

WHO IS THE BOY WHO KNOWS TOO MUCH? SEE INSIDE.

The GEM

2d



WILL YOU WALK INTO MY PARLOUR—?

THEY THOUGHT THEY WERE CLEVER ENOUGH TO FLEECE THEIR SCHOOLBOY GUEST
—BUT IT TURNED OUT HE WAS TOO SMART FOR THEM!

The Boy Who Knew



Rowing silently down the starlit river, the juniors came within sight of the Lodge. "Bai Jove, they're still up!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. A light was burning in one of the downstairs windows.

CHAPTER 1.

Thrashing Cutts!

"PWAY say no more, deah boys!"

"But—"

"I am wesolved!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy certainly looked very resolute as he made that statement. His elegant form was drawn up to its full height, his slim hands were clenched, and his eye gleamed behind his eyeglass.

Blake and Herries and Digby, the other occupants of Study No. 6 in the Fourth Form passage, looked at one another helplessly.

When Arthur Augustus mounted the high horse, it was next to impossible to get him to dismount.

And Arthur Augustus had mounted the high horse now with a vengeance. He was, as he declared, resolved.

"But you can't!" howled Blake.

"I shall twy!"

"Look here—" began Herries.

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"You are wastin' time, Hewwies! A D'Arcy always means what he says!" said Arthur Augustus, with great dignity. "Pway let me pass, Blake!"

"But I tell you—"

"Wats!"

"I tell you—" said Digby.

"Wats!"

Arthur Augustus pronounced that ancient and classic monosyllable so loudly and distinctly that it reached the ears of three juniors in the passage, and they promptly looked into the study. They were Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther of the Shell, otherwise the Terrible Three.

"You fags rowing again?" asked Monty Lowther in a severe voice.

Blake glared at him.

"Whom are you calling 'fags,' you Shell boulder?" Clear out!"

"Gussy's got 'em again!" growled Herries. "You can lend us a hand to hold him, if you like. He's jolly well not going to Cutts' study!"

"What has Cutts been doing now?" asked the Terrible Three altogether.

They were sympathetic at once. They had had many and many a rub with Cutts of the Fifth—Cutts, in fact, was their special enemy.

"He has been cuffin' my minah!" said Arthur Augustus loftily. "I wefuse to allow my minah to be cuffed by any swankin' wottah in the Fifth Form! I am goin' to thwash Cutts!"

The Terrible Three jumped.

"You're going to what?" gasped Tom Merry.

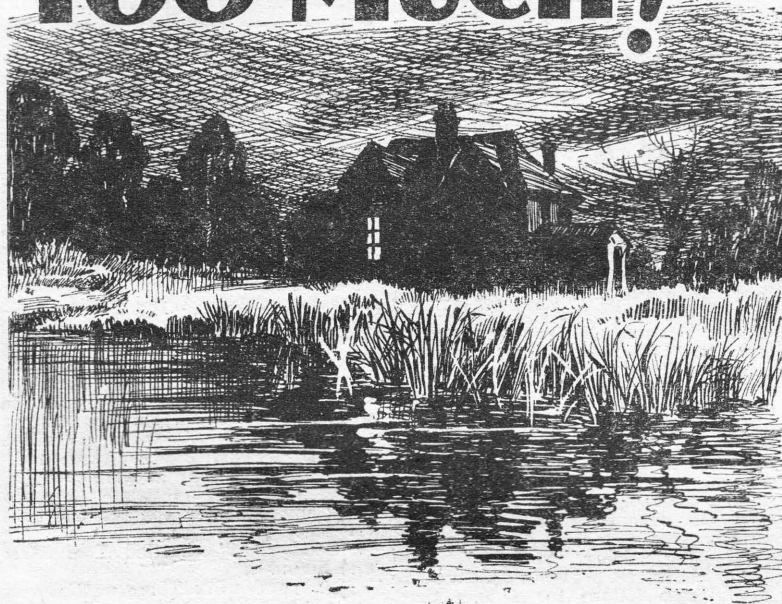
"Thwash Cutts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

If Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had stated his intention of thrashing Ben Foord or the celebrated Max Baer, it could not have struck the chums of the Shell as funnier. Cutts of the Fifth was, of course, a senior, and he was a very powerful fellow and a good boxer. There were few fellows in the Fifth, or the Sixth, either, who cared to have the gloves on with Gerald Cutts. For

HUMOUR . . SUSPENSE . . DRAMA . . IN A POWERFUL LONG HOLIDAY STORY OF
THE CHUMS OF ST. JIM'S.

Too Much!



by
**MARTIN
CLIFFORD**

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth Form to undertake to thrash him was a very remarkable enterprise.

But Arthur Augustus was in deadly earnest. Determination gleamed through his eyeglass.

"I fail to see any cause for laughter!" he said stiffly. "Cutts has been waggin' my minah, and I won't have Wally wagged!"

"But——" said Tom Merry.

"But——" gasped Manners and Lowther.

"I refuse to listen to any arguments upon the subject!" said Arthur Augustus, with a wave of the hand. "I am goin' to Cutts' study now, and there is goin' to be a feahful thwashin' for——"

"But who's going to get it?" gurgled Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You will see. When I have finished with Cutts," said Arthur Augustus, with a ferocious look, "his fiwends will have to gathah up the sewaps!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jack Blake sank into the armchair, to laugh more at his ease. Digby and Herries held on to the study table and roared. The Terrible Three seemed to be in danger of falling into hysterics. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy jammed his famous monocle a little more tightly into his eye, and stared round at the hilarious juniors with lofty indignation.

But as his lofty indignation only made them roar the louder, he strode out of the study, with his noble nose high in the air.

"Oh, my only sainted aunt!" Blake gasped, wiping away his tears. "Gussy will be the death of me some day!"

"Cutts will be the death of him to-day if he goes to his study and goes for him!" stuttered Lowther. "Good old Gussy!"

Blake jumped up.

"He musn't go, the duffer! After him!"

The juniors ran hastily out of the

study. They had no doubt that Gerald Cutts of the Fifth deserved a fearful thrashing—dozens of them, in fact; and if Arthur Augustus had been equal to the task, they would have speeded him on his journey with pleasure. But as the case stood, Arthur Augustus was going to look for trouble, and very bad trouble.

The swell of the Fourth was already half-way down the staircase.

"After him!" muttered Tom Merry.

The juniors dashed down the passage at top speed. By main force, if there were no other means, they intended to dissuade Arthur Augustus from his gallant but desperate enterprise.

It was by sheer bad luck that Mr. Railton, the Housemaster of the School House, happened to step out of a study just as the six juniors came down the passage in full career. Mr. Railton did

With nowhere to go for his holidays, Jerrold Lumley-Lumley welcomes Cutts' invitation to an attractive house party. He doesn't know that, by accepting, he is playing into the hands of an unscrupulous cardsharper!

not often visit Fourth Form studies; and how were Tom Merry & Co. to know he was there, and that he was just coming out? Clearly they could not possibly know, but it was very unfortunate, all the same.

For the six racing juniors crashed right into the Housemaster as he stepped suddenly into the passage. Mr. Railton was a stalwart man and an athlete, but he was not prepared for a shock like that. Neither were the juniors. Mr. Railton went over with a

crash, and six gasping juniors sprawled wildly over him.

"Wha-a-at!" ejaculated the Housemaster. "Bless my soul! What—what the——"

"Great Scott!"

"Oh, sir!"

"Sorry, sir!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Tom Merry & Co. scrambled off the Housemaster and got up. Mr. Railton, completely breathless, lay gasping.

The juniors forgot all about Arthur Augustus D'Arcy and Cutts of the Fifth. They thought only of the horror of their unintentional deed. Bumping a Housemaster over headlong in the passage was a decidedly serious matter.

They stood panting, and looking at the floored Housemaster. Tom Merry was the first to recall his presence of mind sufficiently to assist him to rise. He gave a helping hand to the Housemaster, and that gentleman sat up, gasping.

"What—what——" he panted. "Merry—Blake, what——" He gained his feet, with as much dignity as was possible under the circumstances. He was very flushed and very dusty, and breathing hard in jerks. "What does this mean? How dare you rush into me in this manner! Are you out of your senses?"

"So sorry, sir!" murmured Lowther.

"We didn't see you, sir!"

"Quite an accident, sir!"

"We were rather in a hurry——"

Mr. Railton was frowning darkly, which was not surprising under the circumstances.

"You should not rush down the passage in that way!" he said. "You should be more careful! You will take a hundred lines each!"

"Yes, sir!"

And Mr. Railton, shaking the dust from his gown, walked majestically away. The juniors looked at one another. A hundred lines each was a hundred lines, but they were glad to escape so cheaply.

"Luckily, it wasn't Selby or Linton!" murmured Monty Lowther. "More likely a hundred whacks than a hundred lines if it had been! Railton is a brick! I'm glad we bumped him over!"

"I've nearly busted my beastly nose on his beastly shoulder!" grunted Herries, dabbing his nose with his handkerchief. "All through that ass Gussy!"

"My hat! Where is Gussy?" exclaimed Tom Merry, remembering the swell of St. Jim's.

"Oh, he's gone, of course!"

"He's in Cutts' study long ago," growled Herries. "Well, he won't stay there long, I fancy."

"Let's go and look for him, anyway," said Tom.

The juniors made their way down to the next floor at a more moderate pace, Herries dabbing his nose as he went.

They reached the end of the Fifth Form passage; they did not need to go farther. There was the sound of a door opening, and a figure shot forth

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from Cutts' study, and a boot and part of a leg came into view for a moment behind it. The figure bumped on the floor; the boot and leg disappeared into the study again, and there was the slam of a door.

The figure picked itself up.

It was—but was it?—Arthur Augustus D'Arcy! The juniors gazed at it wide-eyed. Arthur Augustus had not been many minutes in Cutts' study—for the purpose of thrashing Cutts.

He had gone in a handsome and elegant youth—the best-dressed junior in all St. Jim's. He came out—

The change was amazing.

If Arthur Augustus had been through a mill, or under a motor-car, the change could hardly have been more surprising in his appearance.

His elegant clothes were rumpled and dusty; his jacket was split up the back; his collar and tie were gone; his hair was a mop. A stream of red ran from his nose, and one of his eyes was closed. His ears were very red, and seemed to have increased in size. He blinked round him in a very uncertain way, and ejaculated breathlessly:

"Bai Jove!"

"Gussy!" gasped Blake. "Is it you, Gussy?"

"Or your ghost?" stuttered Tom Merry. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What have you been doing?" shrieked Manners.

"Gwoogh! I've been thwashin' Cutts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Have you finished him?" sobbed Blake.

"N-no!" panted Arthur Augustus. "I have not quite finished him yet. I am goin' to finish him!"

He swung round towards the door of Cutts' study.

With one accord the juniors seized him and dragged him back.

Arthur Augustus struggled wildly in their grip.

"Let me go! Welase me, you wottahs! I'm goin' to finish thwashin' Cutts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let him live!" gasped Lowther.

"Spare him! As you are strong, be merciful, you know. Think of his aged parents. Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wufese to think of his aged pawents! Let me go! I am goin'—"

"My dear fathead, you're wrecked enough already!" moaned Blake.

"We're not going to have our champion lunatic quite slaughtered. Yank him away!"

"I wufese— I pwotest—"

"All hands—yank!" said Blake.

And Arthur Augustus was "yanked" away, still refusing and protesting. They did not release him till they had plumped him down in the armchair in Study No. 6. Arthur Augustus collapsed there in an exhausted condition.

The juniors stood round him on guard, grinning; but Arthur Augustus made no further attempt to escape. He had no breath left.

"Did you fairly pulverise him?" asked Blake, almost weeping.

"As a mattah of fact," gasped Arthur Augustus—"as a mattah of absolute fact, I did not have time to get weally started on him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pewwaps upon the whole, he is wathah big for me to tackle—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And I feel wathah a w'eck now—"

"You look it. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Howevah, I am goin' to finish thwashin' Cutts!"

Whereupon, Tom Merry & Co. pounced upon the warlike swell of the School House, and pinned him down in the chair, and sat upon him in a heap, and refused to move until he had promised, on the honour of a D'Arcy, not to thrash Cutts of the Fifth any more.

CHAPTER 2.

The Last Night of the Term!

"NO prep to-night!" announced Tom Merry joyfully.

St. Jim's was breaking up for the holidays on the following day. The Terrible Three of the Shell—and the other fellows for the most part—were anticipating the breaking-up with great pleasure. On the morrow the railways would be distributing them to the four corners of the United Kingdom, to meet again at St. Jim's after the vacation, and recount delightful experiences.

The Terrible Three were going together. Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther were to spend the vacation staying with one another alternately, in order not to separate. And they were to begin the vacation with the chums of Study No. 6, as the guests of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, at Eastwood House. On the morrow morning the seven juniors would be starting together, and they had done some of their packing already.

"Nothing doing to-night," Tom Merry continued. "We shan't see the New House fellows for a long time. Figgins & Co. will have time to forget that the School House is Cock House at St. Jim's."

"We'll remind 'em quick enough next term," said Monty Lowther cheerfully.

"But we ought to give them a last reminder before we break up," said Tom Merry thoughtfully. "No prep on the last night, and how can the time be better spent than in japing Figgins & Co.?"

"Echo answers how?" agreed Manners.

"Excuse me—echo should answer Co.!" remarked Lowther.

"Rats! Figgins & Co. are having a final feed in their study this evening to celebrate the breaking-up," Tom Merry observed. "Mrs. Taggles made a special pie for Fatty Wynn. I saw it before it was baked. It was a whacker! Nearly two feet across. She'll be sending it to Figgins' study pretty soon, I should think!"

Manners and Lowther grinned. Being unoccupied that evening, the last of the term, was, of course, a sufficient reason for japing their old rivals of the New House. For some weeks now they would not have any chance of ragging New House juniors, as Figgins & Co. were going in quite a different direction for their holidays; therefore, this last opportunity was not to be lost.

"But the New House bouncers will be keeping an eye on that pie!" said Manners, with a shake of the head. "Figgins & Co. will turn up in force to escort it to the New House. We shall have a battle royal to get hold of it."

"Well, a battle royal would finish up the term in great style!" grinned Tom Merry. "But I think we can get hold of it by strategy. When we've captured it, we'll ask Figgins & Co. to supper. Only fair to let them have a whack in their own pie!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let's go and scout, anyway!"

"Good egg!"

The Terrible Three sauntered along across the old quadrangle to the school

shop. A fat Fourth Former was in the shop talking to Mrs. Taggles. It was Fatty Wynn, the Falstaff of the New House.

"Not quite done yet, Mrs. Taggles?"

"Not quite, Master Wynn."

"All right. You'll send it across when it's finished?"

"Yes, Master Wynn, in about half an hour. I'll ask Taggles to bring it over."

"Good enough!" said Wynn.

And he rolled towards the door, and met the Terrible Three face to face. Fatty looked suspicious at once.

"Hallo! Celebrating the breaking-up—what?" asked Monty Lowther affably.

"Oh, a little bit of a feed!" said Fatty Wynn carelessly. "You go and eat coke in your mouldy old House."

And Fatty Wynn rolled away.

The chums of the Shell exchanged a grin. They had heard what passed between Fatty Wynn and Dame Taggles.

"In half an hour," murmured Lowther, "that whacking pie is to be taken across to the New House by the never-sufficiently-to-be-respected Taggles. He will pass under the elms on his way there. It is already dusk. It will be quite dark then. Suppose three understudies of Dick Turpin were ambushed under the elms? Suppose they rush forth and slaughter Taggles, and collar the pie?"

"Good egg!" chortled Tom Merry and Manners.

And the Terrible Three walked away in good spirits. Meanwhile, Fatty Wynn had returned to the New House, where his chums, Figgins and Kerr, met him in the doorway.

"Not ready yet?" asked Figgins.

"Half an hour; and those Shell bouncers from the School House are on the track, and I think they're going to lay for our pie," said Fatty Wynn. "We shall have to take half a dozen fellows to fetch it."

"Cheeky rotters!" growled Kerr.

"We'll collar them and duck them in the fountain if they lay hands on our pie!"

"Hold on!" murmured Figgins, with a gleam coming into his eyes. "Hold on! I've got an idea. They're going to lay for the pie when it's sent over, are they? Half an hour is plenty of time to get ready for those School House duffers. Come with me, my infants!"

For the next ten minutes Figgins & Co. were very busy. Then they might have been seen, as a novelist would say, proceeding cautiously to the tuckshop. After an interview with Dame Taggles, who smiled exceedingly, they strolled down to the porter's lodge.

There they had a little talk with Taggles, the porter. After that, they sauntered back to the New House, affecting not to notice three lurking shadows under the elms.

"There they go!" murmured Monty Lowther, as Figgins & Co. disappeared towards the New House. "Not a suspicious, my sons!"

"They seem very keen to know how the pie's getting on," remarked Manners. "I suppose that's what they've been to the tuckshop for. They'll be more interested still in its getting off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If they come down in an army to escort the pie home, we'll whistle up our crowd," Tom Merry remarked. "I've spoken to Study No. 6, and Kangaroo, Reilly, Hammond, and Dane. They're ready for the signal if they're wanted. That pie is coming into the School House

if we have to wreck the New House and strew Figgins & Co. in little pieces over the quad."

"Yes, rather!"

The chums of the School House were prepared for desperate measures. But desperate measures did not seem to be required. There was no sign of the New House fellows coming in strong force to escort the pie home. The half-hour had passed, and the trio, from their ambush under the elms, had seen Taggles, the porter, arrive from his lodge, and go into the shop. Evidently he was now going to take the pie to Figgins' study. And still there was no sign of Figgins & Co.

"Shush! Here comes Taggles!"

The portly form of the school porter could be seen advancing in the gloom from the direction of the tuckshop. Taggles carried a large basket in his hand, evidently containing the consignment for the New House. He came on under the dark shadow of the trees, and then there was a sudden rush.

Three shadowy forms closed in swiftly on Taggles—his arms were seized by two pairs of hands, and a third pair of hands grasped the basket and yanked it away.

Taggles was sat down on the turf gently but firmly, and left there gasping, as three swift forms disappeared towards the School House with the basket. Soft chuckles floated back to the ears of the school porter as he sat in the grass.

"Huh!" gasped Taggles, who was grinning, too. "Huh! I'd report 'em, only Master Figgins 'anded me a bob to take it quietly. I'd report the young raskils, 'andlin' a 'ard-workin' man like this 'ere! Huh!"

Quite unconscious of Taggles' reflection on the subject, the Terrible Three rushed towards the School House with their prize. In the doorway quite a crowd of juniors awaited them—the four chums of Study No. 6, and Kangaroo, Clifton Dane, Glyn of the Shell, and Hammond, Reilly, and Lumley-Lumley of the Fourth, and several others. They glanced eagerly at the heavy basket.

"Got it?" exclaimed Jack Blake.

"What-ho!"

"And the silly duffers weren't on the look-out?" grinned Kangaroo.

"No fear! Easy as falling off a form!" chuckled Tom Merry. "Figgins & Co. have been done quite brown, as easy as babes in the wood. Gentlemen, there will be a feed in my study to celebrate breaking-up! We are kindly provided with a magnificent pie by the generosity of our friends of the New House!"

"But we're going to ask Figgy to the feed—that's only cricket. Go and ask him nicely, Gussy. Tell him we've got a splendid pie—"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Arthur Augustus, chuckling, crossed to the New House, while Tom Merry & Co. bore the great pie in triumph to their study in the Shell passage.

CHAPTER 3.

Puzzle—Find the Pie!

F IGGINS & CO. were in their study in the New House. The study, as Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked into it, presented a festive appearance. There were preparations for a feed on a considerable scale. The table was laid for seven, with all

sorts and varieties of crockery and cutlery, and there was an unusually large number of chairs in the study.

Figgins, Kerr, and Fatty Wynn were chatting together.

"Time that pie was here," Figgins remarked, as Arthur Augustus tapped at the half-open door and stepped in.

"High time," agreed Kerr. "Is that you, Taggles? No; it is Gussy!"

"Top of the evening to you, Gussy!" said Figgins affably. "Have you seen anything of Taggles? He was going to bring us a pie, but he seems late."

"Pewwaps you'd bettah not wait for it, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus, with a sweet smile. "Vewy likely Taggles will be late. I've come ovah to ask you to a feed in the School House."

"You're awfully good," said Figgins; "but we're just going to have a feed here on our own. We've got a special pie coming, made by Dame Taggles' own fair hands, and it may come any minute now. Reddy and some of the fellows are coming, too, when the feed's here. You can stay and join us."

