've got too much sense—and I didn't do it, or think of doing it. I felt the weight of something in D'Arcy's jacket pocket, but I didn't know it was a pocket-book—I didn't look to see what it was—why should I?"

"Then you didn't touch the banknote?"

"Of course I didn't!"

"Or Wootton—"

"Wootton hadn't anything to do with D'Arcy's clothes—I did them!"

There was a pause.

"Look here," said Tom Merry at last. "The banknote was there; we've got proof of that—plenty of witnesses. It was taken while Gussy's jacket was lying on the bed in the dorm. You fellows were there playing tricks with the jacket. Nobody else went to the dormitory. We suspected it might have been Mellish or Levison—but we've gauged the time, and found out that they couldn't have done it. Levison was out, and Mellish's time is accounted for, unless he was in the dormitory while you were there. That settles it for them. Gore was out, too—and Crooke is laid up in the school hospital just now—and there isn't another chap in the House who'd play that trick, I know that. Besides, we're not going round suspecting fellows there's no proof against, when we know that somebody actually was in the dorm handling the clothes."

Gordon Gay compressed his lips.

"What does that mean?" he asked.

"It means that we want the banknote."

"I told you I know nothing about it."

"Look here, Gay, we don't suspect anybody of stealing it. I've said that, and all the fellows say the same—"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"It was taken for a joke. I've no doubt that it was hidden somewhere

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about the House, and is there now. We only want you to tell us where you put it."

"I have told you already that I never touched it, and didn't even know it was there. If you can't take my word, I've got no more to say."

There was a long and painful pause.

Gordon Gay's denial that he had not even seen the banknote disposed of the theory that he had removed it for a joke. If he had done so, he would have said so. There would have been no need to lie about it. It had not been taken for a joke, then; but—had it been taken for another reason? That miserable suspicion forced itself into the minds of the St. Jim's fellows. They were certain that the Grammarians had removed the banknote from D'Arcy's pocket-book—and his denial could only mean one thing—that he had taken it with the intention of keeping it.

It was a horrible thought—it wasn't possible. And yet—

Gordon Gay read the involuntary suspicion in the faces of the St. Jim's fellows, and his own face, which had been flushed, grew pale.

"You—you rotters!" he said, in a strained voice. "Do you dare to think that I've stolen the filthy banknote—you rotters!"

"I can't think so," said Tom Merry, with an inward struggle. "We all know you are a decent chap, Gay. You couldn't be a thief!"

"Wathah not!"

"But tell us where it is," said Blake.

"I don't know anything about it!"

Silence.

"Don't you believe me?" shouted Gordon Gay.

Still silence. What were the juniors to say?

Gordon Gay clenched his hands.

"So I am either a thief or a liar?" he said, between his teeth. "And you've come over to tell me so. Well, I'll give you my opinion. You've got a thief in your school, and he's taken the banknote—and very likely he's counting on your being fools enough to suspect us. That's my opinion!"

"Look here—"

"You had a chap expelled once for stealing," said Wootton major, with a bitter sneer. "It's time the sacking started again."

Tom Merry & Co. felt their anger rise. Rather than accuse Gordon Gay of theft, they would have allowed the matter to drop, and D'Arcy would have submitted to the loss of the banknote. But to be accused of having a thief in their school by the fellows they were certain had taken the banknote—that was a little too much. Tom Merry broke out angrily:

"There's no thief in St. Jim's, but unless you tell us where to find the banknote, we shan't have any choice about believing that there's a thief here."

"That's enough!" said Gordon Gay; "Get out!"

"We want the banknote!"

"Go round St. Jim's looking for the thief, then," said Gay savagely. "Perhaps it's in one of your pockets all the time!"

It was an unjust remark; but Gordon Gay's temper was very naturally excited. The words were like flame on a fire.

"You uttah wottah!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, with fierce indignation. "You dare to accuse my friends of—"

"You've dared to accuse me, haven't you?" said Gay. "Get out of here, and

search one another's pockets till you find the banknote!"

"You rotter!"

"Clear off!" shouted Wootton major. "We're fed-up with you. Get back to your Thieves' Kitchen! Mind your pockets, you fellows!"

"Bai Jove! I—"

"We're going!" said Tom Merry, white with anger. "We know what to think now. We shan't make an accusation, and we'll make it up to Gussy about the money. Pass the note, if you like—you'll be quite safe. We don't want a scandal—and we don't want to have anything more to do with you rotters. Come on, chaps, let's get out of here!"

But the matter had gone too far. Gordon Gay, with clenched fists and blazing eyes, sprang between Tom Merry and the door.

"You've said too much!" he said, in a choking voice. "You dare—you dare to accuse me—me? Put up your hands!"

And, barely giving Tom Merry time to put up his hands, Gordon Gay rushed at him, hitting out right and left.

## CHAPTER 14.

### Gordon Gay's Reply!

TOM MERRY gave blow for blow—his blood was up, too. In a moment there was a terrific combat raging in Gordon Gay's study.

All the fellows joined in it, all of them furiously excited; and the study furniture went crashing right and left. The juniors were too excited to speak—but there was incessant gasping, panting, and scuffling of feet.

The St. Jim's fellows were in the majority, and they had the best of it; but the noise was bringing other Grammarians to the scene.

Outside, in the passage, juniors came rushing to the rescue. The study was so crammed with fighting juniors that there was hardly room to move.

Half of them were down, and the other fellows were stumbling and sprawling over them.

The uproar was terrific.

But the odds were now greatly on the side of the Grammarians, and one by one the St. Jim's fellows were overcome, and they were rolled on the floor and pinned down by the Grammarians.

"Sit on the cads!" said Gordon Gay. "They've come here and accused us of stealing. We'll let all St. Jim's see what we think of them when they get back."

The Grammarians were looking very grim.

In the rags between the two schools, there was generally good humour on both sides, and even in the combats the blows were not as a rule struck very hard. But things were changed now. Every fellow had hit his hardest in that fierce struggle, and there were bruised faces, darkened eyes, and noses streaming red among the fellows in the study.

"Let us get out!" panted Tom Merry. "We're done with you fellows!"

"We're not done with you!" said Gay. "You're going to beg our pardon for the rotten things you've said, or we'll send you back home in a way you won't like!"

"Beg your pardon for telling the truth! Not likely!"

"So you're still sticking to it?" said Gay, with a black frown. "All serene

—we'll make you sorry for it. Tie up their paws, you fellows!"

"I wefuse to submit to such an out-wago!"

"Tie that fool up!"

"You uttah wottah! If you dare do chawactawise me as a fool—"

"Hold your silly tongue!"

"Bai Jove! I—"

"Stick something in his mouth if he won't shut up!" said Gay.

And Wootton major promptly jammed a chunk of coal into it, and the unfortunate Arthur Augustus spluttered and stuttered wildly.

Frank Monk hurried away, and returned with a cord, and the hands of the juniors were tied down to their sides.

Then they were dragged to their feet.

"Two of you take each one of the rotters and walk them out," said Gay.

"It's dark outside, and we'll get them into the road without the prefects spotting us."

"Gwoogh!"

"Don't mind how you handle them if they give you any trouble!"

And the Saints were bundled, one after another, out of the study.

The Grammarians collared each one of them, and as the Saints had their hands secured, they could offer no resistance.

They were marched out of the House into the dusk of the Close, the Grammarians crowding round them to screen them from the general view.

"The rotters came on bikes," said Carker.

"Throw their bikes out into the road, some of you! They're going to walk back. They can fetch their bikes afterwards!"

"Right-ho!"

Tom Merry & Co., breathing rage and fury, were marched out of the gates into the road, and they were walked along towards St. Jim's. The bicycles were wheeled out after them, and left along the palings by the road.

Half-way to St. Jim's the Grammarians halted.

"Well, have you done playing the fool?" demanded Figgins, his voice quivering with rage.

"Not yet," said Gay.

"If you don't let us loose—"

"Shut up! Now, are you going to take back your accusation, and beg our pardon?" demanded Gordon Gay.

"No!"

"Nevah!"

"Rats!"

There was no doubt that the St. Jim's juniors had made up their minds on that subject. Their replies were decidedly emphatic. Only Kerr was silent.

"Very well. Then we'll label you by your right name," said Gay.

He took a bottle of marking-ink from his pocket, wetted his finger with it, and traced a word on Tom Merry's forehead.

The word was in as large letters as the space would allow, and the word was "LIAR!"