"Afraid I couldn't wait, deah boys," said D'Arcy, chuckling at the thought that he would have to wait a very long time if he waited in Figgins' study for the raided pie. "Pway come ovah to our House. We've got a pie ourselves—a weal whackah!"

"Not really?" said Figgins, in surprise.

"Yaas, wathah!"

Figgins & Co. exchanged grave glances.

"Shall we go?" said Figgins seriously. "We could put off our own feed till a little later, for that matter."

Kerr and Fatty Wynn smiled.

"Well, our pie isn't here," said Kerr. "If Gussy's got a pie, we may as well

begin on that. It's awfully good of Gussy!"

"Not at all, deah boys. It's the Shell chaps, weally, who are standin' the feed," said D'Arcy. "Tom Mewwy's got a pie—a weal whackah!"

"We'll come!" said Figgins.

"Wight-ho!"

And Figgins & Co. followed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy down the stairs, and out of the New House. They smiled and exchanged winks as they marched across the quadrangle. They had not expected to be invited to share the captured pie. But they were very glad to be on the scene—very glad indeed.

Tom Merry's study was crowded when Figgins & Co. reached it with Arthur Augustus. The chums of the School House were there in full. On the table stood the big basket, and Tom Merry was opening the wicker lid.

"Welcome, dear boys!" said Monty Lowther hospitably, as the New House trio came in.

"Awfully good of you!" said Figgins. "It's a curious coincidence, but we were expecting a pie ourselves just now, but Mrs. Taggles hasn't sent it yet."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Figgins & Co. looked round in surprise.

"What's the joke?" asked Figgins innocently. "Nothing funny in our expecting a pie, is there?"

"Certainly not!" said Tom Merry hastily. "These silly duffers cackle at anything! Cheese it, you fellows, and get some plates and things."

"That must be pretty nearly as big a pie as ours, from the size of the basket," Fatty Wynn remarked.

"Pwobably just the same size, deah boy!" smiled Arthur Augustus.

"Well, let's see it."

Tom Merry had removed a cloth



Three shadowy forms closed in swiftly on Taggles; his arms were seized by two of the figures and the third grasped the basket and yanked it away. "Huh!" gasped the astonished porter. "I'll report yer!"

covering from the interior of the big basket. He looked surprised as a wooden box was revealed.

"My hat, it's a box!" he exclaimed. "That's a jolly queer way of packing a pie!" said Manners.

"Jolly queer!" said Figgins. "I suppose you've really got a pie there, and you're not pulling our leg—what?" "Oh, it's here, right enough!" said Tom.

He lifted the wooden box out of the basket, and bumped it down on the table. It was very heavy. The box was nailed up.

"Well, I never saw a pie so carefully fastened up as that one before," said Figgins. "I hope Mrs. Taggles won't fasten up our pie like that. Rather too much of a good thing, in my opinion."

"Did that pie come from Mrs. Taggles?" asked Kerr.

"Yes. She made it herself." "Then why is it nailed up in a box?" "Blessed if I know!" said Tom, feeling a little perplexed himself. "Anyway, we'll soon have it out."

He selected a chisel from Lowther's tool-box, and wrenched off the lid of the wooden box. Straw packing was disclosed inside. Figgins & Co. burst into a laugh.

"Pie packed in straw!" chuckled Figgins. "Well, that beats the band! Blessed if I ever saw a pie packed in straw before!"

"Bai Jove, it is weally vevy peculiar! This must be an altogether new wheeze of Mrs. Taggles."

Tom Merry, with a mystified face, drew out a handful of the straw packing. As the pie really belonged to Figgins & Co. they should have known more about that extraordinarily careful packing than did Tom Merry & Co., but they were looking on with amused interest, as if they had never heard of such a thing before.

"Well, where's the blessed pie?" asked Blake, as the pile of unpacked straw rose higher and higher on the study table.

"Hallo! Here's something!"

Tom Merry's hand came in contact with something hard in the straw inside the box, and he drew it out. It was a brick! The juniors stared at it blankly.

"You're not going to eat that?" ejaculated Figgins.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Fatty Wynn.

Tom Merry groped desperately in the box. He dragged out two or three more bricks and an old boot. Then there was nothing left but straw.

"Well, my hat!" he ejaculated.

"Bai Jove! Is that the lot?"

"That's the lot!" growled Tom Merry.

"Extwaordinawy!"

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Figgins good-humouredly. "You've brought us over here for a feed, you know. Where's the pie?"

"There doesn't seem to be any pie!" gasped Tom Merry.

"Then you were pulling our legs all the time?"

"N-no! We—we thought there was a pie in the basket!" gasped Tom.

"Blessed if I understand it!"

Figgins shook his head solemnly. "Somebody's been japing you," he said.

"Somebody knew you had ordered a pie, and they've stacked that basket full of rubbish for a joke on you."

"But we didn't order the pie!" howled Tom Merry desperately. "We—we raided it! Somebody else must have raided the basket before we got hold of it, and left that rubbish in it."

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"Perhaps they've left a message for you in the basket, then," suggested Kerr. "If they've spoofed, you they'd leave a word to tell you so."

"They didn't spoof us!" growled Tom Merry. "They were spoofing you. This was your pie."

"Ours?"

"Yes. And somebody else must have been after it as well as us."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Figgins.

"Hallo! Here's a card in the straw!" exclaimed Kangaroo, who was groping in the box.

"Well, I'm off!" said Figgins, rather hastily. "It's pretty plain that there's not going to be a feed. I'm surprised at you. Ta-ta!"

Figgins & Co. left the study rather hurriedly. Kangaroo had felt a card in the straw, and he extracted it and read it, just as the New House trio quitted the study. He held it up for the juniors to read.

"Look at that!"

"My hat!"

"Gweat Scott!"

There was a roar of wrath in Tom Merry's study, for the card bore the inscription in big, daubed letters:

**"PUZZLE—FIND THE PIE!
WITH BEST WISHES FOR
SUCCESS
FROM FIGGINS & CO."**

The juniors stared at the card, and then at one another.

"My only hat!" roared Blake. "They knew you silly chumps were after the pie, and they planted this on you."

"M-my hat!" gasped Tom Merry. "That fat beast Wynn must have suspected us, after all. Where are those New House bounders? After them! We'll collar the real pie before they can get into their House."

Lowther dragged the door open, and the juniors rushed out in an excited crowd.

"Too late!" growled Tom.

He pointed to the window of Figgins' study. It was open, and the light streamed out into the quad. At the lighted window Redfern and Figgins appeared in full view, holding up a gigantic pie for the juniors in the quadrangle to see. Redfern had fetched the pie home while Figgins & Co. were in the School House.

"This is where we smile!" sang out Figgins. "Who's Cock House at St. Jim's?"

And the fellows in the study roared: "New House! New House!"

"Who's been done brown, and spoofed like a little kid?"

"Tom Merry! Ha, ha, ha!"

Then the window slammed down and the blind was drawn, and Figgins & Co. sat down to their feed, while Tom Merry & Co. returned to the School House with feelings that were altogether too deep for words.

CHAPTER 4.

The "Outsider"!

JERROLD LUMLEY-LUMLEY of the Fourth Form sat in his study alone.

There was a somewhat grim expression upon his face. Lumley-Lumley of the Fourth was looking forward to the breaking-up on the morrow with feelings very different from those of Tom Merry & Co.

The fellow who had once been known as the Outsider of St. Jim's was now one of the most popular fellows in the Lower School. The wild ways which

had earned him his nickname had been dropped long since. But Lumley-Lumley had never been, and would never be, quite like the other fellows.

His career before he came to St. Jim's would always leave its mark upon him. The fellow whose earliest years had been spent in wandering in strange countries with his father—then anything but a millionaire—had a store of strange experiences, a knowledge of life that the other juniors could not share.

In those wild days prosperity had come, and Mr. Lascelles Lumley-Lumley was now a power in the City, and the owner of untold wealth. Jerrold Lumley-Lumley had brought with him to the school curious ways he had picked up in a Californian mining-camp, in gambling-saloons in San Francisco, in the Bowery of New York, and in strange quarters in Paris and London. He had shaken down into his place at last. His wayward career as the Outsider of St. Jim's was over and done with. There was no more breaking bounds at night to visit forbidden haunts; no more joining in card parties in Cutts' study. But sometimes Lumley-Lumley, thinking of the old wild days, had yawned a little over what was to him a deadly quiet life.

He had no relations in England with the exception of his father. And now his father had gone abroad in connection with some railroad undertaking in South America. Lumley-Lumley generally spent his vacations with his father; but now he was stranded.

So he was not looking forward to breaking-up with any feelings of pleasure.

On the morrow he had either to remain at the school after the other fellows had left, or else to leave St. Jim's by himself, and rely upon his own resources for the vacation. That was an easy enough thing to the lad who had always been able to look after himself, and who had plenty of money—as much as he chose to ask an indulgent father for.

But somehow it did not appeal to him.

Somehow, just now, it was borne in upon his mind that he was lonely—that he had not, like the other fellows, crowds of relations, motherly and sisterly eyes to greet his return, or young brothers to listen awe-stricken to stories of the doings at St. Jim's.

He opened the table drawer, and took out a cigarette—one of Levison's cigarettes. Levison of the Fourth was a confirmed smoker, as his pasty complexion testified. Lumley-Lumley had long ago given up such habits. He had no ambition to shine as a "blood" or a "dog" in the fast set at St. Jim's.

But he was feeling so lonely and despondent at this moment that he turned almost unconsciously to the old habit. He lighted the cigarette, and blew out a little cloud of smoke.

Tap!

The study door opened.

Lumley-Lumley took the cigarette hastily from his mouth. He coloured with vexation at being caught. He had told Levison many a time, in the plainest of language, his opinion of his habits, and it was exasperating to be caught himself in the same foolish action.

But it was not Levison who came in. It was a big, athletic Fifth Former—Cutts of the Fifth. The well-dressed, elegant Fifth Former, with his cool, steady eyes and clean-cut features, was quite a conspicuous

figure in the School House at St. Jim's. He was the dandy of the Fifth and the leader of the "smart set" in the Upper Form—the fellows who smoked and played bridge for money, and in other ways wasted time and money and health under the belief that they were seeing "life."

He smiled as he saw Lumley-Lumley take the cigarette hastily from his lips. "Don't mind me," he said, closing the door of the study.

Lumley-Lumley bit his lip. He threw the cigarette on the floor, and ground it under his foot.

"It was one of Levison's!" he exclaimed.

Cutts nodded. "No harm in a cig every now and then," he remarked.

"I guess I never smoke."

Cutts smiled again. It certainly was a peculiar statement for Lumley-Lumley to make, as the Fifth Former had found him with the cigarette between his lips.

"I've looked in to speak to you about the vac," said Cutts, taking his seat on the side of the study table, and swinging his long legs.

"About the vac?" said Lumley-Lumley.

"Yes. You generally go abroad with your pater, don't you?"

"I guess so," Lumley-Lumley had never been able to drop that peculiar mode of speech, picked up during his early days in America.

"Will you be abroad all the vac this time?"

Lumley-Lumley grinned. He had no plans whatever for that vacation, as a matter of fact, but he did not feel inclined to tell Cutts of the Fifth so.

"I don't know."

"Look here, Lumley," said Cutts, bending towards him. "I'm getting up a little party for the vac. We're going to a jolly little place down in Hampshire—plenty of shooting, fishing, boating—all kinds of amusements. Of course, my friends are seniors, and it's a bit out of the common to ask a junior along with us. But you're a bit different from the rest of the juniors—you've seen life."

"I guess I have," said Lumley-Lumley coolly.

"Well, as I was saying, we shall be a jolly party—Gilmore of the Fifth, Knox of the Sixth, and some other fellows, and we're going to a jolly place. If you want to have a good time, come along with us. We'd be glad to have you. You always were a jolly pal before you took Tom Merry as a model and gave your friends the go-by. Try it for a week."

Lumley-Lumley wrinkled his brow in thought.

He could guess what Cutts' little party would be like—extremely "wild dogs," in all probability, when they were safe at a distance from masters and prefects of St. Jim's.

But there was no doubt that the party would be jolly enough.

And, as a matter of fact, Cutts' invitation came just in time. On the morrow he had to leave, and it would be decidedly more agreeable to leave with Cutts & Co. than to "mouch" away by himself.

Yet he felt a twinge of conscience. Ever since his reform he had had nothing to do with Cutts. And he knew that Tom Merry & Co. would have received him with open arms if he had given them the slightest hint that he was unprovided for for the holidays.



than his prospects had been before the dandy of the Fifth visited him in his study.

CHAPTER 5.

Study No. 6 Means Business!

"THEY'RE havin' a coach." Arthur Augustus made that startling announcement to Blake and Herries and Digby in Study No. 6.

The Fourth Formers were busy. They were selecting various articles that they would require during the vacation at Eastwood House, and endeavouring to pack them into bags that would not contain half the amount of things that seemed to the juniors strictly necessary and indispensable.

"Eh?" said Blake. "Who's having a coach?"

"The New House wottahs," answered D'Arcy. "I heard the boundahs speakin' to Taggles about it when I went down to tell him about my twunk. The coach is comin' at ten o'clock in the morning to take Figgins & Co. to Wayland. They're not goin' to take the local twain from Wylcombe, the same as we do. They've got the cheek to have a coach. Pwobably a dozen of the boundahs have clubbed togethah for it." "Like their cheek!" agreed Digby. "What a nerve to have a coach over to Wayland, when we're going to take the common or garden local train!"

"Yaas, wathah! I've been thinkin', deah boys—"

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Blake in astonishment.

"Will you be sewious, you ass?" exclaimed Arthur Augustus wrathfully. "I tell you I have been thinkin'—"

"And now tell us what you've been thinking with," said Blake cheerfully. "Blessed if I knew you had the necessary apparatus!"

"You uttah ass! I've been thinkin' that it's up to this study to dish those boundahs. Tom Mewwy has twied it, and made a hopeless failure of it, and I think it is wotten for the New House to finish up the term with a score ovah the School House."

"Hear, hear!" said Blake cordially; and Herries and Digby echoed "Hear, hear!" They quite agreed with the swell of St. Jim's upon that point.

"Vewy well," continued Arthur Augustus triumphantly. "Why shouldn't we waid that coach to-morrow mornin' and leave them to take the local twain?"

Blake and Herries and Digby looked admiringly at their noble chum. Certainly Arthur Augustus was full of brilliant ideas, for once.

"By Jove!" said Blake. "You must really have been thinking, Gussy! You should try it again, if it works like that."

"Weally, Blake—"

"It's a jolly good idea. The coach is coming at ten o'clock, you say?" said Blake thoughtfully.

"Yaas. Figgins was tellin' Taggles to be weady to put his bags and things on the coach when it came. Ten o'clock precisely, in the mornin', Figgv said. And the beast grinned at me, and said he hoped I should enjoy a wide in the local twain."

"Then his doom is sealed," said Blake solemnly. "A fellow who had the unparalleled nervé to grin at the one and only Arthur Augustus D'Arcy must die the death. There's nothing else for it. His doom is sealed!"

"You fwrightful duffah—"

"Shush!" said Blake soothingly. "We're on to this. If the coach comes at ten it will come up the road a little before ten. That's as clear as anything in Euclid—clearer than a lot of things are in Euclid, as a matter of fact. Now, suppose a set of nice kids—us—had their bags out in the road, all ready, and stopped the coach as it came along and collared it and drove off in it to Wayland? Figgins & Co. would wait for it to arrive, but it wouldn't come!"

"Hear, hear!" chirruped Herries and Digby.

"That was my ideah, of course," said Arthur Augustus.

"Well, it's my idea now, and we're jolly well going to work it!" said Blake briskly. "We've got to have all the bags as far as the stile to-morrow morning by a quarter to ten. The boxes can look after themselves. And we don't want a whole coach to ourselves, so we'll let those Shell bounders into it, and they can come, too. It will be a lesson to them that when things have to be really done it's this study that has to do them."

"Yaas, wathah!"

And Blake & Co. forthwith proceeded to Tom Merry's study to acquaint the Terrible Three with the latest plot against Figgins & Co.

The Shell fellows entered into it heartily, the only difference of opinion on the subject being in regard to the leadership. Tom Merry felt that the affair had better be carried out under his personal direction, to ensure success, and Blake replied to the suggestion with the remark that when he wanted a howling ass to show him how to do things he wouldn't fail to let Tom Merry know.

Next, the chums of Study No. 6 looked into Reilly's study and added Reilly and Kerruish and Hammond to the party, assuring them that there would be plenty of room in the coach, and no charge, as the bill was to be paid by Figgins & Co., of the New House. They called on Lumley-

Lumley. Levison and Mellish were in the study when they looked in, so they called Lumley-Lumley out into the passage, not caring to confide the matter to Levison, who could not have been depended on to keep a secret.

Lumley-Lumley came out with a somewhat surprised look on his face.

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

"It's about getting off to-morrow," said Blake. "I suppose you're catching the same express from Wayland—and you're going from Wayland, anyway, as everybody has to."

"And we're havin' a coach to Wayland," said Arthur Augustus; "saves all the bothah of goin' by the local twain, you know."

"And seats are free to all our pals," said Digby, with a grin.

"So we'll give you and your bags a lift to Wayland," said Herries, "only you'll have to be at the stile with your traps at a quarter to ten."

"Isn't the coach coming to the school for you, then?" asked Lumley-Lumley, in surprise.

"No; it's coming for Figgins & Co., and we're going to raid it en route," explained Blake; and the juniors chuckled in chorus.

"I guess I'd like to come," said Lumley-Lumley, "but I'm going to Wayland with somebody else, as it happens."

"That's all right; bring him—or them—along," said Blake. "There's plenty of room in the coach; and we could squeeze a bit, anyway."

Lumley-Lumley coloured a little.

"I'm afraid the chaps couldn't join your little party," he said. "They're all seniors."

Blake whistled.

"Starting off for the vacation with seniors?" he asked.

"I guess so, this time."

"Lucky bargee, if you're going with Kildare or Darrell," said Blake. "The seniors aren't generally very keen to take juniors along on a vac."

"Wathah not."

"They're not Sixth Form chaps," said

Lumley-Lumley awkwardly. "As a matter of fact, not to make a blessed secret of it, I'm going with Cutts."

"Cutts of the Fifth!"

"That wottah Cutts!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus. "The uttah wottah I was compelled to thwash for cuffin' my minah?"

"Oh!" said Blake. "I thought you weren't pally with Cutts any more. No business of mine. Sorry you can't come with us. Ta-ta!"

"I—I say, I'm not exactly pally with Cutts," stammered Lumley-Lumley. "This is only a party for the holidays, you know. Nothing of the old game—that's all done with. Cutts asked me and—"

"What about your pater?"

"He's a few thousand miles away, and won't be home for months."

"Then why can't you come with us, you boundah?" demanded Arthur Augustus. "You know I should be jolly pleased for you to come to Eastwood House for the vac."

"I guess you're real good, Gussy, but I've fixed it up with Cutts now."

"Blow Cutts! Chuck him over, and come along with us," said Blake. "You can't want to go round with that rank outsider."

Lumley-Lumley shook his head.

"It's fixed up now. I can't throw Cutts over. And, to tell the truth, he asked me when I was feeling pretty down, and I was glad to say yes."

"But you knew we'd be glad to have you, deah boy."

"I guess—"

"Well, I dare say Lumley knows his own bizney best," said Blake dryly.

"Don't do anything to get sacked for next term, Lumley; that's my advice. Ta-ta!"

Study No. 6 walked away, and Lumley-Lumley went back into his room. He could see that the juniors thought the worst of him for going with Cutts, and he repented a little for his hasty acceptance of the Fifth Former's invitation. But he was loyal, and he did not think for a moment of throwing Cutts over.

CHAPTER 6.

The Early Birds!

ST. JIM'S presented a lively scene upon the following morning.

Fellows going in all directions, left at different hours. Earliest to start were Bernard Glyn and Kangaroo and Clifton Dane of the Shell. They were going to Glyn House, which was within an easy walk of St. Jim's. After them, Tom Merry & Co. were off pretty early. They wanted to get out with their bags unseen by Figgins & Co., and soon after nine o'clock they shook hands with their numerous friends, and started, in ones and twos and threes. They did not leave the school in a body, for fear of attracting the suspicious attention of Figgins & Co.

Strange to say, nothing was seen of the chums of the New House. Figgins and Kerr and Wynn, Redfern, Owen, and Lawrence, and the rest, appeared to be occupied that morning. At all events, they were not to be seen in the quadrangle when Tom Merry & Co. came out.

"Hardly like to go without saying good-bye to Figgins," Blake remarked, as he started with his studymates. "But we'll send a note by the coach-driver, explaining why we couldn't stay to say good-bye."

"Yaas, wathah!"

Blake & Co. reached the stile and dumped down their bags in the bright

BARRING BOB CHERRY!



Unable to explain how he came to have a stolen banknote in his pocket, Bob Cherry, of the Greyfriars Remove, is turned down by his chums. And it's all brought about by a weak-kneed fellow who cannot run straight and who lacks the courage to face the music when trouble accrues from running crooked. To divulge the secret locked up in his breast would not only spell trouble for the culprit but also for one for whom Bob has a very great respect. Read and enjoy this powerful cover-to-cover school story of Harry Wharton & Co. in

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morning sunlight, and the Terrible Three joined them ten minutes later. Then came Kerruish and Reilly and Hammond, all cheerful and grinning. After them came two or three more School House juniors who had been let into the scheme.

All of them reported that they had got out quite easily, without coming across Figgins or a single pal of his.

"They seem to be asleep this morning," Tom Merry remarked. "I should have thought Figgy would have been suspicious, especially as Gussy was there when he was telling Taggles about the coach. It might have occurred to him that we should raid it."

"I dare say he was thinking about the vac," remarked Blake. "Anyway, we can always do those New House bouncers in the eye. They can spoof Shell fellows, but they're not quite up to the weight of Study No. 6."

"Wathah not!"
"Oh, rats!" said the Terrible Three together.

Several vehicles passed the juniors as they waited by the stile. They were laden with St. Jim's fellows and their belongings en route for Rylcombe or Wayland. Tom Merry & Co. gave Kildare, the captain of St. Jim's, a cheer as he passed with Darrell.

"Hallo! It's nearly ten!" exclaimed Reilly. "Faith, and it's time that coach came by, if it's to get to the school by ten o'clock."

"Late, I suppose."
The juniors looked down the road towards Rylcombe. There was certainly no sign of the coach so far. Ten o'clock rang out across the fields, and the coach had not appeared. The minutes passed slowly.

"Jolly late!" said Blake, at a quarter past ten. "My hat! Some of the New House bouncers will be coming along to see what's become of it, and they'll spot us here with the bags."

"You're quite sure about the time, Gussy?"

"Yaas, wathah! Ten o'clock was what Figgins said to Taggles," declared Arthur Augustus D'Arcy positively. "I heard him with my own yahs, deah boy."

"Well, you couldn't have heard him with anybody else's, I suppose. But it's jolly queer the coach doesn't come."

"Yaas, wathah; it is certainly vewy queeah. But I am quite sure about it."
"Half-past ten," said Kerruish.

"My hat! We shall lose the train if we wait here much longer!" Tom Merry exclaimed. "And there's no sign of that blessed coach!"

"Blessed if I understand it!" said Blake, wrinkling his brow in perplexity. "The coach simply must pass us here to get to St. Jim's."

"Figgins may have altered the time, after he noticed that Gussy was on to it," suggested Lowther.

"Great Scott!"
"Bai Jove! I nevah thought of that!"

"You wouldn't," growled Manners. "Weally, Mannahs, you did not think of it, eithah."

"Study No. 6 was managing this," said Manners, with a sniff. "Just like you Fourth Form duffers! Of course, you've made a muck of it!"

"It's too bad!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Look here, one of us had better cut off to St. Jim's, and see about it. If Figgins has altered the time for the afternoon, we can't wait here for hours and hours. We'll have the coach, anyway, whatever the time the rotters have fixed it for."

"Yaas, wathah!"
Tom Merry started off for the school, and the other fellows anxiously awaited

his return. It did not take the Shell fellow long to reach St. Jim's.

Taggles, the porter, was in the doorway of his lodge, and Tom Merry came up to him breathlessly. He noticed a grin on the crusty face of the porter.

"What time Figgins' coach coming, Taggles?" asked Tom Merry.
"Arf-past eight," grinned Taggles.

"Half-past eight!" howled Tom Merry. "How could it come at half-past eight if it was ordered for ten o'clock?"

"Master Figgins, he changed the time, arter Master D'Arcy 'eard him say ten o'clock," said Taggles, with stolid satisfaction. "I think that p'raps Master Figgins was afraid some young rips I know of might think of collarin' his coach. He started off at 'arf-past eight with the hothers, and 'e's left a note for you. 'Ere it is."

Tom Merry tore open the note.
"Dear Duffers," it ran, in Figgy's big, sprawling writing. "This is to say

QUICK ON THE UPTAKE!



"Hallo! Had a good holiday? ",
Half-a-crown has been awarded to G. Drayton, Frere Pilgrim, Christchurch 5, Barbados.]

good-bye, as we're starting rather early. Hope you will have a good time this vac.

"P.S.—Compliments to Gussy on his excessively expressive countenance. Tell him, next time he thinks of japing the New House not to give it away on the spot.

"Kindest regards,
"GEORGE FIGGINS."

"Oh, my hat!"
Ten minutes later, Tom Merry rejoined his comrades at the stile.

"Well?" they demanded with one voice.

Tom Merry did not reply. He held up Figgins' note. It was reply enough, and there was a howl of wrath from the School House juniors:

"Oh, rotten!"
"The spoofers!"
"The swindlers!"

"Dished and done!"
"All Gussy's fault!" howled Lowther. "Compliments on his expressive chivvy! Of course, Figgy mentioned ten o'clock on purpose for Gussy, and made it half-past eight afterwards to do us in the eye."

"Weally, Lowthah—"
"He was pulling Gussy's leg all the

time," groaned Blake. "Well, of course, we didn't know that. I admit that Gussy is a howling ass—"

"Weally, Blake—"
"This is how Study No. 6 manage things!" howled Manners. "Here we've been waiting over an hour for the blessed coach, and Figgins & Co. were gone in it before we had finished brekker!"

"And now we've lost the train!"
"Rotten!"

"There's only one thing to be done," said Tom Merry.
"And what's that?" growled Blake discontentedly.

"Bump Gussy!"
"Weally, Tom Mewwy—hands off! Stop it!"

"Bump, bump!"
"Yawoooh! Oh, you wottahs, you are wuinin' my twousahs! Help! Yow-ow!"

"And now we'll go and look for a train!" growled Tom Merry.
"Gwoogh!"

And the School House juniors started off on foot, Arthur Augustus frowning with majestic wrath, and dusting down his elegant garments with a cambric handkerchief as he went.

CHAPTER 7.

Off for the Holidays!

THE local train from Rylcombe bore Tom Merry & Co. to Wayland Junction.

They had lost their express, and they had an hour to wait for the next train to Wayland. There were a good many St. Jim's fellows about the station, and a short time before Tom Merry & Co.'s train came in, four fellows walked on the platform, evidently with the intention of taking the same train, and the four were Cutts & Co. Arthur Augustus turned his eyeglass upon Jerrold Lumley-Lumley, who was sauntering by Cutts' side, chatting with him.

"Bai Jove! There's Lumley!" he remarked. "They did not go by the early train."

Lumley glanced at the juniors, and coloured a little. Tom Merry & Co. were on bad terms with Cutts and Knox the prefect, and were not friendly with Gilmore. Under the circumstances, it was awkward for Lumley-Lumley to meet his old friends. But he nodded to them, and paused to speak. Cutts, with a supercilious glance at the juniors, strolled on along the platform with the other two seniors.

"Not off yet?" asked Tom Merry.
"N-no," said Lumley-Lumley, "we've had a stroll round Wayland and looked into some places. I thought you were going by the earlier train?"

It occurred to Tom Merry that Lumley-Lumley had picked the later train and induced his companions to wait for it, with the intention of avoiding the awkwardness of travelling with his junior friends. But owing to the astuteness of Figgins & Co., Tom Merry & Co. had also missed the earlier train, so they were destined to travel together after all.

"You're goin' in our divection, Lumley?" asked D'Arcy.
"I guess so."

"You see, we missed our twain, owin' to a wotten trick of that boundah Figgins," said Arthur Augustus. "We were goin' to collah his coach, as we told you last evenin', but somehow or othah he was up to it, and has done us." "Then we shall be in the same train," said Lumley-Lumley. "I'm sorry you fellows are not on better terms with Cutts. He's not really a bad sort."

Tom Merry's lip curled.

"I don't know what you call a bad sort, then," he said. "I know he tried to get Lowther and me into his rotten gambling, and made it difficult for us to keep out of it. I know he used Digby's name in a scheme to swindle his own uncle, who's a friend of Dig's pater, and it was by sheer luck we found out what he was doing, and showed him up. I know he gets new fellows into his study and plays bridge with them—and wins!"

"I know—I know! But I guess he's got his good points, all the same," said Lumley-Lumley. "He's a jolly companion, anyway!"

"Tastes differ!"

"Yaas, wathah! I am weally wathah surprised at you, Lumley. Is it weally too late to excuse yourself to Cutts, and come along with us? My patah would be vevy glad to see you at Eastwood."

"You're awfully good, Gussy! I—I suppose you fellows think I oughtn't to be with Cutts," said Lumley-Lumley uneasily. "But—but I assure you that it's all right. It doesn't mean that I'm going to do anything rotten. It's just a holiday at a quiet place down in Hampshire."

"Then you won't be very far from us, when we're at Eastwood," said Jack Blake.

"I don't know. Is Westhorpe very far?"

"Bai Jove! It isn't half a mile from Easthorpe," said Arthur Augustus. "Is that where you are goin' to stay?"

"Yes; a place called the Lodge, close by Westhorpe."

"I know the place," said D'Arcy. "A vevy pwetty place—shootin', and fishin', and boatin' and things. It's the same wivah as wuns past our place, so we shall vevy likely see you on the wivah."

"Well, perhaps I shall see you down there," he said. "Ta-ta!"

And the Outsider of St. Jim's walked along the platform and rejoined Cutts & Co.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy shook his head solemnly.

"I don't like old Lumley bein' with those fellows," he said seriously. "They are goin' to lead him into weckless goings on—I know that."

"Well, he's old enough to take care of himself," remarked Manners. "Here comes the train."

"How are we travelling?" asked Herries.

"By twain, deah boy!"

"Ass! I mean what class? You've got the tickets."

"First class, of course, as Gussy's got the tickets!" chuckled Blake. "Doesn't Gussy always do things in tip-top style?"

As the party were the guests of Arthur Augustus, he had insisted upon getting the tickets, and naturally he had taken first-class tickets. A pound or two more or less made no difference to the swell of St. Jim's, who was rolling in money at the break-up of the term. There were only two first-class carriages on the train, and Cutts & Co. entered one, so the juniors invaded the other. Both parties had the carriages to themselves, though the other part of the train was considerably crowded.

"Bai Jove! There won't be woom for all of us here!" Arthur Augustus remarked. "Does anybody feel inclined to travel in the next cawviage with Cutts?"

Nobody did.

"We'll make room," said Tom Merry. "As host, it's your business to make us comfy. I suggest that you sit on the rack!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

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"Hallo! Room here?" asked a cheery voice, as Wally—D'Arcy minor of the Third—looked in. "This way, Joe!"

"There ain't any room there, Wally," said Frayne of the Third.

"Oh, we'll make room. You can sit on Gussy!"

"I wufuse to let Fwayne sit on me, Wally. You fags can go furthah along the twain!"

"First-class carriages are at a discount!" explained Wally.

"It is weally vevy extwavgant of you fags to take first-class tickets at all!" said Arthur Augustus, as D'Arcy minor dragged Joe Frayne into the carriage.

"But we haven't," said Wally. "I'm not such a mug as to waste money like that!"

"Then you have no wight in this part of the twain at all. I trust you are not thinkin' of swindlin' the company, you young wascal?"

"What are companies made for?" asked Wally innocently.

"Why, you feahful young wepwobate—"

"Don't you begin, Gussy!" implored Wally. "It's all right; I'm not going to welsh the company. I'm jolly particular on that point. That's why I'm going to travel in your carriage."

"Weally, Wally—"

"You see, you can pay the extra on my ticket when they come along," explained Wally. "That's the advantage of having a major."

"I wufuse to do anythin' of the sort!" said D'Arcy indignantly. "I wquest you to move along at once to the third-class cawviages!"

"Train's starting," said Wally.

"You know vevy well that you can go along the cowwidor. This is a cowwidor twain."

"So it is," agreed Wally. "But I'm not going to travel third-class. I'm surprised at your suggesting it, Gussy!"

"You young wascal!"

"Really, the pater would be shocked at your suggesting that I should travel third-class," said Wally cheerfully. "I'm afraid your highbrow tone is going down, Gus!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If the twain hadn't started," said Arthur Augustus, in measured tones, "I would thwow you out on the platform, you cheeky young boundah!"

"Lucky for you the train's started, then!" said Wally. "Somebody would be hurt if you started chucking me out, and it wouldn't be me! If you'll collect up some of your enormous feet, Lowther, a fellow would have more room!"

"Look here!" said Tom Merry, laughing. "There isn't room for nine fellows in one carriage. If you fags have third-class tickets, you'd better go along the train."

"Must travel with my major," said Wally cheerfully. "It's my major's duty to look after me and see that I don't get into mischief."

"Yaas, that's vevy twue; but—"

"Get off my feet!" said Lowther.

"Well, I told you to collect them," said Wally. "Besides, you shouldn't have such big feet unless you travel by special train."

"You cheeky young bounder, I'll—"

"Shush! Don't let's start the vao with a rag," said Wally. "Just shove up a bit farther and make room for a chap."

"I wogard this invasion of our quartahs as simply feahful impertinence, Wally."

"Rats! There's no room in the next

carriage," said Wally. "It's no good to me, because Cutts wouldn't pay on my ticket or Frayne's. I'm sticking to you. But a couple of those Shell bounders can get out."

"Bai Jove! I—"

"It's all right," said Tom Merry, with a laugh. "I'll get into the next carriage, and you can come along with me, Lowther. We'll risk the moral contamination."

"Right-ho!" growled Lowther. "I'm not going to have these inky fags squeezing me into a pancake, anyway."

Tom Merry and Lowther stepped out into the corridor of the train. The express was outside Wayland now, and rushing along through the green woods and meadows. Wally and Joe Frayne carefully squeezed into the seats left vacant by the two Shell fellows, quite regardless of the wrathful looks of the rest of the party.

CHAPTER 8.

The Black Sheep!

CUTTS and his companions had settled down comfortably for the journey.

There were only four of them, and they had the carriage to themselves—at first, at all events. They had plenty of room, and made themselves comfortable. Before the train was out of Wayland Cutts and Knox and Gilmore were smoking cigarettes. Gerald Cutts offered his case to Lumley-Lumley.

The Fourth Former shook his head.

"Oh, rot! Put a smoke on!" said Cutts. "We're not in school now, you know. No masters or prefects here to worry us. We can do as we like."

"I guess I'd rather not."

"Oh, be a pal!" said Gilmore. "One cig. won't hurt you, kid!"

"It's a smoking carriage," said Cutts. "You don't mean to say that you're afraid of those good youths in the next carriage seeing you?"

Lumley-Lumley flushed.

"No; bit—"

"Well, have just one."

"Oh, all right."

Lumley-Lumley reluctantly accepted a cigarette, and Cutts gave him a light. The Outsider of St. Jim's—looking very like the Outsider of former days now—blew out a little cloud of smoke. Like Cutts & Co., he felt the freedom from the restraint of the school, and was in an unusually reckless mood.

"How long does this last?" asked Gilmore.

"Two hours."

"Then we've got to pass the time somehow. I suppose you fellows don't seem inclined to pass two hours reading the newspaper?"

Cutts and Knox laughed. That harmless way of passing the time on a railway journey was very far from their minds. Cutts produced a pack of cards from his pocket.

"Nap or banker?" he asked.

"Make it nap."

"Right-ho! There's four of us—"

"Three, I guess," said Lumley-Lumley coolly. "You remember what I told you, Cutts, when you asked me to come with you. Nothing of that kind for me."

Gilmore sneered, but a quick look from Cutts checked him.

"I haven't forgotten, kid," said Cutts. "I don't want to interfere with any fellow's tastes. If you don't want to play, it's all right."

"I guess that's all serene."

"Then it's a go."

The three seniors began to play. As they played for penny points, the play

was moderate enough—at least, in comparison with Cutts' usual style. Lumley-Lumley looked on. The three seniors, interested in the game, seemed to have forgotten him, and Lumley-Lumley had a feeling of being "out of it." As he had chosen to stay out of the game, he could not complain, and he yawned over a paper while his companions amused themselves. But he could not keep his eyes on the paper. The sight of the cards had a fascination for him. The gleaming red and black attracted his eyes in spite of himself. They brought back to his mind his wilder days, when his life had been crammed full of excitement, and the danger of it had given his reckless pleasure an added zest.

"Take a hand?" said Cutts presently, as he shuffled the cards.

Lumley-Lumley hesitated.

"Only penny points?" he asked.

"Certainly! We won't rook you."

"I guess it's not that. I've plenty of dibs," said Lumley-Lumley. "But, after all, nap for pennies can't be called gambling, can it?"

"Only by evil-minded persons," grinned Knox.

"Give me a hand, then," said Lumley-Lumley. "Dash it all, a fellow must do something. And we're not at St. Jim's now."

Cutts dealt the cards, and Lumley-Lumley picked up his hand.

"Two!" said Gilmore.

"Three!" said Knox.

"Nap!" said Lumley-Lumley.

"Go it!"

The door of the carriage on the train-corridor was closed, and the curtain drawn across it to keep the occupation of the little party from the view of the people who might pass along the train. But at that moment the door was slid back, and the forms of two juniors appeared in the corridor outside.

Tom Merry and Lowther looked in.

They started at that unexpected scene burst upon their view.

Cutts and Knox and Gilmore they knew were likely enough to pass the time on a railway journey gambling, but they had not expected it of Lumley-Lumley.

The latter flushed crimson.

Cutts looked round angrily.

"What do you kids want here?" he demanded.

"There's no room for us in the next carriage," said Tom Merry quietly.

"We're coming in here."

"You're jolly well not coming in here! We're not going to be crowded with junior kids!" Cutts exclaimed.

"Get along the train!"

Tom Merry looked at him steadily.

"We're coming in," he said, stepping inside the carriage as he spoke. "There are two seats vacant here, and we're going to take them."

"What-ho!" said Monty Lowther.

Tom Merry and Lowther sat down in the two corner seats nearest the corridor.

Cutts laid down the cards, with a threatening scowl.

"If you whelps don't want to be chucked out, you'd better get out of your own accord!" he exclaimed.

"Get on with the chucking!" said Lowther cheerily. "There are half a dozen chaps in the next carriage who'd chip in, if necessary. It will liven up the journey. Don't mind us. Start!"

"Cheese it, Cutts!" murmured Knox. "We don't want a rag with a crowd of fags."

Cutts gritted his teeth. On second thoughts he did not care, either, for a rough-and-tumble row with six or seven juniors. The seniors were bigger, but the odds were on the side of Tom Merry & Co., if they piled in, as undoubtedly they would do.

Cutts sat down again.

"Let's get on," he said. "Never mind if the little cads are here. There's no sneaking out of term, anyway."

"We didn't come in to watch your rotten game," said Tom Merry, with a curling lip. "You needn't mind us."

"Well, shut up!" said Cutts.

"You went nap, Lumley," said Gilmore. "We're waiting for you."

Lumley-Lumley was very red and uncomfortable.

He had had no anticipation that his old friends would enter the carriage, or he would certainly not have taken up a card. But he did not care to put them down now that the Shell fellows were there. He did not like to act like a boy who suddenly found himself under the eye of a master. He played his hand, and made nap.

"Your deal, Lumley."

Lumley-Lumley took the cards.



There was a brief struggle in the car, and then suddenly an elegant form shot out backwards. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors. Arthur Augustus' attempt to eject Wally had somehow gone astray.

"Let's have something a bit more lively on the game," yawned Knox. "What do you say to tanners?"

"Done!" said Cutts.

"Done!" said Gilmore.

"Oh, all right!" said Lumley. "May as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb!"

"Don't be an ass, Lumley!" said Tom Merry, his patience giving way. "You know those rotters. They only want to rook you."

"Will you be kind enough to hold your tongue?" inquired Cutts.