He went to each of the struggling juniors in turn, and made the same inscription.

Kerr opened his lips to speak as Gay was dabbing his forehead, but he closed them again. Kerr had very strong doubts in his mind, but he would not appear to be funkling. So he did not say a word.

The St. Jim's juniors were trembling with rage.

"Now take the cads home," said Gay. The juniors were run on towards St. Jim's.

The gates of St. Jim's had been closed, and Gordon Gay gave a loud peal at the bell. Taggles, the porter, came down grumbling, and opened the gates.

He stared at the crowd of fellows outside.

"Why, what—what—" gasped Taggles.

"Kick 'em in!" said Gordon Gay. Tom Merry & Co. were roughly bundled into the gates.

Then the Grammarians walked away.

The juniors writhed with shame and rage. To be seen by the other St. Jim's fellows tied up, with that insulting inscription on their foreheads, would be unendurable. Taggles was staring at them like a man in a dream.

"Well, my heye!" gasped Taggles. "Pretty goings-hon, I must say! I'll report yer!"

"He, he, he!" came an irritating cackle, as Mellish of the Fourth came through the dusk. "Oh, my hat! What a sight!"

The juniors glared at Mellish as if they could eat him.

"He, he, he! Liars—eh? Is that their opinion of you?" chuckled Mellish. "Well, I dare say they're about right. He, he, he!"

"Taggles, old man—" began Tom Merry.

"I'll report yer!"

Mellish had rushed off, evidently with the intention of calling other fellows to witness Tom Merry & Co. in their predicament. The juniors were feverishly anxious to get loose before he could return with a grinning crowd.

"Do you want a quid, Taggles?" said Tom Merry desperately. "You can

report us for being late if you like, only cut us loose—quick!"

"Quids" did not come to Taggles every day.

"Wait till I get a knife," he said.

The juniors followed the porter into his lodge. Taggles cut the cord and their hands were free, and then he obliged them with soap and water to wash the inscription off their foreheads. The door was closed. Already curious fellows were gathering outside.

The juniors breathed more freely when Gordon Gay's inscription was washed off.

"Thank goodness!" said Tom Merry. "Oh, we'll make those rotters pay for this!"

"Yaas, wathah!" groaned Arthur Augustus.

"The cads!"

"The rascals!"

The juniors hunted through their pockets, and the quid was raised for Taggles. Then they streamed out of the porter's lodge. Kerr had found most of the quid, and Figgins nearly all the rest, the other fellows promising to settle up for their share later, funds at present being low among them.

Outside the lodge quite an army of fellows had gathered to see them, greatly interested by Mellish's account of their appearance; but now there was nothing to see, save the marks of the conflict on their faces and clothes.

"What's happened?" demanded Gore of the Shell.

"Find out!"

"Have you been licked?" asked Levison.

"Go and eat coke!"

And, with those unsatisfactory replies, the hardly used Co. walked away to the School House.



Gordon Gay's study was crammed tight with angry juniors, yet still more Grammarians came hurrying to join the fray. Some of the combatants were down, and other fellows, fighting and struggling, were stumbling over them. But the odds were heavily against the St. Jim's juniors.

## CHAPTER 15.

## Difference of Opinion!

**I**N Tom Merry's study a council of war was held at once. It was time for evening preparation now, but the juniors were thinking of anything but preparation now.

They wanted vengeance on the Grammarians; they wanted it hot and strong, and they wanted it at once.

There was a buzz of excited voices in the study, propounding and discussing schemes for making the obnoxious Grammarians "sit up" in the most thorough manner for their heinous conduct. In the general babel only Kerr was silent. But Kerr was thinking.

Kangaroo and Reilly and two or three other fellows had obligingly gone out to fetch in the bicycles, Tom Merry & Co. having something more important to think about just then.

"They've got to be made to sit up for this!" said Blake savagely. "Of course, there isn't the slightest doubt about it now. No need to cut up so rusty as that if they weren't guilty."

"Quite wight, deah boy."

"Gay had the banknote—very likely had it in his pocket all the time—"

"We ought to get the number and publish it so that he can't pass it," said Figgins. "He doesn't deserve any consideration after what he's done."

"That's so!"

"It was bad enough to steal the five, without branding us as liars because we wanted it back!" said Blake between his teeth.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"What do you think, Kerr?" demanded Figgins, turning to his Scottish

chum. "You haven't said a blessed word!"

Kerr hesitated.

"Well, I hardly like to say, as you've all made up your minds about it," he said, "but—"

There was a growl at once. The juniors were not in a mood to be contradicted. They had quite made up their minds about the guilt of Gordon Gay—indeed, in their present vengeful state probably a direct proof of his innocence would hardly have been welcome.

"Oh, rot!" growled Monty Lowther. "As if there could be any doubt about it, after the way they've acted!"

"Well, they all acted the same way, but only two of them could have been concerned in taking the banknotes, as only two of them came over here," said Kerr.

This was so logical that the other fellows could only reply to it by another growl.

"Something in that!" said Figgins.

"But—"

"The fact is," said Kerr, "the way Gordon Gay and Wootton major acted makes it pretty clear to me that they told the truth."

"What!"

"Bosh!"

"Wubbish!"

"Well, I won't trot out my opinion if you don't want to hear it," said Kerr.

"Oh, run on!" said Blake ungraciously.

"Well," said Kerr, "Gay cut up so rough that I couldn't help thinking he was genuinely indignant. Thieves don't feel indignant when they're found out—they feel ratty, but they couldn't possibly feel indignant."

"Oh, he was putting that on!" said Herries.

"He might have been, of course; but it looked genuine to me. Another thing is, they made such an awful fuss. Now, thieves don't like publicity. Gordon Gay didn't care if the whole Grammar School, and all St. Jim's, and the whole blessed universe knew that he was accused. But if he had the banknote he'd have wanted to keep it dark. He'd have tried to get us away without a disturbance, I should think."

"Bai Jove! That's vevy pwob, deah boys!" said Arthur Augustus, with a wise shake of the head. "Kerr speaks just as if he had been stealing himself, and knew just what a thief would do."

"Why, you silly chump—" roared Kerr.

"Weally, Kerr—"

"You howling blatherskite!"

"I wufese to be called a howlin' blatherskite. I was payin' a compliment to your tact and judgment."

"Then you'd better bottle up your compliments till you can put 'em in a better style!" growled Kerr. "Now, if that silly ass has done interrupting—"

"I wufese—"

"Shut up, Gussy!"

"Well, faking all things together, it looks to me as if Gordon Gay's conduct shows that he didn't take the banknote," said Kerr.

"Then who did?" demanded Tom Merry. "We've cleared Mellish of suspicion. It's pretty well established that he didn't do it, unless he was there at the same time as the Grammar School cads, and Gay said he didn't see him."

"He saw that we were prepared to suspect Mellish," said Kerr quietly. "If he was guilty, it would have been quite easy for him to say he'd seen Mellish hanging about the dormitory."

"But that would be a whoppah, deah boy, as he didn't see him."

"Ass! A fellow who would steal would tell a lie, I suppose?" snapped Kerr.

Arthur Augustus reflected.

"Yaas, I suppose he would," he agreed at last. "Yaas, I wvegard it as vevy pwob. A chap who would steal would do any mean thing."

"If it wasn't Mellish, however, it was somebody else," said Kerr. "After all, it was a bit thick jumping on Mellish on mere suspicion, because he's done some caddish things before. Lots of silly asses might have played such a joke, for if the banknote's been taken by a St. Jim's chap, it hasn't been stolen."

"Then it will turn up some time," said Manners.

"And if it does, it will prove that we were wrong about Gordon Gay," said Blake.

"Bai Jove, we should have to offah a most pwofound apology in that case."

"It hasn't turned up yet!" growled Herries.

"My idea is that we should look for the fellow inside St. Jim's, not outside," said Kerr. "I can't help thinking that it was just chance that the Grammarians happened to be here this afternoon, when some silly chump was larking with Gussy's banknote. As the practical joker hasn't owned up we shall have to find him."

"If the chap is a St. Jim's chap we've got to find him as quickly as possible," said Tom Merry. "How do you propose to set about it, Kerr?"

"Look!" said Kerr laconically.

"But how—when—where?"

"With your eyes, now, in the dormitory to begin with," said Kerr sweetly.