"No, I won't, when I see a pal of mine being taken in by a gang of sharpers!" said Tom Merry savagely. "You know this is rotten, Lumley. Why don't you chuck it?"

Lumley-Lumley grinned.

In his old days, as the Outsider of St. Jim's, he had often been taken in hand by fellows who expected to make money out of him, but he had proved himself sharper than the sharpers. Cutts & Co. certainly had a business eye on Lumley-Lumley's well-lined pocket-book; but the Outsider was quite sure that he could take plenty care of it.

"We don't want a row with you fags," said Cutts, in a voice trembling with rage. "But if you can't keep a still tongue in your head you'll go out of this carriage on your necks, I warn you."

"Rats!"

"It's all right!" said Lumley-Lumley, rather at a loss between his present and his old friends. "Don't you bother about me, Tom Merry! I can look after myself!"

"You don't seem to be able to!" snapped Tom.

"I guess it's all right."

Lumley-Lumley dealt the cards, with a tinge of defiance in his manner. He did not like the suggestion that he needed protecting.

Sixpence a point was soon increased to a shilling a point, and then to two shillings. Before the journey was half over, the four young rascals were gambling on a serious scale.

Tom Merry and Lowther, by no means pleased to be witnesses to such a scene, left the carriage and walked down the corridor. They found seats in a third-class compartment, and Lumley-Lumley was left to his friends.

But Cutts & Co. were very far from "rooking" the astute Outsider. Lumley-Lumley was throwing himself into the game now with all his old zest, and he was winning all along the line. In the old days his luck had been phenomenal, and it had not deserted him now.

By the time the train stopped at Westhorpe, Lumley-Lumley was six pounds in pocket—three from Cutts, and thirty shillings each from Gilmore and Knox—and the three seniors were looking considerably blue.

"Time for another round?" asked Gilmore, as Cutts looked at his watch.

The dandy of the Fifth shook his head.

"No; we're just in. But Lumley will give us our revenge to-night at the Lodge."

"Oh, of course!"

Lumley-Lumley nodded assent. He could do nothing else. He had won their money, and he could not refuse to give them their revenge afterwards. But he realised what that meant to his good resolutions. He had broken the ice, and after that there was no returning.

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CHAPTER 9.

D'Arcy is Sorry He Spoke!

"EASTHORPE!"

Tom Merry & Co. descended from the train in the quiet country station.

"Bai Jove, I'm wathah glad to be here!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy remarked. "If you bwing that mongwel on a journey with me again, Wally, I shall thwash you!"

Wally's shaggy favourite, Pongo, was peeping out from under his jacket. Arthur Augustus had a strong objection to hairy dogs at close quarters. There were a good many hairs belonging to Pongo on Arthur Augustus' immaculate bags. He dusted himself down very carefully on the platform.

"Oh, rats!" said Wally cheerfully. "Is the car here? I've got to look after Pongo; there's a dog he always fights with at the Easthorpe Arms."

"That wotten beast is not comin' in the car!" said his major wrathfully. "I would almost as soon have Hewwies' beastly bulldog!"

"My bulldog isn't beastly!" said Herries warmly. "Some silly asses don't know a good dog when they see one!"

"Weally, Hewwies—"

"He jolly well is coming in the car!" said Wally. "You can walk, if you like, Gussy. 'Tain't far."

"You can let the beast wun aftah the car!"

"Rats! You can run after the car!" retorted Wally.

And he marched out of the station, with Pongo under his arm.

The car from Eastwood House was already waiting. It was a big car, and there was room for the nine juniors to crowd in. Pongo was certainly superfluous, from the point of view of several fellows besides Arthur Augustus. But D'Arcy minor was not to be denied. He carried Pongo into the car and sat him down on a cushioned seat.

Arthur Augustus breathed wrath.

"Take that bwute out, Wally!"

"Rats!"

"I shall thwow him out!"

"Bosh!"

"I wefuse to have my twousahs made dirty and haiwy by that howwible mongwel!"

"Keep your blessed trousers to yourself, then!" said Wally cheerfully. "I don't ask you to shove your trousers against Pongo, do I?"

"Besides, there is no woom for a dog; and the patah does not like to have dogs in the car, as you know vewy well."

"Oh, the pater will get used to it in time!"

"Take it calmly, Gussy!" advised Tom Merry. "We'll find room."

Arthur Augustus shook his head.

"I am bound to make that young boundah respect his eldahs," he replied. "I do not approve of this disrespect towards one's eldah bwothah. I always tweat old Conway with pwopah respect, and I insist upon the same frow Wally. Wally, you young wascal, if you do not dwop that beast out of the car, I shall eject you!"

"Eject away!" grinned Wally.

"Stand clear, you fellows, while I thwow that cheeky fag out!"

"Hear, hear!" said Blake.

Arthur Augustus clambered wrathfully into the car. His dignity as Wally's major was at stake. He laid a grasp upon the fag, and Wally cheerfully returned it. Several idlers gathered round the car to look on with interest. A graceful girl who was

coming down the village street quickened her pace as she saw the car, but the juniors were so busy watching D'Arcy's performance as "chucker-out" that they did not observe the approach of Cousin Ethel.

"Don't stand in the way, you chaps!" called out Arthur Augustus, from the interior of the big car. "He's just comin'!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wally, I shall be sowwy to use violence—"

"You will, if you begin!" agreed Wally.

"Are you going?"

"Not this year!"

"Then out you go, you cheeky young wottah!"

There was a struggle in the car. Then a form came tumbling out and rolled in the dust.

"Hurrah!" shouted Blake. "Blessed if he hasn't chucked him out—"

"Yawwooh!"

"Why, it's Gussy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus sat up and groped for his eyeglass. Wally and Pongo looked out of the car.

"Pick him up!" said Wally cheerfully. "I'll let him come in if he's quiet!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you uttah young wascal!" yelled Arthur Augustus, scrambling to his feet. "I will give you a feafuhl thwashin'! I will thwash you severely! I'll—"

Words failed Arthur Augustus. He rushed furiously towards the car. A hand was laid upon his shoulder from behind, and he shook it off roughly.

"Pwaw don't collah me, you ass! I'm goin' to—"

"Arthur!"

"Gwreat Scott!"

Arthur Augustus spun round as if he had been electrified. Cousin Ethel stood before him, smiling. It was Cousin Ethel to whom he had addressed that rude remark.

The swell of St. Jim's became as crimson as a freshly boiled beetroot.

"Bai Jove! I beg your pardon, deah gal—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wally.

"Shut up, you young wepwobate! I'm weally awfully sowwy, Ethel, deah gal! Of course, I didn't know it was you!" said Arthur Augustus, in great distress.

"Of course you didn't!" said Ethel cheerily. "And Wally is a young rascal, just as you say!"

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Wally indignantly. "You're not going to side with that duffer, Ethel? He doesn't want Pongo in the car."

"Ahem! I—I wegwet that you should have seen me wathah excited, Ethel; but that minah of mine is enough to twy the tempah of a saint, weally! Wally, I twust you will not want to have that wotten mongwel in the car with Cousin Ethel?"

"Ethel likes dogs," said Wally. "Still, I'll tell you what! You can go in the car, and I'll walk with Ethel. I don't want your old car."

"Wats! If Ethel is goin' to walk, of course, I am goin' to walk, too," said Arthur Augustus. "Upon wefflection, you can take the beast in the car!"

"I was out for a walk," said Cousin Ethel, "and there is hardly room in the car. You may come with me, Wally, if you behave yourself."

"Well, I like that!" grumbled Wally, jumping out of the car with Pongo. "I should always be as quiet as a lamb if I wasn't worried by a rowdy major!"

"You—you feafuhl young wascal—"

"Let's put the bags in the car, and all walk!" suggested Tom Merry.

"What a really ripping idea!" said Blake heartily.

"Well, if Gussy will be quiet, and not make any of his rowdy scenes, he can come along," said Wally. "But none of your hooliganism, Gussy."

Arthur Augustus did not reply to that remark. His feelings were too deep for words.

Cousin Ethel and the juniors walked down the leafy lane towards Eastwood House, with Pongo frisking after them, and before they were fairly out of the village Pongo was fighting desperately with the dog from the Easthorpe Arms. Wally and Joe Frayne rushed to the rescue; but Pongo was already chasing his enemy across a meadow, and the two fags sprinted in hot pursuit. The party walked on, as Wally and his comrade disappeared in the distance.

Tom Merry & Co. and D'Arcy's cousin were at lunch when the two fags came in. From the windows they saw them coming up the drive. Wally had Pongo under his arm. He also had his collar torn out, and a big swelling on his nose, and a splash of mud across his face.

Arthur Augustus leaned out of the window, and turned his eyeglass upon his disreputable minor.

"Wally, you young wuffian, how did you get into that awful state?"

Wally snorted.

"Dog's owner wanted to whack Pongo," he said indignantly. "Said Pongo was the cause of it."

"Yaas, and so he was."

"Well, Pongo's got some spirit," said Wally. "He doesn't like that dog at the Easthorpe Arms, and he always goes for him. I wasn't going to have Pongo whacked. No jolly fear! So we piled on the owner, didn't we, Joe?"

"We did!" grinned Frayne.

"And left him in the ditch," said Wally cheerfully. "I shouldn't wonder if he complains to the pater. You'll bear me out that I was in the right, won't you, Gussy?"

"You young boundah! I shall certainly wefuse to do anythin' of the sort! I—"

"Oh, ring off!" said his minor.

And Wally and Joe and Pongo passed into the house. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy returned to the luncheon-table breathing hard.

"It's a frightful wowwy to have a minah, Ethel," he remarked. "Only the othah day I had to thwash Cutts of the Fifth for cuffin' him, and I dare say he deserved it. And Cutts is a beastly big fellow, you know. It's weally against the wules for a juniah to thwash a Fifth Formah! But I had to do it—didn't I, you chaps?"

"You did!" agreed Tom Merry. "But it's lucky for you you don't have to thwash a fellow like Cutts every day. There wouldn't be anything left of you if you did!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"It was worth seeing, Gussy thrashing Cutts!" said Monty Lowther. "He did it in a manner all his own. We watched him. It was really interesting. He went into Cutts' study and thrashed him. He did it by coming out of Cutts' door on the end of Cutts' boot. Rather a painful way of thrashing a chap, I should think; but that was Gussy's way."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Lowthah—"

But Arthur Augustus remembered that the humorist of the Shell was his guest, and paused in time, without stating his opinion of Monty Lowther. "Well?" said Lowther.

THERE'S A POINT TO IT!



"Well, now we're here, where are we going to spread the lunch?"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to Robert Pozzoli, 326, Euston Road, N.W.1.

"As you are undah my fathah's woof, Lowthah, I will say nothin'. But if we were at St. Jim's now, I should wemark that I wegard you as a silly ass!"

"Pass the chicken," said Lowther.

"Certainly. I mean—"

"You mean to pass it? Good! I'm waiting!"

Arthur Augustus passed the chicken, and gave it up.

CHAPTER 10.

Undesirable Neighbours!

"G LORIOUS weather!" Jack Blake remarked the next morning, as he looked out of the window.

"Gorgeous!" agreed Herries, who shared Blake's room. "I wish Towser was here. Towser would enjoy this place!"

"Oh, blow Towser! Let's call Gussy!"

Blake proceeded into the adjoining room, where Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was still deep in slumber.

Blake put his head close to the sleeper, and uttered a sudden formidable roar.

"Wake up!"

"Bai Jove!"

"Do you know it's an hour past rising-bell?" said Blake; and he grasped the swell of St. Jim's and whirled him out of bed.

Arthur Augustus bumped on the floor and roared.

"Time we were down," said Tom Merry, looking in from another door. "Mustn't slack because we're on holiday, you kids!"

"Whom are you calling kids?" demanded Blake.

"You Fourth Form kids," said Tom. "Buck up! We're nearly ready to go down, and Wally's out already with his precious mongrel. We're going to keep you fags up to the mark! Ow!"

A pillow whizzed through the air, and Tom Merry shot back suddenly into his room.

Blake chuckled, and returned to his room to dress. The juniors of St. Jim's were starting their holidays in high spirits. As Blake remarked to Herries, it was ripping not to have to grind Latin that morning in the Form-room at St. Jim's.

The river looked much more inviting than the Form-room had ever looked. Tom Merry & Co. came down in a cheery crowd, and found Lord Eastwood and his son, Lord Conway, already at the breakfast-table. The earl greeted the juniors cordially, and Lord Conway gave them a welcoming nod.

Wally was at the breakfast-table, too, with Frayne, and he was feeding Pongo, who was under the table, and not supposed to be seen. But if Pongo was not seen, his happy voice as he worried kidneys and rashers of bacon could at least be heard.

Lord Eastwood and his eldest son were discussing a matter apparently of great interest to them, and Tom Merry & Co., as they heard the viscount's remarks, started a little. Lord Conway was speaking of the Lodge and its occupants.

"Quite a rowdy party there," Lord Conway remarked. "I've been speaking to the head keeper this morning, and he says that they incessantly come over the border-line. We can't have them potting our birds."

"Certainly not," said Lord Eastwood, frowning. "Who is it that has taken the Lodge?"

"A Captain Punter, I think," said Lord Conway. "I've seen the man, and he looks to me a rank outsider. They have a roaring time there—bridge till two in the morning, and that kind of thing. And a fresh lot arrived yesterday, Perkins says, and they slanged him in great style when he pointed out to some of them that they were on the Eastwood property with their guns."

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus. "Are you speakin' of the Lodge at Westhorpe, Conway, deah boy?"

"Yes."

"Then I wathah think we know who the fwesh awwivals are," smiled Arthur Augustus.

"You know them!" exclaimed his father. "I trust, Arthur, that you have no acquaintances among those rowdy persons?"

"Sowwy, patah—can't be helped. They're St. Jim's fellows—seniahs, of course. We wouldn't own them in the Fourth Form."

"Bless my soul!" said his lordship. "The Lodge is certainly not a right place for St. Jim's boys to spend their holidays in! I suppose their people know their business best; but, at all events, you boys must have nothing to do with them."

"That's all right, sir," said Tom Merry. "We're not particularly friendly with Cutts & Co., anyway. We'll give them a wide berth."

"Yaas, wathah! I do not appwove of Cutts."

After breakfast the juniors strolled down to the river. Arthur Augustus was wearing a very thoughtful look. Monty Lowther slapped him on the shoulder and made him the generous offer of a penny for his thoughts.

"Ow! Pway don't be a wuff ass, Lowthah! I was thinkin'—"

"I knew there was something the matter with you," said Lowther, with a nod.

"Fathead! I was thinkin' of that name old Conway mentioned—Puntah! I've heard that name before."

"Punter—Punter," said Tom Merry thoughtfully. "Yes, I've heard it, too. I remember; it was that sharper who dogged us when we had a holiday abroad, and tried to kidnap Gussy!"

"Yaas, wathah! I wondah if it is the same man? He was an awful wascal!" "I shouldn't wonder," said Tom Merry. "He was a professional sharper; and what Lord Conway says of the tenant of the Lodge would fit Punter. He ought to be in prison, as a matter of fact, only he's too keen to be cornered by the law. Precious sort of acquaintance for St. Jim's chaps!"

"And Lumley's there?" Manners remarked.

Tom Merry sniffed.

"They've got him there to fleece him, of course," he said. "I dare say Cutts stands in with Punter, to clear something if he can bring a rich mug there to be skinned."

"Well, Lumley's rich, but he isn't exactly a mug," said Lowther. "I remember when he was a wild beggar at St. Jim's he could hold his own among the sharpeners at Rylcombe."

"But this Punter is a different sort of sharper from the dingy bounders who hang about the Green Man, in Rylcombe," said Tom. "He's a professional swindler, and if he gets Lumley playing cards he will clean him out."

"I twust Lumley will not do anythin' quite so wotten as that, deah boy."

Tom Merry shrugged his shoulders. He had not mentioned to the other fellows what he had seen in Cutts' carriage on the way down; and Lowther had also kept his own counsel. They did not want to talk about the fellow who had been their chum, but who seemed to be well on the way of deserving once more his old title of the Outsider.

"Let's have a boat out," said Blake. "It's a lovely morning for a pull up the river."

"I'm going to take photographs," said Manners. "See you later."

Herries and Digby elected to visit Arthur Augustus' pony, while Manners went out with his camera, so the other four fellows ran the boat out and embarked. Arthur Augustus sat at the lines, while Blake and Lowther and Tom Merry pulled.

"We shall pass the Lodge," Arthur Augustus remarked, turning his eyeglass upon the wooded shore. "I shouldn't wondah if we see somethin' of those boundahs. I shall wufuse to take any notice of Cutts."

"Better still, give him another thrashing," suggested Lowther.

"Pway don't be an ass, Lowthah! Bai Jove! There they are! They've got a punt!"

The juniors looked round. On a gentle rise from the river bank stood the Lodge, a large country "cottage" in its own grounds. Under the big trees by the riverside a punt lay moored, and several fellows were in it, playing cards in the cool shade. Cutts of the Fifth and Knox were there, and another fellow whom the juniors did not know—a vapid-looking youth with an eyeglass and a vacant face, probably one of the "pigeons" whom the tenant of the Lodge invited there to be plucked. And there was a man with a sallow face and strongly marked features and a slight scar on his cheek, whom the juniors knew at once. It was a long time since they had seen him, but they recognised Captain Punter, with whom they had had trouble during a holiday abroad.

"Puntah—bai Jove!"

The party in the punt glanced round at the sound of oars. Lumley-Lumley was sitting on the side of the punt, looking on at the game, but not playing. He coloured at the sight of the juniors.

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A sneer crossed Cutts' face as he looked at them. Captain Punter gave a start and stared at them hard and gritted his teeth. He had vindictive remembrances of his former acquaintance with Tom Merry & Co.

"Puntah, you wascal!" Arthur Augustus hailed him. "I did not expect to see you here. It is like your cheek to be here, you wottah!"

Cutts glanced at his host.

"Do you know that whelp, Punter?" he asked.

Captain Punter shook his head.

"Never seen him before," he replied calmly.

"Bai Jove! That is a whoppah, Punter! I am not at all sure that the police are not lookin' for you at the present moment!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus indignantly. "You know perfectly well that you twied to get us to play cards on the steamah, and twied to swindle us. You are a blackguard, sir! I am not surprised that Cutts is a fiend of yours. But I must wemark, Lumley-Lumley, that I am vewy surprised and shocked to see you in such company. I wcommend you to get out of it."

The worthy captain turned purple with wrath. "Get off from here!" he roared. "You're trespassing! Clear off at once, or we'll come and shift you!"

Tom Merry laughed.

"The river's free to everybody," he said; "and D'Arcy's free to tell you his opinion of you, you scoundrel!"

The captain jumped up and grasped a punt pole.

Cutts rose, too, his eyes gleaming. He was not sorry for a chance of coming to blows with the juniors he disliked intensely; the odds were on his side now.

"Let's duck them!" he exclaimed.

"Good idea—what?" said the vapid-looking youth, screwing his eyeglass into his eye. "Cheeky young beggars—what? Duck them?"

"You hear?" shouted Captain Punter. "You'll clear off from here at once, or we'll have you out of that boat and duck you!"

"Rats!"

"Yaas, wats, you wascal!"

Captain Punter cast the punt loose.

Gilmore jumped into it from the bank.

There were five of the party now, without counting Lumley-Lumley. The Outsider of St. Jim's was looking troubled and perplexed.

"Hold on, Punter!" he exclaimed. "Those fellows are friends of mine."

Captain Punter uttered an oath.

"Friends of yours or not, they're not going to trespass here and insult me!" he exclaimed. "You can jump ashore if you like!"

Lumley-Lumley hesitated a moment, and then jumped to the bank as the captain pushed off. He was in an awkward position. He did not want to take part against his old friends, and at the same time he could not very well side against his host and his fellow-guests at the Lodge. He stood with a

moody brow on the grassy bank and watched.

Captain Punter was in deadly earnest. So were Cutts & Co. And the youth with the eyeglass was chuckling gleefully at the idea of ducking the cheeky schoolboys. Captain Punter poled out into the river. Tom Merry & Co. rested their oars. They had a right to be anywhere on the river they chose, and they certainly did not intend to be bullied away by a sharper like Captain Punter. And if they were not exactly looking for trouble, as Tom Merry put it, they were not keen to avoid it. As for the odds against them, they did not give that matter a thought. They were quite prepared for a scrimmage.

Bump!