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"Well, it won't do any harm," said Blake.  
 "And it won't do any good!" growled Herries. "Look at my eye!"  
 "Oh, blow your eye!" said Figgins crossly. "I'm fed-up with your eye! Let's get up to the dorm and look round."  
 "I'm going to get a beefsteak for my eye," said Herries.  
 "You can get a beefsteak, and a mutton chop, too, if you like," said Kerr. "I don't suppose your brain powers would help us much. Come on!"  
 Herries grunted, and went away to the lower regions in search of a beefsteak. The rest of the Co. ascended to the dormitory. It was quite dark there. Tom Merry turned on the electric light. The dormitory presented its usual aspect, and the juniors were decidedly puzzled how they were to find any traces of the fellow who had purloined the five-pound note.  
 "It's up to you, Kerr," said Blake. "How are you going to begin? I suppose you don't expect to find footprints here?"  
 "No, that's not likely."  
 "Sherlock Holmes generally finds cigarette-ash and things!" grinned Monty Lowther. "He could tell who was the criminal, what his grandfather's front name was, and what he did for a living by the ash of a cigarette. But I don't see any ashes."  
 Kerr did not reply. He was deep in thought. Slowly a light broke over his keen, intelligent face. Figgins, who was watching him with dumb admiration, suddenly burst out:  
 "He's got it!"  
 "Wats!"  
 "I tell you he's got it!" said Figgins excitedly.  
 "I refuse to believe anythin' of the sort. I regard it as utahly wotten of you, Figgins, to accuse your own pal of takin' my banknote!"  
 "Your banknote, you howling idiot!" roared Figgins.  
 "Who's talking about the silly banknote?"  
 "You distinctly stated that Kerr had got it."  
 "Fathead! I said he'd got the idea—the giddy explanation. I can see it in his chivvy."  
 Kerr laughed.  
 "I've thought it out," he said. "I've come back to our original idea. I think it was Mellish."

CHAPTER 16.  
 Climbing Down!

**T**OM MERRY & CO. simply stared.  
 Kerr had not even looked round the dormitory, and how he could possibly have worked it out that it was Mellish was past their power of divining.  
 "Mellish!" repeated Manners.  
 "I don't say so, but I think it's jolly likely."  
 "But if Mellish were here he must have been here at the same time as Gordon Gay and Wootton," howled Blake, exasperated, "and Gay said plainly that he wasn't!"  
 "I know."  
 "Well, ass, Gay has eyes, hasn't he? And if Mellish was here, idiot, he's big enough to be seen, isn't he, burler?" demanded Blake excitedly.  
 "Certainly, if he was in sight."  
 "Oh, I suppose he vanished into thin air when the Grammarians came in?" snorted Blake.  
 Kerr shook his head.  
 "I don't think so. I think it's far more likely that he vanished under one of the beds."  
 "What!"  
 "Bai Jove!"  
 "Put yourself in his place," said Kerr placidly. "Let us suppose for the moment that it was Mellish. If it were Mellish, he must have been here when the Grammarians arrived."  
 "That's certain, and it shows that he wasn't here."  
 "Not at all. Suppose Mellish is in the act of taking the banknote, and he hears somebody coming to the dorm, what does he do?"  
 "He wouldn't know it was a Grammarian!" growled Blake.  
 "No, he'd think it was some of us coming in—coming back for something we'd left in our clothes," Digby remarked.  
 "Exactly!" agreed Kerr. "And he wouldn't like to be found messing about with Gussy's notebook. He would get out of sight as quick as he knew how. The easiest and quickest way would be by diving under the bed. Gussy's bed, as it was nearest."  
 "Yaas, that is quite pwob."  
 "Then in come the Grammarians," pursued Kerr. "Mellish wouldn't show himself. He'd be glad to see a jape played on you fellows, and he wouldn't dream of interfering. And he isn't exactly the kind of chap who'd care to

(Continued on page 28.)

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# BILLY BUNTER'S COMPETITION!

## Bunter Suggests Fishing!

"I SAY, you fellows—"  
Billy Bunter made that remark to unheeding ears. Bob Cherry had just come into Study No. 1 at Greyfriars with news, and Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh were listening to him, and they had no attention to bestow upon the Owl of the Remove.

"I say, you fellows—"  
"It's a fact," said Bob Cherry. "Skinner told me, and I trotted over myself to see."

"It's curious," said Harry Wharton. "I say, you fellows—"  
"It's close by the river," went on Bob Cherry. "I saw a lot of workmen on the ground, and I asked one of them, and so there isn't any doubt about it."

"The surprisefulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Singh, in the beautiful English for which he was famous. "A new schoolful establishment so close to the ancient and honourable college of Greyfriars will lead to rowfulness, I expect."

"Very likely," grinned Bob Cherry. "Still, the more rowfulness the merrier. We had some high old times when those foreign fellows were at Greyfriars."

"Jolly exciting times, at all events," said Harry Wharton. "Still, I should be glad to see some of those French and German chaps again. They were decent fellows."

"The decentfulness was great."

"I say, you fellows—"  
"By the way, do you know who is going to keep the new school by the river?" asked Nugent.

Bob Cherry shook his head. "No, I haven't been able to discover that, nor what sort of a school it is going to be. I don't know whether it's in connection with Greyfriars or not. I know all that land belongs to Greyfriars, of course."

"I say, you fellows—"  
"Hallo, there is Bunter talking. Have you got anything to say, Bunter?" asked Bob Cherry, looking round.

Billy Bunter blinked at them through his big spectacles with an injured expression.

"Yes, I have Cherry, and I think you might give me a minute, instead of talking for hours together."

"Cheese it! I haven't been in the study five minutes, and then you generally talk such rot!" said Bob Cherry. "However, go ahead!"

"I've been thinking of a new idea. You see, I find physical culture rather trying. It's all very well in its way, but it's too much like work."

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Cricket is rather the same, too, and, besides, there's so much jealousy in cricket. I feel sure I shouldn't be let into the Form eleven—"

"The surefulness is terrific!"  
"Upon the whole, I have thought it out that angling is more in my line," said Billy Bunter. "You see, it's a healthy, open-air exercise, and you can sit down to it, which is a great advantage."

"I suppose so—to you."  
"Angling is the kind of outdoor sport

that will suit me," went on Bunter. "It's a jolly good thing, not too much like work, and you can sit down and enjoy your sport instead of buzzing about with a bat, or a pair of Indian clubs, and you can have a jolly time without bothering anyone else. In fact, angling is a thing that is agreeable to all parties concerned."

"Especially the fish," remarked Bob Cherry.

"The fish. Oh, I wasn't thinking of the fish!"

"No, I suppose you weren't; but I don't suppose you'll be very dangerous to the fish," said Nugent. "Well, Bunter, if that's all that's troubling you, you can take up angling, and angle for all you're worth, with all the angles you can find in Euclid."

"That isn't all, you fellows. I've been thinking that a fishing competition in the Remove would be a very good idea."

"What sort of competition?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Why, you know, we could have a prize for the chap who catches the biggest fish, or the greatest number of trout, or something of that sort," said Bunter. "I haven't thought out the details yet. Of course, the other fellows wouldn't really stand much chance against me—"

"Have you had much practice?"  
"Well, no, I haven't really gone in for it at all yet," confessed Bunter.

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**Only one thing can mar Billy Bunter's great fishing competition—the selfishness of juniors who object to having their property purloined for prizes!**  
~~~~~

"But I'm very keen when I start on a thing, you know. I shall soon be going ahead like wildfire. I've not got a rod yet, but if you fellows felt inclined to club together and buy me one, I shouldn't raise any objection."

"Well, that's generous of you, Bunter!" Harry Wharton remarked, with a laugh.

"You'll always find me good-hearted," said Bunter, beaming through his big spectacles. "In fact, I should like some of you to get me a rod. It's rather discouraging to an enthusiastic angler to have to content himself with fishing for minnows with a tin-can."

"I suppose so."  
"We could get up some ripping prizes for the competitors," said Bunter thoughtfully. "Every fellow who is flush can contribute. That's a simple plan, and any chap who has anything that would do for a prize can put it in. Bicycle-lamps, books, rods, cricket-bats, and so on. I could make a selection from the things in this study alone that would make up a very decent prize list."

The chums of the Remove glared at the originator of the great idea.

"If you start selecting any of my property," said Bob Cherry, in

measured accents, "I warn you beforehand that there will be a dead Bunter picked up at Greyfriars."

"The deadfulness of the Bunter will be terrific if he lays his fingers on any of my goodful chattels!" remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Oh, I say—"  
"If any of my property figures in a prize list," said Nugent darkly. "I know a fat Owl who will figure at an inquest!"

"I think you're very selfish to want to spoil a ripping good idea like that," said Billy Bunter. "Still, I've no doubt I could think of something else for a prize list."

"You'd better!"  
"The main thing is, what do you think of the idea of a Form competition?"

"Oh, ripping!" said Nugent.

"Do you chaps want to form a committee to run it, then?"

Bob Cherry winked at his chums. "Well, no, I don't think we'll form a committee just yet," he said. "My view is that, as the originator of the idea, you ought to keep the management entirely in your own hands, Bunter."

"But I don't want to be selfish—"  
"Nothing selfish about that. It's an idea more suitable to your intellect than ours. We should only muck it up."

"The muckfulness would be terrific!"  
Billy Bunter nodded thoughtfully.

"Well, there's something in that," he agreed.

"We'll come into the business when the prizes are being distributed," promised Bob Cherry. "We won't be left out of that. Now, you chaps, are you coming along to look at the new building with me?"

"Certainly!" said Harry Wharton.

"But I say, you fellows—"  
"What, aren't you finished yet?" asked Bob Cherry, in astonishment.

"No, I want to tell you some more about—"

"How long do you think it will take you to get through with what you have to tell us?" asked Bob Cherry thoughtfully.

"About a quarter of an hour—that's all."

"Well, that's all right! We shan't be back for quite half an hour, so you'll have plenty of time," said Bob Cherry, grinning. "Come on, you chaps!"

And the chums of the Remove quitted the study.

## Look Before You Leap!

HAZELDENE came out of his study with a letter in his hand and an extremely pleased expression on his face, as the chums of the Remove walked down the passage. They stopped to speak to him. "Come into a fortune?" asked Bob Cherry pleasantly.

Hazeldene laughed.

"No."  
"What's the good news, then? Has Bulstrode changed out of your study?"

"No. I've had a letter from my sister."  
"Have you, really?"  
The chums of the Remove were interested at once. All but Hurree Singh

## ANOTHER GREAT FRANK RICHARDS' YARN OF THE EARLY ADVENTURES OF THE CHUMS OF GREYFRIARS.

remembered the visit of Marjorie Hazeldene to Greyfriars. The Nabob of Bhanipur had not been at the school then. The girl had been great friends with the Removites.

"Yes. She says she's coming over on Wednesday afternoon."

"Good news!" said Bob Cherry heartily.

"Rather," said Nugent.

"Is she coming by train, Hazeldene?" asked Harry Wharton.

"No. My people are living only a few miles from Greyfriars now, and Marjorie is going to drive over. It will be jolly."

"If there's anything we can do to help to make it jolly," said Harry Wharton, "you've only got to tell us so."

"Rather!"

"The ratherfulness is great!"

"We'll do anything," said Bob Cherry. "We are yours to command, Vaseline, and don't forget it!"

Hazeldene laughed.

"I won't forget it." He put the letter in his pocket. "By the way, have you chaps heard of the new building that's being put up by the river?"

"Yes; we're just going down to have a look at it. Coming along?"

"Yes," said Hazeldene, and he walked on beside Harry Wharton. "I've heard a curious thing about that, too."

"What is it?"

"You remember those foreign chaps who used to be at Greyfriars—they came at the same time as Hurree Singh?"

"I remember."

"Well, I hear that they're coming to the new place near Greyfriars, and that the two schools are to be run in connection. You remember what fearful rows there were when they wore in the Remove Form here. The Head found it wouldn't do. Now the idea is to run a sort of branch establishment with the alons in it."

"There may be something in it," said Harry Wharton thoughtfully. "I shouldn't be sorry to see them again, either. Some of them were very decent, especially Fritz Hoffman and Adolphe Meunier. Things will be lively if they come down again."

"I fancy they will. It's only a rumour; but I think there's something in it!"

The chums of the Remove crossed a corner of the ancient Close and passed through the Cloisters. Beyond was a gate in the old stone wall, and on the other side of this the plantation which grew down to the banks of the Sark.

The sounds of workmen busy working could be heard, and there was a crash of a falling tree. The little gate in the wall was fastened with rusty bolts, and was never used. It did not take the chums of the Remove long to climb over it.

A curious sight met their gaze.

A large number of trees had been felled, and a glimpse of the winding river could now be had from the school wall. Workmen were busy under the direction of a shouting foreman. It was evident that the ground was being cleared for a new building.

"They will be jolly close neighbours," Bob Cherry remarked. "When the building is up, there will only be the Cloisters between us."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"They will be some time putting it up, though."



Billy Bunter wedged the chisel under the lid of the mysterious box and wrenched hard. Snap! The lid flew up, and so did a cloud of cayenne pepper! "Atchoo!" sneezed the astonished Owl. "Atchoo!"

Hurree Singh uttered a sharp exclamation.

"Look, my worthy chums!"

The nabob's dusky finger pointed to a figure in Etons standing beside a cart, with hands in pockets, gazing at the work of demolition.

Hurree Singh slid off the gate.

"It is the esteemed rotter, Hoffman."

"By Jove," exclaimed Bob Cherry, "so it is! It's Fritz Hoffman, who was hero with the German chaps, and who wrecked our study."

Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh was running towards his old acquaintance.

Hoffman, the burly, good-tempered German lad who had been well liked during his stay at Greyfriars, did not see him. He was standing looking on with great interest at the felling of a tree, and was not aware of the proximity of the Greyfriars fellows.

Hurree Singh, in the exuberance of his joy at seeing a familiar form again, rushed up to the German and hugged him round the neck. Hoffman gave a startled cry.

"Mein gootness, vat vas tat after?" he ejaculated.

He staggered under the shock of the sudden embrace.

"My worthy chum—"

But Hoffman had caught his foot in a root as he staggered, and went down in a heap, with the excited Nabob of Bhanipur sprawling over him.

"Ow! Mein Himmel! Mein pack is prok! Ow!"

"My worthy friend," gasped Hurree Singh. "I am joyfully glad to—"

"You villain tat throw me ofer! I gif you trashing!"

"The thrashfulness to a chumful friend—"

"I gif you peans!"

The German, who could hardly be expected to guess that he had been bumped over with the friendliest motives in the world, gripped Hurree Singh round the neck, and rolled over on the ground with him.

"Now I gif you peans!"

"Ow! My esteemed friend, please do not inflict the smitfulness of the fist on my honourable nose. Ow! My worthy nose is full of great painfulness now! Rescue, my worthy chums!"

Harry Wharton and his companions, laughing too much to be able to run very fast, arrived on the scene, and Harry jerked Hoffman off the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Hold on, old chap—"

"I hold on to tat nigger—"

"Cheese it!" said Cherry. "What the dickens have you got to fight about, you sausage devourer?"

"I fights him mit fist for pumping me on the ground."

"It was an unfortunate accident," wailed the nabob, sitting up and nursing his nose tenderly. "I rushed to you, hearty glad to bestow the greatfulness, and then you hammered my worthy nose with your esteemed fist."

The German lad grinned.

"Den I vas mistaken mit myself after," he remarked.

"That is the casefulness."

"You gif me friendly greeting and I pounce your nose. I vas sorry."

The nabob staggered to his feet.