Smeared with slime and dripping with water and reeds turned to shake his fist at the juniors, "A

The punt bumped into the boat, and both the crafts rocked violently. Then Captain Punter led the attack, leaping into the boat, which oscillated violently as his weight came down in it. He stumbled as the boat rocked, and before he could recover himself Monty Lowther had hold of his ankles and had tilted him over the other side. The gallant captain plunged head-foremost into the river with a mighty splash.

CHAPTER 11.

The Right Thing!

SPLASH!
"Ha, ha, ha!"
Captain Punter disappeared into the river. The juniors were all on their feet now—Arthur Augustus with a boathook in his hand, and the

other three with their oars ready to repel boarders, so to speak.

"No admittance!" grinned Tom Merry, as he thrust his oar against Cutts' chest, and sent the dandy of the Fifth sprawling back into the punt. Lowther's oar caught Gilmore in the ribs, and he joined Cutts in the bottom of the punt.

Knox of the Sixth leaped into the boat, and slipped, and the next moment was on his back, with Jack Blake sitting on his chest and pinning him down. The Sixth Former of St. Jim's struggled furiously under the junior; but Blake had him down, and kept him there.

"Gerroff!" roared Knox. "I—I'll smash you! I—I'll—"

tried to drag himself in, but Arthur Augustus made playful passes at him with the boathook.

"You keep off, you wottah!" said D'Arcy. "You can hang on, if you like; but if you twy to get in, I shall give you a feahful cosh!"

Cutts and Gilmore staggered up in the punt. The boat had drifted apart from it now, and the distance was too far for a leap. Lumley-Lumley, on the bank, was grinning. It was evident by this time that the fortune of war was not going against Tom Merry & Co.

Tom Merry grinned and dipped his oars. The boat glided down the river, with the furious captain hanging to it, D'Arcy still keeping him at bay with the boathook. Knox was still struggling under the weight of Jack Blake. Cutts and Gilmore poled away furiously, but they could not get near the boat again.

"Bai Jove, I wathah wegard that as a victowy!" grinned Arthur Augustus. "We have beaten the wottahs, deah boys, and taken a pwisonah. What are we goin' to do with him?"

"What were they going to do with us?" chuckled Blake. "Duck him!"

"Yaas, wathah! Let him join his fwiend Puntah in the wathah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hold on!" roared Knox. "You—you rotten fags, if you dare to duck me, I'll—I'll—I'll— Leggo! Chuck it! Oh crumbs!"

Lowther and Blake and D'Arcy seized the Sixth Former together, while Tom Merry sat at the oars, keeping the boat well away from the punt lumbering in pursuit. Knox was dragged up, struggling furiously, and pitched bodily over the gunwale. He disappeared into the water with a loud splash.

He came up puffing, and struck out for the punt, and Cutts helped him in, drenched and dripping and furious.

Captain Punter still clung to the gunwale of the boat, and was being dragged along through the water after it. The captain was a very poor swimmer, and he dared not let go his hold to attempt to get back to the punt. And the boathook flourishing in Arthur Augustus' hand kept him from trying to climb into the boat. His red face had grown pale, and he was panting and gasping. "Bettah knock that wottah off," Arthur Augustus remarked. "We can't dwag him along the wivah!"

"Give him a cosh!" said Monty Lowther.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"D-don't!" yelled the captain, as Arthur Augustus brandished the boathook in a ferocious manner. "D-don't! I—I—I shall be d-drowned if I let go!"

"Impossible!" said Lowther. "Folks who are born to be hanged can't be drowned!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, we can't take you in," said Blake. "You've tried to take us in once; but we're not going to take you

in. Let's land the beast, you fellows. We'll shove him across the river, and Cutts can punt over and fetch him."

"Good egg!"

Tom Merry rowed in to the farther shore, and the boat reached the reeds. Arthur Augustus made a playful lunge at the drenched captain.

"Now get off," he said.

"And back up," said Tom Merry.

"I—I can't! I can't get through ten feet of mud!" howled Captain Punter. "I—I shall be smothered! I—"

"You never know what you can do till you try," said Tom cheerfully. "But one thing's jolly certain, if you don't get off, I shall shove you off with this oar!"

"That's wight, deah boy! I'll bwain him if he doesn't clear off!" said D'Arcy. "Now, where will you have it, Puntah?"

"You—you young villain!"

Crash!

Arthur Augustus brought the boathook down on the gunwale within a couple of feet of the captain's head. Punter gave a yell of fright.

"Bai Jove! Missed his nappah!" said Arthur Augustus. "Nevah mind, I'll bwain him this time!" And up went the boathook again.

The captain, grinding an oath between his teeth, let go his hold, and went floundering quickly through reeds and mud to the shore. There was deep water and thick mud for him to scramble through, and by the time he reached shallow water he was a most disreputable-looking object. He stood in the shallows, soaked with water, dripping with mud, shaking his fist at the boat, and raving out curses.

"Aren't you going to duck us?" laughed Tom Merry.

"Give way, deah boys!" said Arthur Augustus. "I weally cannot stay here and listen to that wascal's extremely bad language. Buck up!"

The juniors bent to their oars, and glided away, leaving the captain still raving on the bank. Cutts poled across and took him off at last; and it was an extremely wet and furious party that returned to the Lodge. Tom Merry & Co. went on down the river quite cheerfully. They had scored off their old foes, and were quite satisfied. There was only one thought that troubled them, and that was the thought of Lumley-Lumley of the Fourth thrown into such rascally company for his vacation. And that was a real worry, for they had a sincere friendship for the one-time Outsider of St. Jim's, and it was painful to see him in his old bad courses again.

Arthur Augustus sat with a wrinkled brow at the rudder-lines. He was evidently thinking the matter out very deeply.

"It's up to us," he said, at last.

"Hallo!" said Lowther, who had been watching the swell of St. Jim's wrinkled brow with some amusement. "Got through the mental process at last?"

"I've been thinkin' it out, deah boys. It is wathah a pity that we didn't know that Lumley-Lumley was stwanded for the holiday, and then we could have asked him to come with us, and he would have come. I feel that I have been a little to blame. It nevah occurred to me that he wasn't goin' with his pater as usual, and he nevah said a word. I pwesume he was afraid of bein' suspected of fishin' for an invitation, though weally he might have known his old pals bettah. Undah the unfortunate circs, I wepeat that it is up to us."

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captain floundered through the mud to the shallows, and you going to duck us?" laughed Tom Merry.

"You'll shut up!" grinned Blake, playfully jamming Knox's head down on the timber of the boat.

"Yarooop!"

"By gad!" ejaculated the youth in the eyeglass, who was watching the scene from the punt without taking any share in the proceedings. "By gad!"

"Help!" roared Knox. "Lend me a hand. Talboys, you idiot!"

"By gad!" repeated Mr. Talboys.

"Will you help me, you chump?"

"By gad!"

The exertions of Mr. Talboys were apparently entirely limited to that ejaculation. Perhaps he did not like the look of Tom Merry & Co. at close quarters.

Captain Punter had come to the surface, puffing and blowing. He grasped at the gunwale of the boat, and

"What's up to us?" demanded Blake. "To wescue him from his unsavouvy surroundings," said Arthur Augustus firmly. "You see, so long as he was simply with Cutts & Co. we couldn't intahfere. They are wotten blackguards, but they are St. Jim's fellows. But now we know he is stayin' with a wottah who is pwactically a cwiminal. That fellow Puntah would be in pwison now if the police had pwroof against him. We can't leave a fwied in such company. If he won't leave it of his own accord, it's up to us to wescue him."

The juniors grinned. The idea of rescuing a fellow from his host and his fellow-guests in a place to which he had gone of his own accord struck them as funny. But Arthur Augustus was in deadly earnest.

"I mean it, deah boys," he said. "There is no tellin' what twouble Lumley may get into among that cwowd. That gang at the Lodge are a set of feahful outsiders. They wace about the cwountry in a glawing motor-car, and poach on my patah's land, and play bwidge half the night—in fact, they are a wascally set of wottahs. They are goin' to swindle Lumley, of course. That's what he's there for. It's up to us to wescue him. He thinks he can't bwreak with Cutts; but if we give him no choice in the mattah, it will be all wight."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lowther. "Are we going to carry him off by force? Once aboard the lugger and the gal is ours: Ha, ha, ha!"

"I fail to see any reason for eacklin', Lowther. I suggest that we captuah Lumley-Lumley, and cawwy him off in a boat. Then we'll duck him till he pwomises, honah bwight, to join our party at Eastwood, and have nothin' more to do with Cutts or Puntah."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gussy, old man, your hospitality is really overwhelming when you set your mind on doing the right thing," said Tom Merry. "It's the first time I ever heard of securing a guest by collaring him and ducking him."

"It's for his own good, deah boy."

"By George," said Blake, "it's not a bad wheeze, when you come to think of it! Lumley-Lumley ought to be glad to get out of that kind of company, if he's got any decency in him. Well, if we take him out of it by force, it will be a big favour to him. And if Gussy's willing to have him at Eastwood—"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Then I back up Gussy," said Blake.

"We'll try it on—what?"

"But Lumley will be ratty if we collar him," said Tom Merry, laughing.

"Let him be watty, if he likes."

"But you can't compel a chap to become your guest against his will!" roared Lowther.

"I am pwepared to go any lengths when it is a question of doin' the wight thing!" said Arthur Augustus firmly. "Besides, it will be a great jape on Cutts & Co. to cawwy off their special guest, the fellow they are goin' to swindle."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was certainly a harebrained scheme. But the more the juniors thought about it, the better they liked it. Lumley-Lumley was their chum, and Cutts of the Fifth had no right to take him away into disreputable company, and endeavour to lead him into all kinds of rascality and blackguardism. To rescue a fellow against his will was an unusual proceeding—and it might lead to a severe tussle with the tenants of the

Lodge, if the juniors were caught in the act—but that risk only appealed to their sense of adventure. The Lodge party had started the trouble, anyway. And when the boat returned to Eastwood, the rest of the Co. were taken into the scheme, and Manners and Herries and Digby joined heartily in the plan.

During the day Lord Conway and Cousin Ethel both observed that Tom Merry & Co. were frequently in mysterious consultation, and that there seemed to be something afoot; but they little guessed what it was.

The chums of St. Jim's kept their own counsel.

CHAPTER 12.

A Rook Among Rooks!

"ONE no trump!" said Cutts.

It was night—long past midnight. Outside the Lodge the darkness lay thick upon the woods and the river. Save for the occasional cry of a night bird, all was silent upon the sleepy countryside.

But there was no thought of sleep among the reckless party at the Lodge.

In a large room, with french windows open upon a veranda, the electric light gleamed upon an excited if not exactly a merry party.

There were cards upon the table, and silver ashtrays, bottles and glasses and boxes of cigars and cigarettes.

The floor was littered with cards of discarded packs. Two or three broken champagne glasses lay there, too.

The atmosphere was heavy with smoke and the fumes of drink.

Captain Punter, looking more sallow and dingily blackguardly than ever in evening clothes, with a big diamond in his shirtfront, stood with his hands in his pockets, looking on at the card-players.

The gallant captain was not playing, having lately given his place to Mr. Talboys, who was Lumley-Lumley's partner.

Cutts of the Fifth sat opposite Knox. Gilmore was sprawling on a lounge, smoking a cheroot. The deep flush in his face showed that he had been drinking more than was good for him.

Lumley-Lumley had been drinking, too.

There had been a time when champagne was as familiar to the Outsider of St. Jim's as ginger-beer was to the other juniors. And the Outsider seemed to be quite his old self again now. The force of association had done it. He had come down to the Lodge with good intentions. But even on the journey down he had fallen into Cutts' cunning net. On the same evening he had given his companions their "revenge." But his luck had still been good, and he had won heavily.

To refuse to play, when the money of his companions was in his pocket, was impossible. And among this reckless set, all the Outsider's old recklessness was coming back. Tom Merry & Co. would hardly have known him. He seemed to be exactly the fellow he had been when he first came to St. Jim's, as he sat at the card-table. There was a cigar between his teeth, and a half-empty champagne glass at his elbow. The flush on his face showed that the potent liquor had had its effect upon him. But he was still cool enough to play carefully and well.

The game was auction bridge. They had started with half-a-crown a hundred. But as the night grew older and the wine circulated, and recklessness mounted, the stakes had been

increased. They were playing a guinea a hundred now, and still the Outsider's luck was good.

Captain Punter had been his partner at first, and the gallant captain had played very badly, which was curious, because the captain was a past-master of all card games. But perhaps he had his own reasons for wishing Cutts and Knox to score.

But, in spite of his partner's excessively bad play, Lumley-Lumley had done very well, by a combination of skill and luck. Whenever the captain was dummy, he had had, of course, to sit idle while Lumley-Lumley played the cards to their best advantage, without the power to interfere. And when the captain retired, giving his place to Talboys, the Outsider had gone ahead wonderfully.

Talboys was a bad player, but he did his best, not being in the "know." He was a rich and foolish young fellow, who had been brought to the Lodge, like Lumley-Lumley himself, to be plucked. He was quite unaware of the fact, and he regarded the captain as a dashing fellow with plenty of money, whereas, in reality, the captain would have found it exceedingly difficult to pay his bills but for the unintentional contributions from his guests.

Whether Lumley-Lumley knew that he was regarded as a "pigeon," even Cutts, keen as he was, could not tell.

He gave no sign of knowing it. He regarded the little party as an ordinary, if somewhat reckless, card party, and he seemed to be enjoying the game.

True, Cutts had seen him look over the cards very sharply before play began, and he guessed that the junior was scanning them to ascertain whether they were marked. Lumley-Lumley's peculiar experiences in early boyhood had taught him all there was to know about marked cards. And Cutts was very glad that the captain had not attempted that kind of trickery, for it was quite certain that Lumley-Lumley would have spotted it at once.

So far as the cards were concerned all was above board. The Outsider was not to be taken in by so palpable a dodge as marked cards.

If he was to be relieved of his superfluous cash, it had to be by some means a little more cunning than that.

And he was to be relieved of it—that was what he was there for. Cutts, it is true, had some personal regard for the Outsider, but to the rest he was simply a victim. And Cutts was feeling by this time anything but amiable towards the junior.

If Lumley-Lumley had allowed his money to be won, Cutts' feelings towards him would have been of the friendliest possible kind. But it was Lumley-Lumley who was winning all the time. When he had the worst of it, he kept the losses down, and when he won, his opponents had to pay out a good figure. And Cutts was feeling more and more bitter with every game.

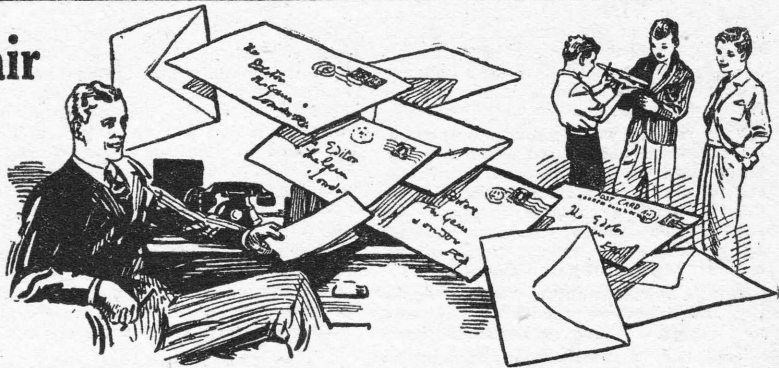
Did Lumley-Lumley know that the captain and Knox were in the "know"—that there was an understanding among them with regard to equal shares in the proceeds if the millionaire's son was rooked? Cutts wondered. But the Outsider's impassive face gave no sign. The captain, with jovial hospitality, pressed champagne upon him, and the Outsider had tossed off glass after glass with perfect equanimity.

The captain looked at him and marvelled. How a junior could stand so

(Continued at foot of next page.)

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, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.



HALLO, chums! What do you think of the first ripping yarn of the "holiday" series? Tip-top—eh? In next Wednesday's issue you will read more about the exciting adventures of the St. Jim's chums at Gussy's ancestral home. The title of this grand yarn is:

"GUSSY'S UNWELCOME GUEST!"

Who is not wanted at Eastwood House? You would never guess, so I will tell you. It's the one-and-only William George Bunter! In his usual cool and brazen manner, the Owl of the Greyfriars Remove invites himself to Gussy's house-party. Arthur Augustus is too polite to turn him away, and so Tom Merry & Co. take it upon themselves to show Bunter just where he gets off!

An amazing scheme for scaring the Owl away is carried out, but when it seems like succeeding something goes wrong—with the result that Bunter is landed at Eastwood House, after all!

Lively adventures follow his arrival, which include an exciting visit to a circus and a crazy cricket match between St. Jim's and the circus team. Readers will revel in every word of Martin Clifford's next magnificent yarn.

"THE BOY FROM THE EAST!"

In the sparkling Greyfriars yarn much champagne and hardly turn a hair was a wonder to him. Of Lumley-Lumley's past he knew nothing. All he knew of the junior was that he was the son of Lascelles Lumley-Lumley, the famous financier and railway magnate, and that he had an ample allowance—as much money, in fact, as he cared to ask an indulgent father to give him. Such a "pigeon" was worth anything to the captain—if only he could be plucked. In that process Captain Punter had not anticipated the slightest difficulty, especially with the aid of Cutts and Knox. But the play was not working out according to programme.

The play had gone on, with short intervals, from the early evening. Now it was past one o'clock in the morning. Would that extraordinary junior never grow tired and slack? Would the potent vintage of champagne never have the effect of dulling his faculties, and throwing him off his guard?

Captain Punter was growing restless. He was deeply out of pocket, so far. The money he had won as Lumley-Lumley's partner was nothing to him, because it came out of the common stock. It had to be returned to the losers afterwards. And the money Lumley-Lumley won went into his pocket, and stayed there.

Frank Richards deals with the further humorous efforts of the Removites to cure their colds. But a big feature of this story is the advent of Wun Lung, the new boy from China. Great interest attaches to the Oriental's arrival, for it is something new to have a Chinese in the Remove. Some of the rougher spirits think the diminutive Chinese boy is an easy subject for a "rag," but Harry Wharton, having promised Mr. Quelch to look after Wun Lung, soon puts a stop to that.

Make sure, chums, that you don't miss next week's number. Order your GEM early.

REPLIES IN BRIEF.

I have only a little space left, but there's enough to answer a few more readers' letters, so here goes.

H. Dillingham (Luton).—I will endeavour to publish the list you want as soon as I have space for it. I'm afraid I cannot do anything about that map. The character you mention will be re-appearing in due course.

A. Ager (Ward End, Birmingham).—I am sorry, but I cannot make use of your suggestion. Your "Pen Pal" notice will be published in its proper turn. There is still a long waiting list. Have another shot at winning half-a-crown.

G. Drayton (Barbados, B.W. Indies).

Once or twice a peculiar smile flickered over Lumley-Lumley's calm, impassive countenance. Cutts, as he noted it, suspected that the Outsider was "up" to every move against him; that he knew what he was at the Lodge for, and that he was taking a secret pleasure in turning the tables upon his kind entertainers. And that thought made Cutts savage and furious. But he could not be sure.

"One no trump!" said Cutts, between his teeth.

"Pass!" said Talboys.

Knox passed.

"Two no trumps!" said Lumley-Lumley calmly.

They played. Talboys laid out his cards, and Lumley-Lumley played. Captain Punter strolled carelessly behind Lumley-Lumley's chair. With equal carelessness, apparently, Lumley-Lumley held his cards down, so that they could not possibly be seen.

Captain Punter ground his teeth hard. His thin lips parted over his teeth, showing them in a snarl like a wild animal. Lumley-Lumley raised his eyes, and in a mirror opposite him he caught the reflection of the captain's face. Instantly Punter's features cleared, and a genial smile took the place of the snarl.

—Johnny Bull will make his appearance in due course. I agree that Levison has his good points, but he cannot be trusted. In addition, he has served Tom Merry & Co. some very caddish tricks.

L. Gagnier (Quebec, Canada).—Thanks for your suggestions, but I am sorry I cannot act on them.

E. Clark (Mitcham).—Pleased to hear that you greatly enjoyed the "Tom Merry's Double" series. Thanks for your suggestion, but the addition of two pages to the GEM is not practicable, and the increase in price would be unpopular with the majority of readers.

D. Ashton (Wakefield).—Thanks for your selection of the best St. Jim's yarns you have read. I am glad to know that you wouldn't give up the GEM for anything. Bulstrode is still in the Greyfriars Remove, but he is not such a bully now, which is why he rarely appears in present yarns. Darrell is seventeen years six months; Blake, fifteen years four months; Gore, fifteen years ten months; Croke, fifteen years nine months; Wingate, seventeen years eleven months; Carberry, seventeen years nine months. Send jokes to the address given above.