"The sorrowfulness of my esteemed acquaintance is very gratifying, but it does not remove the painfulness from the smitten nose."

"You nearly break my peastly pack mit yourself."

"The regretfulness is terrific."

"Oh, you can call it a draw," said Harry Wharton. "Your nose matches Hoffman's back, Inky. But what are you doing down here, Hoffman?"

"I? I haf come to stay at Greyfriars until der new school was retty."

"Then it's really true?"

"Vat is really true?"

"You chaps are coming back?"

"Ja, ja! Ve come to stay in tat puilding ven it is puilt," said Hoffman.

"I come to stay at Greyfriars until den. I look at tat place pefore I come to te school after. I joost arrive mit de train at Friardale, ain't it."

"And you're coming back into the Remove?" asked Nugent.

"Ja, ja!"

"Any more of your fellows coming?"

"Tat I know not. But I know tat I vas hungry after my journey pefore, and I vas glad to haf something to eat mit myself after."

"Oh, come along!" said Harry Wharton. "We'll stand a feed on this joyful occasion. Can you get over the gate?"

The German sniffed.

"Ach! I could joomp over te gate if I like mit myself."

It was a small gate in the wall, and certainly a good athlete could have jumped it; but the chums of the Remove knew what Hoffman did not—that a late fall of rain had made a huge puddle on the inner side of the gate.

Bob Cherry shook his head solemnly.

"You think you could jump that gate. Hoffy?" he asked, cocking his eye thoughtfully at the gate, and then at the German.

"Ach! I say tat I easily joomp it."

"Bot you don't do it!"

"I do not make pets, but I—"

"Well, I don't want you to; that was only a figure of speech," said Bob Cherry. "Bot you don't jump that gate."

"I vill joomp it easily after."

"But what about the waterfulness—"

Nugent stamped on his toe.

"Ow! My tooful extremity is crushed! Ow!"

"Oh, dry up! Are you going to jump it, Hoffy?"

"Ja, ja! I easy joomp it pefore."

"Then do it and don't talk so much about it. You can take a run, and we'll get on the wall to watch you," said Nugent.

"Tat is all right after."

"Come on, you chaps, and let's see the wonderful performance," said Bob Cherry. "I'll wager anybody's money that Hoffy is sorry he tried it."

"Rather."

"But the waterfulness—"

Nugent seized Hurree Singh by the arm and dragged him away. The chums of the Remove climbed on the wall on either side of the little gate, and sat straddled there to watch the German's jump.

They had a view of both sides of the gate now—Hoffman on one side and the deep puddle on the other. The gate being a solid structure, Hoffman could not see what was waiting for him. He was retreating to take a good run for the jump.

It looked an easy one for an athletic fellow, but he meant to make sure, and to clear the gate well in order to show the unbelieving Greyfriars fellows what he really could do in the jumping line.

"But, my esteemed friends, you have forgotten the waterfulness of the puddle on the inner side of the gate," said Hurree Singh. "Our Germanful friend vill land in the water and make himself covered with wetfulness."

"You inky ass, that's the joke!"

The nabob comprehended at last, and his dusky face beamed.

"Ah, I perceive! I did not observe the great jokefulness before, my worthy chums. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't cackle, or you'll give the game away!"

"The cacklefulness will be terrific when Hoffman has made the honourable jump."

"Yes, rather."

"Here he comes."

"Now look out for the jumpfulness."

Fritz Hoffman was taking his run.

He came towards the gate in great style, and rose to the leap, clearing the gate by a good six inches.

Then he landed on the other side.

There was a terrific splash and muddy water spurted up on all sides, and Hoffman gave a roar.

"Ach! Himmel!"

The shock was a startling one. Hoffman was simply smothered in muddy water, and the Removites on the wall roared with laughter.

"Ach!"

The German boy stumbled in the pool and sat down, and there was another splash.

"Ach! I am vet! Ach!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You peastly peasts! You know tat de vater tere, and you make this great choke mit yourselves pefore!" roared Hoffman.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The jumpfulness was great, but the jokefulness was terrific!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You peastly pounders!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fritz Hoffman

crawled out of the puddle. He was splashed and muddy all over, and looked rather limp. The boastfulness seemed to be quite gone.

"Ach! Tat is vat you call rotten!" he grunted.

"Ven I gets mein party to tat place, I makes you all sit up mit yourselves after!"

Harry Wharton slid off the wall.

"Well, you said you could jump it," he remarked.

"Look before you

leap' is an old proverb and a good one. But come along and we'll clean you and feed you!"

"He needs it!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"The needfulness is only equalled by the mudfulness of our worthy friend."

And Fritz Hoffman was marched into the school by the chums of the Remove.

And a good feed in Study No. 1 was all that was required to restore fully his good-humour.

### Bulstrode Contributes!

THE chums of the Remove had of late been in a state which Bob Cherry described as "broke to the wide," but that was altered now. Fresh supplies of pocket-money had come in, and the famine in cash was over. The result was seen in the study feed given in honour of the return of Fritz Hoffman to the fold.

On the occasion of a feed, Billy Bunter was generally very much to the fore. He would feed with anybody, friend or foe, only making one condition on any occasion—that there was grub and plenty of it. There was plenty now; but, strange to say, Billy Bunter for once did not show so keen and intense an interest in a feed as he was wont to do.

He cooked the eggs and bacon and sausages, but in a perfunctory manner. He ate enough for any three juniors, but his brow was thoughtful all the time, and he evidently was not bestowing his whole attention on the meal.

Fritz Hoffman, who knew him of old, looked at him curiously once or twice.

"Vat was te matter mit Bunter?" he asked at last.

Bunter started out of a reverie.

"I'm thinking out of a new idea," he said.

"Bunter is getting up a fishing competition," explained Harry Wharton.

"He's going to offer prizes for the largest number of angles found in Euclid."

"Nothing of the sort, Wharton. The idea is to give prizes to the best anglers for the biggest fish caught, and the greatest number of fish. The prizes will be supplied by—by—I don't quite know who yet. But any fellow who has anything to give away will be allowed to contribute without paying anything."

"That's liberal of you, Bunter," grinned Bob Cherry.

"Well, I'm rather a liberal chap," said Bunter. "Hoffman can enter the competition if he likes. We don't bar anybody, even measly aliens."

"Vat is tat?" asked Hoffman, starting to his feet so suddenly that Billy Bunter jumped and knocked over his cup of tea with his elbow into Bob Cherry's lap. Bob jumped up with a howl.

"Ow! You scalded me!"

"I'm sorry, Cherry; but it was all Hoffman's fault for making me jump like that."

"You young Owl—"

"It's no good blaming me. I've already explained that it was Hoffman's fault. He made me jump so suddenly."

"You call me—"

"I didn't call you. I was just saying—"

"You call me measly alien—"

"No, I didn't. I said we don't bar measly aliens. That wasn't calling you one, was it? You've no business to jump up like a jack-in-the-box and make me spill my tea over Bob Cherry's

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trousers. It's the last cup there was in the pot, and now I shall have to go without."

"What about my trousers?" roared Bob Cherry, mopping himself down with his handkerchief.

"I'm very sorry, Cherry."

"I shall have to go and change them!" growled Bob. "I've a good mind to knock your two silly heads together."

"You will not knock mein head together."

Bob Cherry stamped out of the study.

"As I was saying," said Billy Bunter, "we don't bar anybody in the fishing competition, and all you chaps can come in. I'm going to make up the prize list soon, and I think it will be really an imposing one."

"Vere vill I get prizes come from after?"

"They will have to be contributed, as I said. There are lots of things that would do. I am thinking of putting up my dumb-bells as a prize. They cost fifteen shillings, and they will make a ripping first prize. If the other fellows won't contribute I shall buy the rest of the prizes myself."

Hoffman stared at him.

"Vere vill you get to money? I remember mit meinselb tat you neffer had to money ven I vas at Greyfriars pefore after."

"Yes, I think I was rather short of money at that time, but I'm expecting a postal order to-morrow, and that will set me on my feet again financially," explained Bunter. "There has been some delay in that postal order coming, but it is pretty certain to turn up to-morrow morning; so that will be all right."

"The all-rightfulness will be great if the postal order turns up triumphfully," said Hurree Singh. "Then everything will be gardenfully lovely. But if it does not come—"

"Oh, it's no good discussing a remote contingency like that!" said Bunter. "It's pretty sure to come. But if I offer a really first-class pair of dumb-bells,

some of you chaps ought to contribute something. Wharton's new bat, for instance—"

"Not much," said Harry, laughing.

"Well, I'll draw up the prize list and we'll get the things later," said Billy Bunter.

"Bulstrode has promised to come into the competition. He has offered to contribute a prize and he says he will send it into the study. I am rather curious to know what it is going to be. Bulstrode's people have lots of money, and so I think it is bound to be something rather decent."

The chums of the Remove grinned. They thought it very probable that Bulstrode was imposing upon the simplicity of the Owl of the Remove, but they did not say so. Harry Wharton rose. Tea was over, and it was time for prep to be done. Hoffman took his leave, and went to visit other acquaintances at Greyfriars. The chums of the Remove cleared the table. Bob Cherry came in and they settled down to work.

The juniors could work hard as well as play hard, and the Lower Fourth at Greyfriars was not a Form in which work could be shirked. Nothing was heard in the study for the next half-hour but steady breathing and the scratching of pens.

"Finished," said Bob Cherry at last. "I feel like a run in the Close now for a little fresh air."

There was a tap at the door and Hazeldene looked in. He had a small parcel in his hand, wrapped in brown paper and tied with string.

"Bunter here?" he asked, looking round.

"Yes, I'm here," said Bunter, blinking. "What do you want, Vaseline?"

"Bulstrode asked me to look in and bring you this," said Hazeldene.

"Oh, I see! It's Bulstrode's contribution to the prize list," said Billy Bunter, looking extremely pleased.

"I'm glad he hasn't forgotten. I half thought he was joking when he made the offer."

"Well, here it is," said Hazeldene. He put the parcel on the table and

left the study. Billy Bunter looked at the parcel and opened his penknife and cut the string. His fat face was beaming with satisfaction. He opened the brown paper in which the contribution to the prize list was carefully wrapped. A small wooden box was revealed. Billy Bunter tried to open the lid, but he could not. There was no lock, but the lid was fast to the box.

"That's curious," said Harry Wharton: "the lid has been glued down!"

"I suppose there's something very valuable in the box," said Bunter. "There isn't a lock, you see, and I dare say Bulstrode knew he couldn't trust Vaseline."

"Oh, cheese that!"

"Well, you know Vaseline isn't over honest. You know—"

"I know you're an ass! Why don't you open the box?"

"I'm just going to. The lid will have to be prised up, you see. Will you lend me your knife, Nugent?"

"Why don't you use your own?"

"It might break the blade."

"Why, you young villain! Suppose you broke the blade of mine?" said Nugent wrathfully.

"Well, you see—"

"I'm not going to lend you my knife."

"I think you're very selfish, Nugent. Still, I suppose I must open the box somehow," said Bunter. And he inserted the blade of his knife under the lid and tried to prise it up. Snap!

The box did not open, but the blade snapped off the knife. Billy Bunter cast a glance of deep reproach at Nugent.

"Perhaps you will lend me your knife now, Nugent."

"Perhaps I won't!" said Nugent.

"Why don't you try a chisel?" said Harry, laughing. "There's one in the cupboard."

"I think you might have thought of that before I broke my knife, Wharton. Give me out the chisel, will you, Inky?"

"Certainly, my worthy chum."

The nabob handed over the chisel and Billy Bunter jammed the sharp edge



The German junior cleared the gate by six inches and landed full in the puddle on the other side. "Ach, Himmel!" he yelled, as muddy water splashed all over him. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Famous Four.

under the lid of the box and wrenched. Snap! This time it was the box that gave way.

The lid flew up and so did a cloud of cayenne pepper, and the next moment Billy Bunter was coughing and sneezing like a maniac.

For a moment the chums of the Remove stared at him in amazement, and then they burst into a roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Atchoo—atchoo—atchoo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Gorr! Atchoo—atchoo—atchoo!"

Billy Bunter clasped his head in both hands and sneezed as if by steam. His spectacles fell off and his face streamed with tears as he sneezed and sneezed. The grinning juniors crowded back from the box. They were beginning to sneeze, too.

"Atchoo—what a beastly—atchoo—beastly trick!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "It's a surprise packet, Bunter. But I don't know how a prizewinner would feel when he gets that."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The contribution from Bulstrode was really a clever contrivance. A spring was arranged inside, something on the system of a "Jack-in-the-box," and was depressed by the lid. When the lid was removed it sprang up and scattered the pepper in the face of the person who opened the box.

"Atchoo! Atchoo!"

"It's rather a mean trick," said Harry Wharton. "But it's just like Bulstrode."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Atchoo—atchoo—atchoo! I shall never forgive Bulstrode for this beastly trick. Atchoo—atchoo—atchoo!"

"Go and stick your head in a bath of water," said Nugent sympathetically. "The bathfulness would be a wheezy good idea," said the Nabob of Bhanipur. "But the runfulness into anybody in the passage might lead to ructions."

"Choo—choo—choo! Ow!"

Billy Bunter rushed from the study, sneezing away, and the yells of laughter followed him.

"It's really a bit too rough on Bunter," said Harry, wiping the tears from his eyes. "I'm sorry, but—Ha, ha, ha!"

And the chums of the Remove yelled again.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

### A Catching Complaint!

**B**ILLY BUNTER had left his spectacles in the study, but his eyes were too full of water for him to have seen through them clearly, anyway. He rushed along the passage in the direction of the bath-rooms, and dashed right into a stalwart Sixth Former who was coming towards him.

It was Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars. Wingate had seen Bunter coming, but he did not step aside, naturally expecting the junior to do so. But Bunter did not see him, and he rushed right into him, and clasped him about the waist to save himself from falling.

"Ow, you fathead!" exclaimed Bunter. "What do you want to get in the way for?"

"You young rascal—"

"Oh, dear, is that you, Wingate? I'm sorry. I didn't know it was you. I should never have called you a fat-head if I thought you could hear me."

"What have you been doing—"

"Atchoo—atchoo—atchoo!"

"Have you got a cold?"

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"I—atchoo—I—I—atchoo—choo—"

"What do you mean by dashing into me like that?"

"I didn't see you. I really didn't—choo—choo—atchoo!"

Wingate began to sneeze himself. Bunter's waistcoat and jacket were thick with cayenne pepper. He had scattered a considerable amount over the captain of Greyfriars in the shock of the collision.

"You young rotter! You're—choo—choo—atchoo—you're smothered in pepper—atchoo—atchoo—you're—"

"It wasn't my fault, Wingate. I didn't mean to choo—choo—atchoo!"

"You—you—get out of my sight!"

Billy Bunter was only too glad to obey. He blundered along the passage, and Wingate went on his way sneezing and wrathful.

"Ach! Vat is te matter mit Punter after?"

It was the voice of Fritz Hoffman.

"Get out of the way!" yelled Billy Bunter desperately. "Get out—"

"Ach! I get not out of te vay for any Engleesh poy tat is in te school before!" said the German junior. "I tink—"

"You ass! I—atchoo!"

"Who you call ass, hein?"

Biff! Billy Bunter ran right into the obstinate German and clasped him round the neck.

"Now, you asked for it!" growled Bunter, rubbing his peppery head into Hoffman's face. "I hope you like it!"

"Ach! Himmel! Atchoo—atchoo—atchoo!"

"How do you like it?"

"Ach! I vill—atchoo—atchoo!"

Hoffman reeled against the wall, sneezing as if his head would come off, and Billy Bunter scuttled off, and reached the bath-room and shut himself in. To put his burning face under the tap was the work of a moment. The gush of cold water relieved him somewhat, but he sneezed and sneezed.

A minute more and Fritz Hoffman was hammering at the door.

"Open tat door after!"

"Atchoo—atchoo!" replied Bunter.

"I vill duck you mit yourself in te path, ain't it. I vill vipe up te floors mit you. I will pulverise you before!"

"Go and eat coke!" yelled Bunter, safe behind the locked door.

"I vill—"

"Hallo, Hoffman! Anything wrong?"

The chums of the Remove had followed Bunter, thinking he might come to some harm in his blind career. Hoffman's hammering at the door drew them to the spot.

The German glared round.

"Ja! I—atchoo—I have been made to sneeze mit meinselb by tat poy Punter. I have sneezes as if I plow mein kopf off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I vipes up te floors mit Punter after!"

"It wasn't his fault," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "He's had a trick played on him. He isn't doing it for fun, you know."

"I care not. I vipes up te floors mit Punter!"

"That you don't!" said Bob Cherry. "Bunter's been through it quite enough, without having a fat German on his neck."

"Who you call fat Sherman?"

"You, my pippin!"

"I vipes up te floors mit you after I vipes up te floors mit Punter before!"

"Oh rats!" said Bob Cherry cheer-