All the best, chums! See you next week!

THE EDITOR.

Lumley-Lumley played on calmly. He did not seem to need to consult his cards again. And the captain had no chance of seeing them. When he was betraying Talboys, or any other dupe, the captain had an elaborate system of signals. If he closed his right eye it meant that the player he was spying upon held the ace of trumps. Both eyes closed for a second meant the king and ace. His hand pressed through his hair indicated over six trumps. And so on. But the captain had no chance whatever of conveying the necessary information to Cutts.

Knox did his best. When, as now, Lumley-Lumley was playing two hands, Knox would contrive to let Cutts see his cards as much as possible, and this enabled the dandy of the Fifth to memorise what must be contained in Lumley's hand. But even that was not easy; for if Knox dropped a card face upward, Lumley-Lumley extracted the penalty; if he held his cards so that Cutts could see them, Lumley-Lumley instantly drew general attention to the fact; if he made signs, Lumley-Lumley would stare him steadily in the face, as if asking him what he meant by it. And, of course, the rascals would not venture to cheat openly. In spite of all their efforts, Lumley-Lumley

was holding his own. Captain Punter's private opinion was that he had the luck of the gentleman in black, and he was beginning to suspect that Lumley must be something of a sharper himself to be able to keep his end up in such a situation.

The rascals were getting desperate. So far from cleaning out the pigeon, they had lost considerably themselves; and if this kind of thing went on, Lumley-Lumley, instead of paying the whole expenses of the Lodge for a few weeks, would prove a most expensive guest there.

And Captain Punter was not looking for expensive guests. He was accustomed to being an expensive host.

The rubber finished in favour of Lumley-Lumley and Talboys, at a high figure.

Knox and Cutts had each to pay out three guineas. Their cash resources were getting low now.

Lumley-Lumley yawned. "Half-past one!" he remarked. "Anybody thinking of bed?"

The card-sharper exchanged quick glances.

An extremely ugly look came over Gerald Cutts' hard, clear-cut face.

"Come, you're not sleepy!" he said unpleasantly. "It isn't exactly sporting to get sleepy after cleaning us out like this."

The junior laughed.

"All right," he said carelessly; "I'm game to go on till daylight, if you are! I guess it wouldn't be the first time."

"Another rubber," said the captain. "Go and have a smoke, Knox, old man, and I'll chip in. You two fellows remain partners, as you get on so well."

Talboys and Lumley-Lumley assented to that arrangement. The captain took Knox's place. Knox was glad of it. He was not quite so unscrupulous a rascal as Cutts, and he was clumsy in his attempt to introduce foul play to the game. The captain and Cutts were well matched. They were both as sharp as needles, and would be able to play into one another's hands easily. It was time that luck should turn, even at the risk of awakening Lumley-Lumley's suspicions.

But the Outsider seemed to be quite equal to the occasion. When he had the play, and dummy's hand was exposed, Punter and Cutts, by means of mutual signals, could be quite aware of the position of all the cards in the pack. But Lumley-Lumley made no calls, and left the play to the others. Talboys followed his example.

The rubber finished with a victory for the captain and Cutts. It could hardly finish otherwise. But the losers had only to pay out a guinea each. And when the captain proposed a fresh rubber Lumley-Lumley shook his head. Having found that he could not keep his end up against two sharpeners like Punter and Cutts playing in conjunction, he calmly beat a retreat.

"I guess I've had enough bridge," he said coolly. "If you fellows want your revenge you can have it in some other game."

The captain gnawed his lip; but he could not refuse.

"Any game you like," he said.

"Make it nap."

"A schoolboy game!" said the captain, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"Well, I guess I'm a schoolboy."

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"Oh, I don't mind, if you're set on it."

They played nap, and Lumley-Lumley's luck continued good. At that game it was only possible to cheat by manipulating the cards. As they were not marked, it was difficult to do so. But the captain was an expert, and he succeeded in getting good cards to Cutts. But when Lumley-Lumley dealt he always had a good hand, and the captain eyed him with growing suspicion.

It seemed impossible that a mere schoolboy was able to deal himself good cards knowingly from a pack that was not marked, when the professional sharper's ability in that direction was limited.

The conviction grew in the captain's mind that he was dealing with a boy who knew too much—a sharper who was much sharper than himself. As they were playing for shilling points, a pile of money was soon accumulating beside Lumley-Lumley's elbow.

"Hang the luck!" exclaimed Cutts at last as he felt in his pocket and found nothing but space there. "Let's try a new pack!"

The captain understood.

"And a new game," he said.

"Any old game!" yawned Lumley-Lumley.

The captain produced a fresh pack of cards from a cabinet. They were desperate now, and Cutts' remark had been a hint to the captain to try marked cards as a last resource. And the captain suggested poker as a game. Lumley-Lumley assented at once.

"You know the game?" asked Punter curiously.

"I guess I've played it in mining camps in the Sierra, in California, when I was no higher than the table," said Lumley-Lumley coolly. "You can't teach me much about poker."

Gilmore and Knox joined in the game. It was a last effort to turn the tables upon that pigeon who had so unexpectedly turned out to be a hawk.

After two or three rounds Lumley-Lumley's luck seemed to have deserted him. Twenty pounds had passed away from him, and the conspirators were looking a little more cheerful.

Punter and Cutts had been dealing, and they had given Lumley-Lumley good hands to induce him to plunge; but one of themselves had a hand a little better, to take the pot. When Talboys dealt the captain and Cutts played low. Then came Lumley's deal. He seemed not even to look at the cards. If he had spotted that they were marked he gave no sign of his knowledge.

Captain Punter's eyes gleamed as he looked at his hand. He had three aces and two kings. It was a hand that could only be beaten by four of a kind, or a royal flush.

He risked a change in the draw, and to his delight drew out an ace. He had four of a kind now—the highest possible four. Only a royal flush could beat him, and it was not likely that Lumley-Lumley had dealt himself a royal flush—unless he knew that the cards were marked, and knew how to handle them. And it would have been too much to believe that that mere schoolboy was so well up in the tricks of the professional card-sharper.

Gerald Cutts was looking satisfied, too, in spite of his efforts to appear indifferent.

He had four queens in his hand.

Knox had four jacks. Gilmore had a full hand—three tens and two kings. Lumley-Lumley's face showed no sign of what he had. Talboys had a worthless hand, and passed out in the first round. But the other players bet eagerly. The pile in the pool grew larger and larger. No limit had been fixed, and so the stakes grew higher and higher.

Captain Punter conveyed to Cutts the power of his hand by a secret signal, and the Fifth Former dropped out. After another round or two, Gilmore followed his example. Lumley-Lumley was raising the bets only slightly, apparently a little doubtful now. Knox stayed in long enough to encourage Lumley-Lumley to keep on, and he, too, passed. It remained now between the captain and the Outsider.

With four aces in his hand, the captain would almost have bet his skin on the game. He wondered what the schoolboy could hold that kept him piling pounds in the pool now, and if Lumley-Lumley won it, the sharpeners would be cleaned out as clean as a whistle. But the captain was sure that the Outsider was bluffing. Lumley-Lumley, if he was bluffing, was doing it with an iron nerve.

He opened a pocket-book, flicked out a ten-pound note, and calmly dropped it in the pool.

The captain stared. To go on, he had to put in ten pounds at least, and he had not so much money left about him.

"I shall have to give you an IOU, and call," he said.

Lumley-Lumley nodded.

Captain Punter dropped the valuable IOU into the pool, and called. Lumley-Lumley showed his cards. Captain Punter's eyes almost started from his head. Lumley-Lumley's hand was a royal flush—the ten, nine, eight, seven, and six of hearts. As a royal flush beat a four, Lumley-Lumley had won.

"I guess I'll take the pot!" drawled the Outsider of St. Jim's.

And he reached out for it; and as he did so, the captain, white with rage, and throwing aside all restraint and disguise, reached out, too, and grasped his wrists.

CHAPTER 13.

A Nocturnal Expedition!

"YAW-AW-AW!"

Thus Arthur Augustus

D'Arcy.

It was past midnight, and the juniors of St. Jim's were asleep under the hospitable roof of Eastwood House.

Arthur Augustus was sound in the arms of Morpheus, when an alarm clock beside his bed buzzed in his ears, and he awakened and yawned portentously.

"Yaw-aw-aw! Bai Jove! I'm sleepy!"

Arthur Augustus sat up in bed. The house was very still. Lord Eastwood was sleeping the sleep of the just, little dreaming that his hopeful son had a great scheme on for that eventful night.

Arthur Augustus had carefully placed the alarm clock to awaken him at the right hour; but now he was awake, somehow the enterprise did not seem to him quite so inviting as it had seemed when the juniors were planning it during the day.

He gazed round in the dim glimmer of starlight from the window, and yawned again. From Herries' bed came a sound of steady breathing. The swell of St. Jim's reached out and stopped the alarm, as a preliminary to getting



Livid with rage, Cutts grasped the heavy vase by the neck and hurled himself at the helpless junior. At the same moment an active form leaped through the open windows, and Tom Merry's fist crashed on the side of his head.

up. Then he began to reflect—always a dangerous thing to do when it is a question of getting up at untimely hours.

"Bai Jove! I was wathah an ass to fix it for midnight!" he murmured. "Pewwaps it's the only time for gettin' at Lumley-Lumley without a wow; but, on the othah hand, pewwaps we could catch him quite easily to-mowwow, walkin' in the park. Vevy likely we shall come acwoss him on the wivah. Besides, he may not be gone to bed, and he may be sittin' up playin' some wotten game. And if he's gone to bed, how are we to be sure of pickin' out his window? And if there's a wow, why, there'll be a wow, and the patah won't like it. I weally think I was wathah an ass! Upon the whole, I think it would be far bettah to leave the whole bisney till to-mowwow, and we'll talk it ovah again. I wondah I did not think of all this before. But it's all wright—we'll think it ovah again to-mowwow! There's lots of time, anyway!"

And having come to that resolution, Arthur Augustus laid his drowsy head on the pillow again, and closed his eyes.

He was just slipping back into balmy slumber, when a grasp was laid upon him, and he was jerked bodily out of bed. His eyes opened quite suddenly.

"Gweat Scott! What—who—which—when—"

Tom Merry grinned cheerfully down at him.

"Time!" he said.

"Bai Jove! I didn't know you were awake, deah boy!"

"I heard the alarm, fathead! Didn't it wake you?"

"Yaas; but I've been thinkin', deah boy. On wefection, I weally considah we had bettah leave the whole bisney till to-mowwow!"

Tom Merry chuckled.

"So you want to go back to bed?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Well, if you do, you'll get a jug of water over you. Buck up!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"You're leader in this giddy enterprise, Gussy. It was your idea. Are you going to snore all night, and leave us to go on our own?" demanded Tom.

"I was pwoposin' to leave it till to-mowwow—"

"Rats! Wake up, Herries!"

"Yaw-aw-aw!" came from Herries.

"Lowther and Blake are up already," said Tom. "I've called them. Get into your clobber, Gussy! You're not going to plant a burglarious enterprise on us, and go to sleep while we carry it out."

"Of course, if you're goin', I must come," said Arthur Augustus, with a sigh. "You fellows would make a muck of it without me. But weally—"

"Start in ten minutes," said Tom; and he went back to his room.

And Arthur Augustus groaned and dressed himself. In ten minutes the juniors were dressed and ready to start. The three Shell fellows and the four Fourth Formers made up the party. Wally and Joe Frayne had judiciously been left out of the scheme. Seven sturdy juniors were enough to deal with the Outsider if he should prove refractory.

Tom Merry opened a window and looked out. There was thick ivy below

the window, and descent to the ground was not difficult.

"Bai Jove! We're not goin' out that way, deah boy!"

"We are, ass! We should wake up somebody if we went downstairs. What would your pater or Conway say if they knew?"

"Of course, we mustn't wisk that. But I'm afwaid—"

"Oh, don't be a funk!"

"I am afwaid—"

"Close your eyes, then, and hold on to me," said Blake.

"You uttah ass! I am afwaid—"

"Nice kind of leader for a gang of burglars and kidnapers, I must say!" said Monty Lowther in disgust. "Afwaid, by Jove!"

"You feahful duffah, you will not allow me to finish! I am afwaid that I shall spoil my clobber!" shouted the exasperated Arthur Augustus.

"Oh, never mind your clobber! Come on!"

Tom Merry swung himself out of the window, and descended lightly to the ground. One after another the rest of the party followed him. Arthur Augustus came last in rather a gingerly manner, and dusted himself down very carefully when he stood upon the ground at last.

"Now for the boathouse," said Tom Merry. "You haven't forgotten the key, Gussy?"

"Wathah not!"

"Follow your leader," said Tom.

"Excuse me, deah boy—I'm the leadah," said Arthur Augustus, gently but firmly; and he led the way to the boathouse.

They reached the boathouse, and Arthur Augustus felt in his pocket for the key. Then he uttered an exclamation of dismay.

"Bai Jove! Where's that key?"

"Haven't you got it?" growled Manners.

"I certainly had it. But it does not seem to be here. I had better go back and look for it. It must have dropped from my pocket!"

"Ass!"

"Duffer!"

"Weally, you fellows, as I haven't the key—"

"Jolly lucky I've got one, then," remarked Tom Merry, as he inserted a key into the lock. "There you are!"

"How did you get a key?" asked Arthur Augustus, in astonishment. "This is a patent lock, and I did not know there was another key—"

"Oh, I found it!"

"But where did you find it?"

"In your waistcoat pocket," said Tom calmly. "I thought I'd better take charge of it, as you'd have been bound to lose it. Now, buck up with the boat!"

"You feahful ass—"

"Lend a hand with the boat, while Gussy talks," said Tom Merry. "Get finished by the time we've launched the boat, won't you, Gussy?"

"I regard this as a wotten twick, and—"

"Exactly. Sheer off; you're in the way!"

And the Co. ran the boat down to the water, followed by their indignant leader. The skiff slid out into the river, and the juniors stepped into it. Arthur Augustus took the lines.

"Wow softly, you fellows," he directed. "We don't want to give the alarm to the boundahs when we get near the Lodge."

"Teach your grandmother!" said Lowther cheerfully.

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Give way!" said Tom. "Easy does it!"

The boat glided down the starlit river. The countryside was silent and still. The juniors pulled softly down the dark, silently flowing river. As they drew near the Lodge a light twinkled through the trees on the bank.

"Bai Jove! They're still up!" said Arthur Augustus, peering through the shadows. "It's past two o'clock, deah boys, and they're not gone to bed yet—"

"Rotters!" said Tom. "But it's all the better. We may be able to spot which is Lumley-Lumley's room when he turns his light on."

"Yaas, wathah!"

The punt belonging to the Lodge was moored under the trees. The juniors pulled softly alongside, and secured the boat to the punt. They stepped softly upon the grassy bank, and made their way through the trees towards the house.

As they came out on the level lawn before the Lodge they had a full view of the open french windows of the room looking on the veranda. Electric lights streamed out into the night.

From the darkness of the lawn they could see easily into the lighted room. They saw the table scattered with cards, the champagne bottles with broken necks, glasses and cigars, and men and youths in evening clothes. It was a scene of reckless riot, and in the midst of it was the fellow they had come to save—Jerrold Lumley-Lumley!

Tom Merry set his teeth hard.

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"Gambling—at two in the morning!" he muttered. "That's the Outsider all over—at his worst! Blessed if I don't feel inclined to wash my hands of him!"

"Wats, deah boy! We're here to get him away from those wascals, and we are jolly well goin' to do it!" said D'Arcy firmly.

"Stick to the programme," said Lowther. "But I don't see how we're to get him away yet. We can't very well walk in and yank him out under their eyes."

"Hardly," said Blake, with a chuckle. "We shall have to wait till they've gone in. We can't have to wait long. Even those blackguards can't keep it up much longer without going to bed."

"Hallo!" Tom Merry breathed quickly. "That looks like a row!"

The quiet was suddenly broken. From the open windows came ringing a sharp voice—the voice of the Outsider of St. Jim's!

"Hands off!"

CHAPTER 14.

To the Rescue!

"HAND off!" Jerrold Lumley-Lumley rapped out the words as the grasp of the angry adventurer closed upon his wrist over the pool.

The Outsider had been about to take in the stakes. He had cleaned out the whole company, with the exception of the asinine Talboys. It was clear enough to Captain Punter now that he was dealing with a fellow who was sharper than himself. The sparing of Talboys proved it. Every player in the poker game had had a good hand—with the exception of Talboys.

And it was not difficult for the captain to guess that Lumley-Lumley had intentionally dealt good hands round, giving the captain himself an exceptionally strong one, in order to induce the swindlers to plunge. He had given Talboys a poor hand to make him pass out, because he did not want to win his money. But the others he regarded as fair game.

Yet it was difficult for the captain to complain. Lumley-Lumley, with all his skill in the devices of cardsharper, could not have dealt those hands unless the cards had been marked with a system of marking known to him. As a matter of fact, there was no system of marking cards which Lumley-Lumley was unacquainted with, owing to his peculiar experiences in his youth.

Even if he had come upon a new system of marking, it would not have taken him long to spot it, and turn it to his advantage; his brain was quick as lightning in such matters.

Professional cheat and swindler as the worthy captain was, he was no match in astuteness for the Outsider of St. Jim's. The captain realised it at last—and yet what could he say? For to accuse the Outsider was to confess that the cards were marked, and he had produced the cards himself from his own cabinet.

But Captain Punter was desperate now.

So far from making a fortune out of the millionaire's son, the latter had "rooked" him to the last pound, turning his own weapon against him in the completest manner. And Punter was so enraged that he threw caution to the winds.

Talboys was the only person in the room who was not in the plot, and he was about to learn something of the

character of his kind host and entertainer; for the captain was determined that, whatever happened, Jerrold Lumley-Lumley should not rook him.

Lumley-Lumley, as he met the furious eyes of the cardsharper, realised that all disguise was at an end. More or less secret swindling was done with; it was open war now. But the Outsider was perfectly cool and collected.

The others were upon their feet at once. Gilmore and Knox looked dismayed; they had never dreamed that it would come to this. Unscrupulous rascals as they were, they had some sense of decency left, and the captain's outbreak, amounting to a confession of attempted swindling, gave them no chance of keeping up appearances. But Gerald Cutts was as furious as the captain, and appeared to back him up all along the line. As for Mr. Talboys, he gazed stupidly at the scene, with his monocle jammed in his eye. He was already half-intoxicated, and he looked on like a man in a dream.

"Hands off!"

The captain's grasp closed more tightly upon Jerrold Lumley-Lumley's wrist.

"You don't touch that pool!" he said.

His voice was thick with rage. All the professional geniality of the pretended idler about town was gone. The captain's look now was that of his true character—swindler and bully!

Lumley-Lumley looked at him coolly. Gilmore and Knox, exchanging a quick, troubled glance, slipped quietly from the room. They did not want to be mixed up in what must inevitably follow. Mr. Talboys uttered a feeble protest.

"By gad! What's the trouble, dear boys? Lumley's won the pool, hasn't he?"

Cutts pushed him aside. Talboys sank into an armchair, and sat there, staring blankly.

He did not know what to make of what was going on, and his foolish head was already turning round with the wine he had consumed.

"Let go my wrist!"

The captain gritted his teeth.

"You don't touch a single penny in that pool," he said. "You young swindler!"

Lumley-Lumley laughed.

"Where's the swindle, old fellow? Haven't I shown a royal flush—a hand that beats yours from here to Chicago?"

"And how did you get it?"

"Dealt it."

"Yes; and you gave me four aces—three in the deal, and one in the draw!" said the captain, almost choking with rage.

"How could I know what I gave you?" asked Lumley-Lumley, with an air of astonishment. "You don't mean to tell me that the cards were marked—your own cards?"

"Marked cards!" murmured Mr. Talboys, his eyeglass dropping from his eye. "By gad! Marked cards, by gad!"

"I won't jaw with you," said Captain Punter, dropping into the phraseology habitual to him when he was not posing as a man about town. "You know how you got that hand, and I know it, you young rascal! I didn't know I was entertaining a swindler, who was up to every trick of the trade."

"Or you wouldn't have tried to work off the tricks of the trade on me—what?"

"Let go the pool!"

"No jolly fear! I've won it with your cards! If you play marked cards

on your guests, you must take the consequences. Cutts, old man, what do you say?"

Cutts gave him a deadly look. "I said that you knew all the time," he said, in a choking voice.

"Knew what?" "And you shan't touch that pool," said Cutts, between his teeth, and without answering Lumley-Lumley's question. "Not a pound. Hold the young scoundrel's hands, captain, while I take care of the money!"

"You bet!" said Captain Punter grimly.

The next moment he gave a yell. Lumley-Lumley, with his left hand, caught up a glass of wine, and dashed it full into the captain's face. Punter involuntarily relaxed his grip, staggering back.

Quick as a flash, Lumley-Lumley secured the pool, thrusting notes and coins into his pocket before Cutts could even reach out to him.

Captain Punter gouged the wine furiously from his eyes. Cutts leaped upon Lumley-Lumley like a tiger.

But the Outsider of St. Jim's was ready for him. He made one spring to the mantelpiece, and caught up a heavy metal vase by the stem, and swung it in the air.

"Hands off!" he said coolly.

"You—you—" "Another step nearer, Cutts, and I'll knock you over like a skittle!" said Lumley-Lumley, without a tremor in his voice. "Keep back, if you know when you're safe!"

Cutts stood back; he dared not attack! The dangerous gleam in the Outsider's eyes warned him of what he had to expect if he advanced. Captain Punter had leaped forward to help him, but the Outsider's menacing attitude made him pause. Mr. Talboys blinked at them, and muttered, "By gad!" and went to sleep.

Lumley-Lumley burst into a ringing laugh.

"Spoofed, I guess!" he said mockingly. "I guess you were right, Cutts; I took you at your own valuation at St. Jim's when you asked me here. I played you a fair game till you began to cheat. As soon as I knew that I was in a den of swindlers, and only asked here to be rooked, I guess I went in to win. So long as you played fair, I played fair. When you planted marked cards on me, I used them to skin you.

"I guess I'm not going to keep your money; it's rather too dirty for me to keep. I'm going to hand it over to a public charity, and you'll have a chance of doing good without wanting to. But you're not going to touch a penny of it again—not a red cent. That's where you get it in the neck for bringing me here under a pretence of friendship to swindle me!"

"Hand back the money!" muttered Cutts hoarsely. The mocking, scornful words of the Outsider stung him like a lash.

"Not a sou," said Lumley-Lumley coolly. "I'm not going to keep it, as I said; but it's a fine for your swindling rascality. This has been quite an entertainment for me—rooking the rooks. Stand back! I won't impose on your hospitality any longer, Captain Nobody from Nowhere—I guess I'm getting out of this house to-night. I wouldn't sleep under this roof again at any price. But I take this money with me. And you can put that in your pipe and smoke it."

The captain's features worked with rage. He was ruffian enough for any



violence now that he had thrown off the mask. But the heavy metal vase uplifted in the Outsider's untiring hand daunted him.

"You—you—you young villain!" muttered the captain hoarsely. "Get out of my house!"

"I guess I'll get my bag and go—willingly! Stand clear while I get to the door!"

Captain Punter stood back, clenching his hands with impotent fury. Cutts' hand had closed on a cushion on the lounge. Just as Lumley-Lumley finished speaking he jerked his arm forward; the cushion flew through the air and caught the vase in Lumley-Lumley's hand. It was torn away, and crashed heavily to the floor.

Lumley-Lumley uttered an exclamation and made a spring to recover it, but Cutts and Captain Punter leaped upon him at the same moment, and then he was struggling in their grasp. His right fist lashed out, and Gerald Cutts reeled back from a terrible drive under the chin and fell. Captain Punter bore the Outsider to the carpet.

"Quick!" he panted. "A bottle—quick! Crack him across the head! A bottle! Do you hear?"

Cutts, livid with rage and utterly beside himself now, grasped the heavy vase by the neck. But at the same moment an active form leaped in through the open french window, and Tom Merry's fist crashed on the side of Cutts' head, and he staggered across the room and fell with a crash.

"Pile in, deah boys!" yelled Arthur Augustus excitedly, as he rushed upon the captain.

"Hurrah!" Captain Punter was dragged off Lumley-Lumley and hurled violently into a corner. He sat up, gasping. Cutts lay where he had fallen, only lifting himself on his elbow and gazing at the juniors with an expression of deadly hatred.

Tom Merry & Co. were too many for the rascals—and they knew it. The game was up owing to the unexpected appearance of the juniors on the scene. Blake helped the Outsider to his feet. Lumley-Lumley was panting, but he had not lost his coolness.

"I guess you've chipped in at the right time," he remarked. "But how in thunder did you get here?"

"We came to yank you out if this place by force, if necessary," said Tom Merry.

Lumley-Lumley laughed. "I guess I was going away," he said. "I'm much obliged to you fellows; you came along in the nick of time. I reckon those scoundrels would have done me some damage. I'll leave my bag here and send for it to-morrow. Let's get!"

And the juniors crowded out of the french windows, taking Lumley-Lumley with them. They hurried down to the boat. The raid had turned out quite differently from their expectations. But there was no doubt that Tom Merry & Co. had arrived at the right time.

Lumley-Lumley paused on the bank. "Good-night!" he said.

"Wats! You're comin' with us!" "I can't, Gussy! You know what I've been doing, and I've got my pockets crammed with cash I've done those thieves out of."

"You can't keep it," said Tom quickly.

"I guess I wasn't going to. I'm going to hand over the whole boodle to-morrow to the Cottage Hospital in Easthorpe. But—"

"You're coming with us! You can't go anywhere else, anyway, at this time of night—"

"But—" "Nuff said, deah boy! You're my guest for the west of the vacation."

There was a pause.

"I guess I'm sorry for all this," said Lumley-Lumley slowly. "I don't want to blame anybody but myself; but I'm like the chap in the story who fell among thieves, without intending it. If you fellows like to look over what's happened, I give you my word that it's all finished, fair and square."

"Good enough!" said Tom Merry. "Jump into the boat!"

And Lumley-Lumley stepped into the boat, followed by the other juniors.

Tom Merry & Co. pulled away back to Eastwood House. They arrived there in good spirits, and Lumley-Lumley cheerfully climbed the ivy with them. On the morrow morning there would be an unexpected guest at the table. Meanwhile, the juniors slept the sleep of the just.

Lumley-Lumley's appearance with the juniors when they came down on the following morning caused some surprise. But Arthur Augustus had a free hand in inviting guests to spend their holidays with him, and it was, as he assured the Outsider, all right.

That day the cottage hospital in Easthorpe benefited extensively by a donation from an anonymous donor; and when Captain Punter and Cutts of the Fifth heard of it they "said things" in the most emphatic manner.

Lumley-Lumley's connection with the Lodge and the party there was over. He sent for his bag that day, and it was brought to Eastwood House, and after that he calmly ignored the existence of Captain Punter and Cutts.

He enjoyed a good time with Tom Merry & Co. and Cousin Ethel, and was content to forget his unpleasant experiences when he had fallen among thieves.

THE END.

Next Wednesday: "GUSSY'S UNWELCOME GUEST!" Look out for the next grand yarn of the holiday adventures of Tom Merry & Co. Order your GEM early.

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THE BIG SNEEZE!

Raiders of the Remove!

WAKE up, Bob!"

"Gr-r-r-r!"

"It's time!"

"Yaw-w-w-w-w!"

Harry Wharton laughed and shook Bob Cherry by the shoulder. Bob started out of dreamland, sat up in bed, and rubbed his eyes.

It was dark in the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars, and the darkness was very slightly dispelled by the candle-end that glimmered on Wharton's wash-stand.

"Gr-r-r!" grumbled Bob Cherry.

"It's cold!"

"It's not warm," admitted Harry; "but it's time to get up. Have you forgotten that we are visiting the Upper Fourth to-night?"

"Well, yes, I had forgotten it, as a matter of fact. I've been to sleep, you see. Upon the whole, Wharton, it's not a very good idea, raiding a dormitory on an October night. It's jolly cold, and you know how windy it is in the passages. Better leave it till— Oh! Ow!"

Bob Cherry bounced out of bed as a wet sponge was squeezed over him.

"Hold on!" he howled. "I'm getting up. Don't be an ass! Can't you see I'm getting up? Ow! Gr-r-r! It's cold!"

"Get your things on, then!"

"Well, wake up the others!" growled Bob Cherry, making a dive into his trousers. "We shall all catch cold, I'm certain of that."

"Who's that making a row?" murmured Nugent from his bed. "Can't you keep quiet in the middle of the night and let a fellow sleep?"

"It isn't the middle of the night," said Wharton, as he jerked off Nugent's bedclothes; "it's just struck eleven."

"Oh, I say, suppose we leave that raid over till— Keep off, you beast! I'm getting up!"

"Buck up, then! Are you awake, Hurree Singh?"

"The wakefulness is terrific," purred the soft voice of the Nabob of Bhanipur, as he hopped out of bed. "The sponge-fulness is not needed."

"Help me wake up the others."

The raid on the Upper Fourth dormitory had been planned in the Remove studies the evening before. It had seemed simply a ripping idea then to the Removites. The Upper Fourth were their old foes, and had been crowing over them lately in a manner that the Remove found intolerable.

But when the time came to put it into execution the idea did not seem half so ripping as at first; for the night was cold and rainy outside, and cold and draughty inside.

There were grumbles from most of the beds; there were remonstrances from all. The reasons the fellows gave for not getting up, the reasons they advanced for putting off the raid till another night, were clear, complete, and convincing. But Harry Wharton had an answer ready that was more convincing still—it was a wet sponge. As soon as a fellow felt the cold water down the back of his neck he left off arguing and hopped out of bed.

In ten minutes the Remove were all

By Frank Richards.

(Author of the grand long yarns of Greyfriars appearing every Saturday in our companion paper, the "Magnet.")



up, with the exception of Billy Bunter.

Bunter kept a watchful eye on Wharton, and as the captain of the Remove came towards his bed he expostulated, but Wharton tossed the sponge into his basin.

"It's all right, Bunter; you're not wanted."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"You would only be in the way, so you can stay in bed."

"I say, you fellows, be as quiet as you can," said Billy Bunter. "I expect you will make a muck of it if I don't come. But I mean to take Wharton at his word, just to show you. You might come back as quietly as you can, so as not to wake me up."

"Rats!" said Bulstrode, the bully of the Remove, who never could be uncomfortable himself without wanting to make others uncomfortable, too. "I don't believe in any rotten favouritism. Bunter ought to come with the rest."

"He wouldn't be any good," said Wharton.

"Still, I don't see why he should stick in bed while we go out in the cold."

"It won't make any difference to us."

"Still, we ought to have the fat little porker out, on principle."

And Bulstrode stepped quickly across to Bunter's bed and laid hold of the sheets. Billy Bunter had curled himself up to go to sleep again. He was off his guard, and the next moment the bedclothes were off Bunter. The fat junior started up with a wild yell.

"Ow! W-w-what's—that's that?"

"Time to get up," said Bulstrode, grinning. "Up with you! You can come along and keep watch in the passage."

"I—I really would rather stay in bed."

"I dare say you would, but you can come out in the cold along with the rest of us."

"Wharton! I say, Wharton, you said I could stay in bed!"

"Let him alone, Bulstrode!" said Harry Wharton impatiently. "What's the good of wasting time? I tell you he's no good. As for keeping watch, he's as blind as an owl!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Well, I'm not coming if he doesn't!"

"Don't then! Get to bed—and be hanged to you! Come on, you fellows!"

The Remove, half-dressed and armed with pillows and bolsters, crowded towards the door. Bulstrode scowled after them, but finally joined them. He knew he would be twitted with cowardice if he kept out of the raid. Billy Bunter gathered up his bedclothes and rolled himself up like a hedgehog and went to sleep.

"Don't make a row," said Harry, as the Remove crowded along the passage. "Temple, Dabney & Co. may be awake—"

"Who's making a row?" demanded

Bulstrode disagreeably.

"Oh, shut up!"

"Oh, rats!" said Bulstrode, without taking the trouble to lower his voice, though the raiders were very near the door of the Upper Fourth dormitory. "The fact is—"

"Will you be quiet?"

"No, I won't, unless I choose! I say—"

Bob Cherry clapped his hand over Bulstrode's mouth with a force that made him stagger. The bully of the Remove gasped.

"You—you rotter—"

"Be quiet!" said Harry Wharton with a fierce whisper. "You'll wake them, and we shan't be able to surprise them."

"I don't care! I—"

There was a sound from within the dormitory. Harry Wharton quietly opened the door. The interior of the room was pitch dark. The Removites could see nothing, but there were indefinable sounds in the darkness which made Wharton pretty sure that the alarm had been given.

"Go for them!" muttered Nugent.

Swish!

Suddenly from the dense darkness came the swish of water, and a jugful of cold fluid swamped over the leaders of the Remove.

"Oh!" gasped Nugent.

"Oh-h-h!"

"Ow!"

Swish, swish, swish!

From different points in the darkness came the swamping water. The Remove could not see their foes, but their foes knew where they were, as they had just entered the door. The water swamped over the invaders, and half of them were soaked to the skin in a few seconds. There was a chuckle in the gloom.

"Ha, ha, ha! Do you want some more washing, you Remove kids?"

"Go for them!" panted Harry Wharton.

And he led a forward rush. He bumped against somebody, and the next moment was rolling on the floor in deadly conflict with Temple, the captain of the Upper Fourth. Temple was in his pyjamas, just as he had jumped out of bed.

Two or three of the Remove fell over the struggling pair; and Temple yelled for rescue, and his Form-fellows rushed to his aid and added themselves to the heap.

The melee was soon general, the fellows swiping out right and left with pillows and bolsters. But in the darkness it was impossible to tell friend from foe, and no one could see where his blows fell.

Still, that did not detract from their energy. So long as they smote somebody, it was all right, and the fun was fast and furious.

There was a sudden glimmer of light in the intense gloom. Fry of the Upper Fourth had lighted a candle, and, faint as the illumination was in the long, lofty room, it just sufficed to enable the juniors to make out foes and friends.

"Go it, Remove!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

And the Remove rallied round their leader, and made a rush. The Upper

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"At-chew-ew-ew!" Mr. Capper swung round in the direction from which the sound had come. "Did you sneeze, Temple?" he demanded. "Me, sir?" replied Temple innocently. "Oh, no, sir!"

Fourth went scattering back amongst the beds; but there they rallied, and held their ground well.

The fighting became more furious, and there were endless gasps and yells as the pillows and bolsters smote, and smote hard. The Upper Fourth, manfully led by Temple and Dabney, rallied, and drove the Remove back almost to the door. Then the scrimmage became really terrific.

In the excitement of the fight the juniors had forgotten prefects and masters—everything, in fact, but the fight.

But in the midst of the breathless struggle there was a sound of a door opening along the passage. A gasping warning from Temple followed.

"Cave!"

The pillow-fight ceased as if by magic. "It's Capper," muttered Temple. "My hat! What asses you fellows were to make such a row!"

"The rowfulness was terrific!" "I think you chaps made as much row as we did," grinned Bob Cherry. "I say, I can hear him coming along! Show the candle out!"

The candle was extinguished instantly. The dormitory was in darkness. The footsteps, slow and ponderous, were coming along the passage. It was evident that the master of the Upper Fourth had taken the alarm.

"Quick!" muttered Temple. "Into bed with you! Get in the pillows and bolsters!"

Fry chuckled. "It's no good, old man. These chaps being here will give the show away."

"Do as I tell you! If you're caught here, Wharton, it will mean gating, and perhaps a licking! Get under the beds!"

"It's the only thing to be done," granted Bob Cherry. "Here goes!" It did not take the Remove long to

get out of sight. They bundled under the beds, and the Upper Fourth jumped back between the sheets, and pulled the bedclothes over them. The dormitory door opened, and there was the glimmer of a candle.

Mr. Capper, the master of the Upper Fourth, looked in. The dormitory was as silent as a tomb; the juniors still as mice.

The Mysterious Sneezes!

BOYS!" The Form-master's voice was the only sound that broke the silence, save for the steady breathing of the Upper Fourth. Under

By raiding the Upper Fourth dormitory at midnight, the Removites hoped to catch their rivals napping. But they caught more than they bargained for!

the beds the Remove were almost holding their breath.

"Boys," repeated Mr. Capper, "I have heard a—a noise. I may say an uproar, and I am certain that it proceeded from this dormitory. I am convinced that you are awake, and simply affecting sleep for the purpose of deceiving me."

The steady breathing continued without cessation, and Temple threw in a snore for additional effect.

Mr. Capper shook his head seriously, and advanced into the dormitory. He cast the light of his candle on Temple's face.

The junior kept his eyes closed and snored steadily.

"Temple!" said Mr. Capper. "Snore!" "Temple!" "Snore!"

The Form-master looked baffled. He stepped to the next bed, occupied by Dabney, and turned the light on him. Dabney's eyes were closed so tight that it looked as if a chisel would be needed to open them. The Form-master was suspicious, and he lingered by Dabney's bed, looking at him narrowly. And just then the stillness of the dormitory was broken by a loud and prolonged sneeze.

Capper whirled round, the candle flickering as he did so.

"Who was that?" he demanded. "I knew someone was awake."

Snore! "Who was it sneezed?" demanded Mr. Capper.

The sneezer did not answer. As a matter of fact, it was Bob Cherry who was crouching under Temple's bed. Bob was wet through with the sousing he had received. In the heat of the fight he had hardly noticed it. But now he was quite still, and in a strong draught under the bed. He felt chilled. He felt that a cold was coming. He had not been able to restrain that sneeze. Another was struggling to come, but Bob manfully held that back. He was nearly asphyxiated in the struggle to withhold the second sneeze.

Mr. Capper looked very suspiciously at Temple. The captain of the Upper Fourth looked the picture of sleeping innocence. The Form-master turned away and looked at Dabney, and then passed on to Fry's bed. Bob Cherry saw that his back was turned, and the long-held sneeze came forth with a

violence rendered all the greater by its suppression.

"At-chew-ew-ew-ew!"

Mr. Capper turned quickly, and came back towards Temple. He laid his hand on the boy's shoulder, and shook him. The captain of the Upper Fourth started and opened his eyes.

"Temple, was it you that sneezed?"

"Sneezed, sir? I—I— Is there anything wrong, sir?"

"Wrong? Yes, certainly. I was disturbed in the middle of my duties, Temple, by a loud noise, which I may correctly characterise as an uproar. I am convinced that that disturbance proceeded from this dormitory."

"Really, sir? Perhaps you heard Dabney snoring—"

"It was not a sound of snoring," said Mr. Capper, who was too solemn a master to dream for a moment that a junior could think of being humorous at his expense. "It was more like the sounds of combat, of individuals attacking one another with brutal force."

"You amaze me, sir!"

"Has nothing of the kind been proceeding in this dormitory?"

"Really, Mr. Capper, as captain of the Upper Fourth, I should regard it as my duty to put down any case of brutal violence that occurred in the Form."

"Ahem! I am almost certain that the sounds proceeded from this room," said Mr. Capper. "I— Dear me! Who is that sneezing?"

"At-chew-chew-ew!"

"One of the fellows has a cold, I suppose," said Temple hastily.

"It sounded to me as if that sneeze came from under your bed, Temple."

"Under my bed, sir? Impossible!"

"At-chew-ew-ew!"

This time the sneeze came from Nugent, who was under Dabney's bed. Mr. Capper turned round. Then Harry Wharton sneezed from farther up the dormitory. Mr. Capper turned red.

"This is someone having a joke with me, I presume," he said, with great majesty. "I call upon the person who sneezed to show himself at once!"

"Perhaps it's a— a ventriloquist, sir," said Temple, struck by a sudden idea. "He's making the sounds come from different parts of the dormitory."

There was a chuckle from several quarters. But Mr. Capper did not notice it. Temple's suggestion seemed to him to hit the right nail on the head.

"It is very probable, Temple," he said. "That is, indeed, the only way in which I can account for the mystery. The sneeze in the first place seemed to come from under your bed, and then from Dabney's bed, and then from a distance."

"So I thought, sir."

The Form-master's words were, of course, audible to all the hidden Remove, and two or three of the fellows farthest from the Form-master promptly sneezed.

"There is the sound again," said Mr. Capper, his brows contracting. "I shall punish the practical joker very severely. Boy, I order you to come forth!"

The boy did not come forward. Mr. Capper went along the dormitory from bed to bed, and looked at each member of the Upper Fourth Form in turn. All were in bed, and not one showed a sign of guilt. It was very difficult to define which was the ventriloquist who had produced those sneezes from different directions.