fully. "You're not going to wipe up any floors with Bunter!"

"I vipe up te floors—"

"The wifeplfulness will be a boot on the other foot!" said Hurree Singh, shaking his head. "Our worthy and esteemed German friend will have the honourable march of the frog if he does not what you call simmer downfully!"

"You inky peast—"

"What is the disputing here?"

Mr. Quelch was bearing down on the juniors, and there was a gleam in the eye of the Remove-master.

"If you please, sir," said Hurree Singh, "we were having the little argumentfulness, and have terrific regretfulness that it should have disturbed the serenity of our honoured and revered instructor sahib."

The instructor sahib frowned.

"You know you must not dispute in the passages. Go away at once, all of you, and don't let me hear any more of this!"

"The hearfulness of the honoured sahib is the obeyfulness—"

"You may go!"

And the juniors went. But it was a quarter of an hour before Billy Bunter ventured out of the bath-room, and then he kept a wary eye open for Fritz Hoffman.

### The Prize List!

**F**IRST prize, a splendid pair of dumb-bells, cost fifteen shillings—

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What are you mumbling about, Bunter?"

Billy Bunter looked up and stopped chewing his pencil for a moment. He was sitting on a bench under the elms, with a paper on his knee, and was evidently in the throes of some sort of composition.

"Hallo, Cherry!"

"What are you muttering about?"

"I'm making up the prize list for the fishing competition."

"Good! How are the prizes going on?" said Bob Cherry with a grin. "I suppose you are going to put Bulstrode's surprise-packet at the top of the list?"

"I'm not going to do anything of the sort!"

Bob Cherry laughed. It was the day after the pepper incident, and a half-holiday, and a fine afternoon. Bob Cherry was dressed with unusual care.

His cap was straight on his curly head for once, his collar quite clean, and his necktie neatly tied.

"Well, let's hear what the prizes are," said Bob, "and I'll see if I'll go in for the fishing competition."

"First prize, a splendid pair of dumb-bells, cost fifteen shillings. Second prize, a pocket-knife with three blades, a corkscrew, tin-opener, file, and scissors."

"That's worth having," said Bob Cherry. "It wouldn't be any good to me, though, as I've got one exactly like that."

Billy Bunter coloured a little, for some reason, and went on hastily:

"Third prize, a magnificent new cricket bat—"

"That would just suit me, and the pocket-knife would suit Wharton. He doesn't want a bat, as he just had a new one from his uncle."

"Fourth prize, a 'Golden Queen' bicycle lamp, almost new—"

"One like Nugent's, I suppose?"

"Fifth prize, a set of ivory chess, carved in India, beautiful workman-

ship—"

"My hat! Has Hurree Singh given you his chess as a prize—"

"Sixth prize—"  
"Wait a minute!" said Bob Cherry suspiciously. "Where are you getting all these prizes from?"

"Oh, they will be contributed!"  
"By whom?"  
"Oh, various fellows!" said Billy Bunter evasively.

Bob Cherry's hand dropped heavily on the Owl's shoulder.

"Look here, Bunter, whose set of chess are you offering as a prize?"

"Oh, of course, they belong to Hurree Singh!"

"Has he given them to you?"  
"Well, not exactly."

"Whose new bat is it—Wharton's?"  
"Well, of course, Wharton wouldn't be mean about a thing like that—"

"Whose bicycle lamp—Nugent's?"  
"Nugent couldn't object to making a contribution to a scheme that will bring a lot of kudos to the study—"

"And whose pocket-knife?" howled Bob Cherry. "Whose pocket-knife, you young brigand? Mine, I suppose!"

"If you're going to make a fuss about a pocket-knife, Cherry—"

"Then it's mine?"  
"If you like to offer it as a prize—"

"But I don't like, you blithering young ass!"

"Oh, very well, I will cross that off!" said Billy Bunter resignedly. "It's a great pity to have a good idea spoiled through a little meanness on the part of one's friend, I think."

Bob Cherry grinned.

"You'd better cross the rest off," he said. "The best thing you can do with that prize list is to burn it."

"Oh, I shall be able to work up the prizes!" said Bunter confidently.

"Even if you fellows are so horribly mean as to refuse to contribute a few things, my postal order will very likely come in time, and, even if it doesn't, there's the entrance fees—"

"Oh, are you going to charge entrance fees?"

"I didn't intend to at first, but, upon the whole, I think it will be imperative, to cover the expenses of the competition."

"What expenses will there be?"

"Well, I shall have to expend a certain proportion of the entrance fees in purchasing prizes," said Bunter. "And then there are, of course, my time and trouble to be paid for."

"Oh, of course!"

"I give the idea itself for nothing, without making any charge whatever. But I think ten bob for the trouble of getting up the competition wouldn't be out of the way."

"Not a bit of it. But how many fellows have entered as yet?"

"Well, as a matter of fact, no one has entered yet—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You needn't snigger, Cherry. The idea hasn't had time to work yet. I expect a big rush of entrants when I get the prize list posted up on the notice-board."

"You'd better put a footnote on it. 'Come early to avoid the crush,'" said Bob Cherry, grinning. "Bunter, my boy, I don't think there will be any necks broken over it. Hallo, Nugent, I see you've got a new necktie on!"

Nugent joined them under the elms. He coloured slightly at Bob Cherry's remark.

He certainly had a new necktie on, and he was wearing his straw hat instead of a cap, and his clothes were nicely brushed.

"What's the row, Nugent? You look as neat as a new pin."

"Well, you're looking rather tidy yourself," said Nugent, glancing at Bob. "Your cap is on straight, and your boots are not muddy."

"Well, you see—"  
Nugent chuckled.

"Same here. I don't want Hazeldene's sister to see me looking dowdy."

"That's it. She'll be here soon."

"May as well get down to the gates. Of course, we don't want to be too forward about the matter, but there's no harm in being on the spot to take your hat off, is there?"

"Not at all. I was just thinking the same."

"Come on, then."

"I say, you fellows—"

But Billy Bunter was left talking to the desert air. Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent strolled down to the gates of Greyfriars.

"What do you think about my cap?" said Bob Cherry. "Think I had better run in and change it for a straw?"

Nugent hesitated.

"Say what you think, old chap," said Bob Cherry. "It won't take me many minutes. I was rather doubtful about it when I put the cap on, only a fellow feels so much more comfy in a cap."

"Well, Bob, a straw does look a little more—more attentive," said Nugent. "A fellow looks better raising a straw than snatching a rag off his head."

"I think—Hallo, here's Wharton! He's got a straw on."

Harry Wharton joined them. Harry was always clean and tidy in his person, and his clothes were always in good order; but he also showed a little more improvement on the present occasion.

His collar had evidently just been taken out of the box, his necktie was neat and straight.

"I say, Wharton, what do you think about changing my cap for a straw?" asked Bob Cherry anxiously. "I see you've got yours on."

Harry Wharton smiled.

"You look all right, Bob."

"A straw would look a little more as if we were making a festive occasion of it," Nugent remarked.

"Marjorie Hazeldene wouldn't notice, I expect," said Harry. "Besides, Bob looks best in a cap."

"I feel more comfy," admitted Bob Cherry. "Hallo, hallo, hallo, look at Hurree Singh!"

"My hat!" murmured Nugent.

"What a giddy toff!"

Hurree Singh was indeed arrayed in really striking manner. As Bob Cherry remarked aside:

"Solomon in all his glory wasn't in it with Hurree Singh just then."

The nabob's clothes fitted like a glove all over, his top-hat was glistening in the sun, but not more brightly than his highly polished boots. He had a spotless white collar, and a pair of gloves in his hand. His coat was adorned with a big rose. The nabob's dusky face glowed with pleasant anticipation as he came up.

"I see you are waiting at the gateful entrance for Miss Hazeldene," he remarked. "Do I look nicely resplendent, my chums?"

"You do," said Nugent. "You look nicely resplendent and resplendently nice. I never saw such a black-and-white picture before."

"It shows the respectfulness to the charming visitor to be dressed in the style of the swellful elegance."

"You take the cake, Inky, and no mistake. Here comes Hazeldene!"

Hazeldene joined them. He grinned at the sight of the resplendent nabob, and nodded to the chums of the Remove.

"I'm expecting my sister any minute," he said, stepping out of the sun into the shadow of the gateway.

"What are all you fellows waiting here for?"

"Well, we thought we'd get out of the sun," said Nugent. "No harm in just raising a chap's hat as Miss Hazeldene comes in, is 'hare?"

Miss Hazeldene's brother laughed.

"Not at all. Marjorie will take it as a compliment. Hallo! I can hear wheels on the road."

The juniors made a quick forward movement to meet the coming vehicle outside the gates. Hazeldene touched Harry Wharton on the arm. Harry looked at him, and was surprised to see a troubled look on Hazeldene's face.

"Anything the matter?" he asked.

"No, only—only—"

Hazeldene broke off, the colour deepening his cheeks.

"Only what?"

"Only I know it's not necessary to say it; but—don't let Marjorie have a hint of—that moneylender business, you know—"

Harry Wharton coloured.

"You surely don't think I should allow a word to pass my lips in connection with your dealings with Isaacs!" he exclaimed.

"Don't be ratty. I know you wouldn't, but—"

"It's all right. I'll be careful, if that's what you mean."

"You got me out of a fearful hole, and I'm grateful. But if a word came to Marjorie's ears—"

"No word will ever come to your sister's ears from me."

"I know I can rely upon you. But—

but there are others."

"If the other fellows know anything, they won't breathe a word."

"There's Bunter."

Harry Wharton looked thoughtful. Harry had made a great sacrifice to save Hazeldene from the clutches of Ikey Isaacs, the moneylender, of Dale, and he had succeeded in his object; and the one-time cad of the Remove had certainly turned over a new leaf. But, in spite of Harry's efforts to keep the whole matter a secret, there was not much doubt that Billy Bunter, who minded everybody's affairs, had an inkling of the business.

"Then we must see that Bunter does not talk to your sister."

"He is sure to talk to her a bit. I suppose, and that young chatterbox is always saying the wrong thing. Do you think it would do any good your speaking to him?"

"I don't know. I will if you like."

"I wish you would," said Hazeldene nervously. "He takes more notice of anything you say than what anybody else says. Tell him you'll lick him if he says a word; make him promise to be careful."

"I will if you like. It might have some effect."

"Here's Marjorie."

An open landau had halted in the road, and a slim, girlish figure was stepping out, her sunny, charming face shaded by a wide hat.

(How Bunter's tattling tongue nearly causes trouble, and how his competition fares, go to make next week's Greyfriars yarn a real winner. Look out for it.)

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## THE SCHOOLBOY RAIDERS!

(Continued from page 21.)

tackle Gordon Gay. My belief is that Mellish would lie low, and sneak quietly out of the dorm after the raiders were gone. Then he could have got to the footer ground just about the time he did."

"Didn't I say that Kerr would work it out?" chirruped Figgins triumphantly.

Kerr dropped on his hands and knees beside Arthur Augustus' bed and carefully scanned underneath. He uttered a sudden triumphant exclamation.

"Look there!"

All the fellows bent down beside the bed and looked. The dormitories at St. Jim's were kept as clean as new pins; if the maids had left a speck of dust under the beds after sweeping, the House dame would have been on the warpath at once. But under D'Arcy's bed there were several traces of muddy boots. The "sign" was slight, but it was quite enough.

"That's a cert!" said Tom Merry soberly. "Someone—Mellish or somebody else—has been here, and has taken Gussy's banknote. It was very likely Mellish, though we can't prove it. But whoever it was, it wasn't Gordon Gay. It was a St. Jim's chap!"

"Yans, wathah!"

"We ought to bring it home to him somehow," said Lowther.

"Can't you do some more thinking, Kerr?" demanded Figgins hopefully.

Kerr grinned.

"There's only one way," he said. "I don't know that it would answer—but if Mellish was the chap, we might pin him down. Let's try, anyway."

The juniors descended to the Fourth Form passage. What scheme might be in Kerr's active brain they could not guess, but they were content to follow his lead, after what he had accomplished already. Kerr knocked at the door of Mellish's study and entered, followed by the crowd of juniors.

Lumley-Lumley, Levison and Mellish, and Blenkinsop were all there, doing their preparation.

"Hallo!" said Lumley-Lumley.

"What's the trouble?"

"We've come to see Mellish," said Kerr.

"Found that banknote yet?" yawned Mellish insolently. "Did Gordon Gay own up about taking it before he chucked you out?"

"We've found out for certain that Gordon Gay didn't take it," said Tom Merry.

"Got proof?" asked Mellish with a sneer.

"Yes, we've got proof," said Kerr. "Now we're going to ask you some questions."

"I'm not going to answer them," said Mellish, rising to his feet. "If you don't get out of my study, I'll call a prefect."

"Lock the door," said Kerr calmly.

Tom Merry turned the key in the lock. Mellish gave a hopeless glance towards the door, but escape was impossible.

"We're going to ask you questions, Mellish," said Kerr. "If you don't answer them, we shall take it as a confession. Then you know what you'll get."

Mellish backed away in alarm. "Look here!" he said, in a more conciliatory tone. "I'm willing to tell you anything you like, but I've got nothing to tell."

"What were you doing under D'Arcy's bed, then?" asked Kerr. Mellish almost fell down at the question.

"D-D'Arcy's bed!" stammered Mellish. "Yes."

"You can't prove it!" yelled the cad of the Fourth. "You're trying to bounce me. You know I was watching the footer match."

"Hand me your cigarette-case!" said Kerr.

"My what—what—"

"Don't deny that you carry cigarettes about you," said Kerr. "We all know it. I'm not a prefect, and you needn't mind admitting it to me."

"I haven't a case!" growled Mellish. "I carry a few in my pocket, that's all."

"Exactly! Give me all you have about you."

Mellish fumbled in his jacket pockets, and drew out half a dozen

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cigarettes, and passed them over to Kerr. Kerr examined them carefully.

"Wild Columbine!" he said. "Exactly! Now look at this."

Kerr held out a cigarette in his right hand, holding Mellish's supply in his left. He had put his right hand into his pocket first, and there was not a fellow in the study who did not take it for granted that he had taken that cigarette from his pocket.

"Look at that!"

Mellish looked at it.

"Same as yours?" said Kerr.

"I suppose so," said Mellish, puzzled.

"He admits it, you fellows."

"Suppose I do?" howled Mellish.

"It's nothing to do with me if you've got cigarettes in your pockets the same as mine, is it?"

"It isn't mine," said Kerr quietly.

"All the fellows know that I don't smoke. What I want you to explain is—how a cigarette the same make as yours came to be under D'Arcy's bed in the dormitory?"

"I—I—I—"

"Well?" said Kerr grimly.

"I—I—I— Levison has the same kind of cigarettes?" stammered Mellish.

There was a yelp from Levison.

"Don't try to put it on me, you cad! I was out all the afternoon, and you know it!"

"It was you suggested larking with D'Arcy's banknote!" Mellish howled desperately. "It was only a lark, anyway."

"You admit it?" demanded Kerr. "It was only a—a joke," mumbled Mellish. "You know jolly well that I wasn't going to keep the banknote. I shouldn't be idiot enough to keep a numbered note—I—I mean, you know I wouldn't steal. You all know that."

"I'm not so sure of that, if you had a chance to do it safely," said Kerr, with a curl of the lip. "It wouldn't be much rotter than what you have done. But we admit that we don't suspect you of stealing it. But you took it, and we want to know what you've done with it."

"It's under the lining of D'Arcy's Sunday topper in his hat-box in his study," said Mellish.

Kerr tossed the cigarettes on the table.

"There are your smokes, you rotter! Well, you fellows, it's cleared up now."

"Bai Jove, how jolly lucky the wotah dwopped a cigawette undah my bed when he was there!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus.

"But you didn't tell us you found it there," said Tom Merry, puzzled.

Kerr laughed.

"I didn't find one there, you see," he explained.

"But you said—"

"I didn't say I found it there. I asked Mellish how it came to be under Gussy's bed in the dorm," said Kerr, with refreshing coolness; "that's quite a different thing. As a matter of fact it wasn't under Gussy's bed."

"But you had it in your pocket!" ejaculated Blake.

"Because I happened to put it there," said Kerr cheerfully. "The cigarette I showed Mellish was one of those he handed me. I had it in the palm of my hand when I put my hand in my pocket."

"Oh, Great Scott!"

"You see, as there wasn't any proof I had to catch him," said Kerr.

if he'd had a little more sense, and a little more nerve I shouldn't have bowled him out so easily. You don't seem to be pleased, Mellish."

Mellish ground his teeth.

"You rotter! You were spoofing me all the time."

"Exactly!" said Kerr coolly. "I was spoofing you all the time. Gussy, you can go and get the banknote out of your Sunday topper, and before we leave this study I think we ought to give Mellish a lesson about playing tricks with money and telling lies about it."

"Yes, rather."

Percy Mellish was collared and thrown face downwards across the study table, and then Lumley-Lumley's walking cane was borrowed.

The juniors wielded the cane in turn, and the cad of the Fourth roared under it, till Lumley-Lumley obligingly jammed a duster into his mouth. After that he gurgled and gasped while the lashes descended.

"I wathah think that will do, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"I suggest a vote of thanks to Kerr for thinkin' the mattah out in this weally nobbaw way, and then a visit to the Gwammah School to apologise."

"Passed unanimously!" said Tom Merry.

THE END.

(Next Wednesday: "THE LAST LAUGH!" You'll find that this lively story is one long laugh. Don't miss the fun and frolic when the rivals of St. Jim's go on the warpath!)