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"Very well," said Mr. Capper—"very well. I—"

"At-choo—choo—choo-o-o!"

The sound was under Dabney's bed again. Mr. Capper turned crimson with anger.

"The boy who possesses these ventriloquial powers," he said, "may regard it as a great joke to be impertinent to his Form-master. But I shall inquire into the matter to-morrow, and ascertain which member of the Form it is. He will be caned severely. Good-night, boys!"

"Good-night, sir!"

And the master of the Upper Fourth left the dormitory. There was a general chuckle when the door had closed. The Remove waited a few moments, and then crawled out from under the beds, shivering with cold.

"What the dickens did you keep on sneezing for?" demanded Temple. "It was all very well to work off a yarn about a ventriloquist on Capper, but you would have been hunted out by any other master at Greyfriars. Quelch would have had you out in a tick."

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney. "It was a risky sort of joke."

"It wasn't a joke," said Bob Cherry. "I couldn't help it. I've caught a cold."

"And so have I!" growled Nugent. "I was wed to the skid, and I'm shivering all over now. There's a fearful draught under those beds."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's all very well for you to laugh," said Harry Wharton. "I can feel a cold cubbing on fast. I shall be sneezing and coughing to-morrow like anything."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I thig we'd bedder get back!" growled Bulstrode. "I've got it in the neg."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let's get away from those laughig jackasses!" said Bob Cherry. "If that ass Capper had stayed here another minute I should have exploded, I thig. I shouldn't woder if this turns out to be influenza."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It did not seem funny to the Remove. No one felt inclined for any more pillow fighting. They quitted the dormitory, and took their way back to their own quarters. Nine or ten of the fellows were developing colds rapidly, and most of the rest were sniffing. There were growls among the raiders as they came into the Remove dormitory.

"Nice set out, and no mistake!" said Bulstrode. "I shall be as hoarse as anything to-morrow mornig, you silly rodders! I thig Whartod ought to be scragged."

"Rads!" said Nugent, as cheerfully as he could. "Id wasn't Whartod's fault we were caught by old Capper. It can't be helbed."

"Whad I thig is this—"

"Oh, blow whad you thig! Let's get to bed!"

And they did.

A Crop of Colds!

AT-CHEW-EW-EW-EW!" That was the first sound heard in the Remove dormitory on the following morning. The fellows had been sniffing in their sleep, and they woke up sneezing. Bob Cherry had a swollen face, and Nugent's eyes were watering as he sat up in bed. Harry Wharton looked very flushed, and Bulstrode had a nose like a danger signal. Levison and Hazeldene sneezed

and sneezed. Micky Desmond was cultivating a fine variety of cough, and Russell was coughing and sneezing at the same time.

Each junior, the moment he was out of bed, groped for a handkerchief.

Billy Bunter sat up in bed and stared at the Removites in amazement. He had not awakened when the raiders returned the previous night, and this was his first view of the results of that ill-starred expedition.

"I say, you fellows, is anything the matter?" he asked, blinking round the dormitory.

"Nod ad all," said Bob Cherry. "We're doig this for fun, you know."

"You sound as if you had a cold."

"I've got a cold, fadhead!"

"Did you catch a cold last night?"

"Yes, idiod!"

"Well, you needn't call me names, Bob Cherry. It's not my fault. I knew you would make a mess of it, somehow, if I didn't come. But you can blame Wharton. He said I wasn't wanted."

"You udder ass!" said Harry.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Shud up, and don't jaw!"

"I say, you fellows, if you like a cure for your colds, I can recommend a jolly good one. You feed a cold, you know, and starve a fever. If you like to supply the funds, I'll see about feeding the cold for you."

"And feedig a fat pig at the same dime," said Nugent.

"Well, if I have the trouble of looking after a lot of invalids, I suppose I ought to have a snack to keep up my strength," said Billy Bunter. "Don't be selfish. You mustn't muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn, you know."

"At-chew-ew-ew!"

"I say, you've got a bad sneeze, Desmond. Would you like me to plan a little feed for you to cure your cold? I think I could do it on three bob—well, say four—"

"Faith, and if ye bother me whed I've got a gold, it's breakin' yer neg I'll be after doig!"

"Oh, really, Desmond—"

"Shud up, then!"

Bunter's cure for a cold did not seem to catch on. The Remove dressed and went down. It was rainy and windy in the Close that morning, and they did not go out.

They were a sorry-looking Form when they presented themselves at the breakfast-table. The grins from the Upper Fourth were almost as worrying as the colds. Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, looked at his Form in amazement.

"You seem to have a cold, Wharton."

"Yes, sir," said Wharton.

"And you also, Nugent."

"I'm sorry, sir; it's rather a bad wud," said Nugent.

"Dear me, you all seem to have colds. When did you catch them?"

"Last night, sir."

"This is very strange," said Mr. Quelch—"very strange indeed!"

"Id's very draughty id some of the dormidories, sir," said Bob Cherry.

Mr. Quelch smiled.

"Well, I am sorry. I hope you will all soon be better."

"Thag you, sir."

Breakfast was rather a doleful meal to the Remove that morning. It was worse when they came into the classroom for lessons. They were sniffing and sneezing all the time. None of them were bad enough to be sent into the sanatorium, nor even to be excused lessons. But lessons were a horror in the circumstances. It was bad enough

to be coughing, sneezing, and sniffing, but to have to construe at the same time was horrid.

"My only had!" gasped Bob Cherry, when they escaped. "I thig we ought to have a few days off to get over dese golds—don't you, Whartod?"

"Yes, rather!"
 "Subbose we put id to Quelch?"
 "Nod a bad idea!" exclaimed Nugent. "We could pud it to him as an old spord."

"Ha, ha! I don't thig he would see it in that lighd."

"I feel the extreme sorrowfulness for my worthy chums," purred Hurree Singh, who was one of the few who had not caught cold. "I have a recipe for a wonderful cure of the esteemed colds, if my esteemed chums would care to give it the angust trial."

"Oh, we'll dry it!" said Nugent. "We'll dry anything once."

"Yes, rather!"
 "Then I will buzz off bicyclefully to the honoured chemist in Friardale, and purchase the required ingredients for the esteemed medicine."

And Hurree Singh hurried away at once.

The chums of the Remove went out into the Close. The rain had ceased, and the sun was shining. Football was impossible, neither did they feel inclined for it.

"My had!" exclaimed Wharton. "Something must be done. I've heard that if you inhale oil of eucalyptus with steam, id will sed you up all righd. I think I'll ask the matron for some eucalyptus and dry it."

"I'd dry anything to get rid of this fearful gold," said Nugent

Meanwhile, Mr. Quelch had left the class-room, and as he went down the passage Mr. Capper came out of the Upper Fourth Room and joined him. The Upper Fourth master was looking very serious, and Mr. Quelch stopped at once.

"I want to see you," explained Mr. Capper. "I have been the victim of a trick. It was played upon me by a ventriloquist."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch.
 "Yes." And Mr. Capper explained the circumstances of his visit to the Upper Fourth dormitory the previous night. "You see, the sneezing must have been the work of someone with a knowledge of ventriloquism, who could throw his voice to whatever part of the dormitory he chose."

Mr. Quelch smiled grimly. He was no great believer in the powers of a ventriloquist in a junior Form, and he remembered the crop of colds contracted by the members of the Remove. He thought he could discover a more plausible explanation of the mysterious sneezes.

"I have questioned every boy in my Form," went on Mr. Capper, "and each and every boy denies that he has any gift for ventriloquism. I think the denial is true, because I do not think they would speak falsely, and because I have heard of nothing of the sort in the Upper Fourth. But I have heard, Mr. Quelch, that there is a boy in your Form who has annoyed others near his study by continually practising ventriloquism."

"Yes; it is Bunter."
 "Ah! Now, it has occurred to me that it might have been this boy who was concealed in the dormitory, and who made the sounds proceed from a different part of the room."

"I hardly think Bunter's ventriloquial powers go so far as that," said Mr. Quelch. "But I will certainly question him and elicit the truth, Mr. Capper.

If he was in the Upper Fourth dormitory last night, he shall be caned."

"Thank you very much, Mr. Quelch!" The masters separated, and Mr. Quelch called to the nearest junior, and sent him with a message to Bunter, bidding the Owl of the Remove come to his study at once. Mr. Quelch proceeded there to wait for him, and in a few minutes Billy Bunter made his appearance.

Bunter was looking nervous. He transgressed the rules of the college more often than any other junior, but not from mischief. Simply because he was too thoughtless.

He was not infrequently called up before Mr. Quelch, and he always came in with the air of a martyr about to be burned at the stake. But on the present occasion he could call to mind no delinquency that might have aroused the anger of Mr. Quelch. He furtively wiped a smear of jam from his mouth as he faced the Form-master.

"Bunter," said Mr. Quelch with an absence of sternness which at once encouraged the fat junior, "I believe you have been practising ventriloquism?"

"Oh, yes, sir!" said Bunter, reassured. "I'm a pretty good ventriloquist, sir. I find it comes easier than hypnotism, sir. I started by practising the ventriloquial drone, sir, to get the throat into the proper position. Would you like to hear me do the ventriloquial drone, sir?"

"No, Bunter, I should not. You need not trouble."

"No trouble at all, sir."
 "Have you made any progress with your art yet, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir. My wonderful powers—"
 "Can you throw your voice?"

"Yes, sir, as easy as anything. Shall I show you, sir?"

"Yes, certainly!" said Mr. Quelch grimly.

"Good! I'll speak to a man up the chimney, sir. Then I'll make him answer. Now then! Are you there?" shouted Bunter. "I'm speaking to the chap up the chimney, sir."

"I understand."

"Now I'll make him reply." Bunter squeezed up his features into an expression of expiring agony, and a faint squeak proceeded from his throat:

"Yes."

"Where are you?" he shouted, in his natural voice.

"On the roof," came the squeak. Bunter turned triumphantly to the Form-master.

"There you are, sir!"

"But you were going to show me how you threw your voice," said Mr. Quelch.

"I—I have, sir. I made my voice proceed from the chimney. Didn't you hear it say, 'On the roof,' as if it were a man on the roof speaking?"

"I heard the words certainly; but I thought that was part of your portion of the dialogue," said Mr. Quelch. "I should never have imagined that the words proceeded from the chimney."

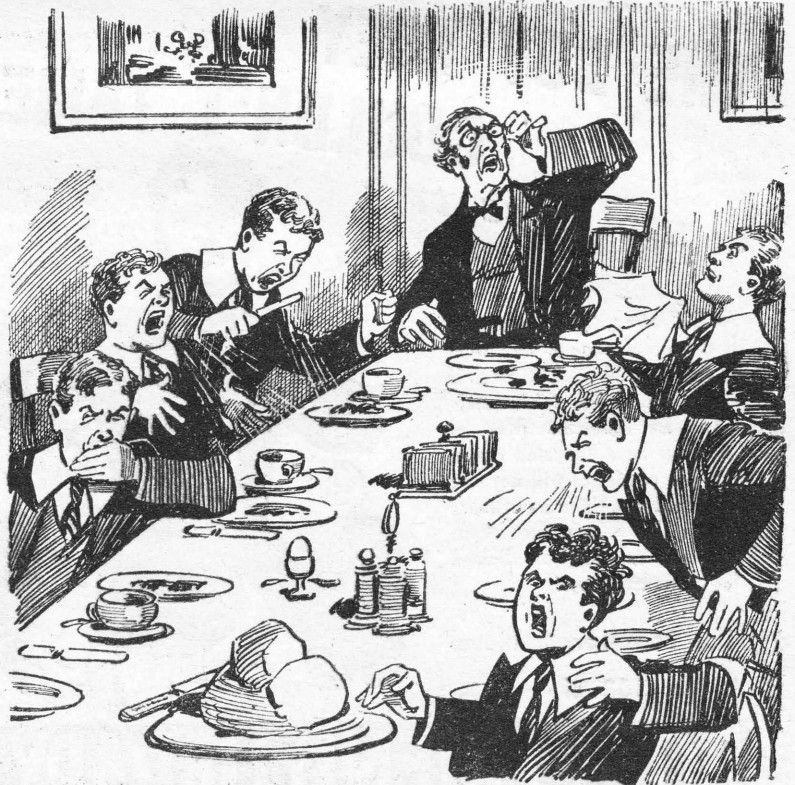
"Oh, really, sir—"

"Is that the best you can do as a ventriloquist, Bunter?"

"I should be glad to give you another example, sir. I will make my voice proceed from that trunk in the corner. Now—"

"You need not trouble. I am satisfied as to the extent of your powers," said Mr. Quelch. "You may go."

"I should like to show you, sir—"



An uproar of sneezes and coughs greeted the Form-master when he took his place at breakfast. "You seem to have a cold, Wharton!" said Mr. Quelch, looking round his Form in amazement. "And you, too, Nugent! Dear me! You all seem to have colds!"

"One word more. Were you in the Upper Fourth dormitory last night?"

"Oh, no, sir! I didn't go—it was so jolly cold—I mean, I was fast asleep all night, and never thought of such a thing!"

"You may go, Bunter."

"Yes, sir."

Billy Bunter quitted the study.

Mr. Quelch smiled grimly. He had no further doubt in his mind as to whence those mysterious sneezes had proceeded—as to what was the cause of the sudden and unaccountable crop of colds caught by the Remove!

Strange News!

DINNER was a meal the Remove at Greyfriars usually did ample justice to. But on the day following the raid on the Upper Fourth dormitory there were delicate appetites for once in the Remove.

Handkerchiefs were more in evidence than anything else among the Remove. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh and Billy Bunter were almost the only two members of the Form who had not a cold.

Harry Wharton had only a mild attack. All the chums of Study No. 1, in fact, had taken it less severely than the rest. It was owing to the excellent condition they kept themselves in by outdoor exercise and regular habits. Some of the more weedy members of the Form were wrecks.

They ate without heart, but Billy Bunter did the best he could to make up for the deficiencies of the others. Mr. Quelch had a peculiar expression on his face during dinner. He did not appear so sympathetic as during the morning, and did not mention the

affliction of his unfortunate Form at all.

After dinner the Remove adjourned to the Junior Common-room. They had it to themselves—the other Forms giving them a wide berth for fear of catching their colds. The room was a babel of coughing, sneezing, and nose-blowing.

"My had!" said Bulstrode. "This is what I call enjoyable, and no mistake! I thig Whartod ought to be suffocaded!"

"Quelch won't let us off, all the same, Cherry."

"Whad about thad idea of asking for the afternoon off?" said Bob Cherry. "We're nod fid to go in to lessods, you know."

"Well, it would be bedder to try, anyway."

"May as well try," said Harry Wharton. "I feel as if my head would burst if I had to swot over rodden Ladin this afternoon. Let's go to Quelch."

The Famous Four proceeded to Mr. Wharton's study.

Wharton tapped at the door, and the Form-master's voice bade him enter. Mr. Quelch was seated by the open window, reading. He laid his book on his knees as the juniors entered.

"If you please, sir," began Wharton, "we should like to be excused from lessons this afternoon, sir."

"I am afraid I cannot entertain that proposition, Wharton," said Mr. Quelch.

"We have fearful golds—"

"I am sneezig like anythig, sir," said Nugent.

"I keep on gouging," said Bob Cherry.

"Id is rather rodden for us, sir."

"Yes, I think it must be, Wharton. I cannot excuse you from classes this afternoon, but you are excused from making any more nocturnal visits to the Upper Fourth dormitory!"

The juniors started.

"The dormitories are very draughty when one is not fully clothed, and when one hides under beds, for instance," pursued Mr. Quelch, with a bland smile. "In such circumstances, one is almost certain to catch cold."

The Removites looked at one another in dismay.

It was evident that Mr. Quelch knew, or guessed, the cause of that famous crop of colds, and it was evidently useless to attempt to move him now.

"Thag you, sir!" said Wharton. And the heroes of the Remove turned to the door.

"I shall not inquire further into last night's freak," said the Remove master. "I think you have been sufficiently punished already. You must take the consequences of your folly. You may go. But stay a moment, Wharton; I wish to speak to you."

"Yes, sir."

Nugent, Cherry, and the nabob went out and waited for Harry in the passage. Wharton, somewhat surprised, and wondering what Mr. Quelch could have to say to him in particular, waited for the Form-master to speak. Mr. Quelch looked at him very keenly.

"I wish to speak to you, Wharton, about a new boy who is coming to Greyfriars."

"Yes, sir."

"As captain of the Remove, you will have a certain responsibility in the matter. But it is not only from that view that I wish to speak. The new boy is a little out of the ordinary, and his path will probably be set with thorns in the Greyfriars Remove. I want you to do the best you can to make things easy for him."

"Yes, sir; with pleasure!"

"Well, the new boy is—is somewhat remarkable," said Mr. Quelch. "We have had some varieties of foreign boys here, especially before Herr Rosenblau's Academy was opened, when we had French and Germans in the Remove. We have now a Hindu. But the new boy is Chinese."

Harry Wharton started a little.

The Remove at Greyfriars had, as Mr. Quelch said, seen many peculiar members during the past term or so. French and Germans and Belgians had been there, and there was still a Hindu, Hurree Singh. But in the history of Greyfriars, it was not mentioned that a Chinaman had ever been there.

"A—a Chinaman, sir!"

"Yes, a Chinaman—a boy somewhat younger than yourself, Wharton. I have not seen him yet. He is at present with Major Newcome, who is bringing him to the school on Friday. Dr. Locke tells me that he is a very pleasant little fellow, very polite, and extremely desirous to please. He speaks English very imperfectly, and may have some difficulty in making himself understood. You will see that his position may easily be a very unpleasant one in a Form like the Remove."

"Very likely, sir."

"I think I know you well enough, Wharton, to feel sure that you will understand my wishes on the subject, and do your best to meet them."

"I shall try, sir."

"No favouritism or anything of that kind, but, above all, no bullying, no ragging. There are some boys in the Remove who will regard a Chinaman as fair game. It would be difficult, if not impossible, for a master to interfere for

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his protection, without making matters worse. What is wanted is a boy of courage and strong character who is determined that there shall be fair play.

Harry Wharton smiled a little. "Thank you, sir. You may rely on me."

"I am sure I can, Wharton." And Harry Wharton left the Remove master's study.

Cures for Colds!

"WELL, what's the trouble?" asked Nugent, as Harry Wharton rejoined the three in the passage. "Quelchy recommend any cure for colds?"

Harry Wharton laughed. "No. There's queer news—a new kid cubbing into the Remove."

"Nothing queer in that that I can see," said Bob Cherry. "We've had new boys before."

"The new kid is a bid of a cough-drop, though, in one respect—he's a Chinaman!"

"A Chinaman!"

"Yes."

"My had! A giddy heathen!"

"I suppose so. And Quelchy wants us—wants me, at any rate—to make things easy for him ad first," said Wharton.

"I wish somebody would make things easy for us," groaned Nugent. "I shan't have any nose left soon."

"The kid will need it," Bob Cherry remarked. "I can imagine how Bulstrode will welcome him, for one. He will start bullying him ad once."

"We shall have to stob him," said Harry quietly.

"When is the giddy heathen cubbing?"

"Friday."

"I say, you fellows have fearful colds and no mistake," said Bunter sympathetically, coming up at that moment. "I'm getting rather nervous of staying in the same study with you. I'm rather liable to catch cold, as I'm of a rather delicate constitution. You ought to do something about it. I'm ready to get up a good feed that will soon put you right again, if you like to give me ten bob and carte blanche."

"Will a thig ear do instead?"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I'm sorry that you don't want to take advantage of my assistance. Feed a cold and starve a fever, you know. It's a good old proverb."

"Oh, rod! Don't bother!"

"I don't want to bother you. I'm trying to do you a service. I think you might show a decent amount of gratitude. Besides, it's not safe for me to remain in the study with you unless you get cured. You might think of that!"

"Go and eat goke!"

"If you keep on coughing and sneezing like this I may catch it. I can only hope to escape by keeping up my strength, and I can only do that by feeding well. I suppose you fellows couldn't do your prep in the Common-room, and let me have the study to myself till you get well?"

"You yug ass!"

"Well, I don't see that I'm a young ass because I don't want to catch your beastly colds. A cold sometimes takes away the appetite, and that might turn out a serious thing for me. I don't see how I can stay in the study with you."

"Well, you needn't, you know," said Wharton, laughing.

"You will do your prep in the Common-room?"

"No; but you can do yours there."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Atchew-chew-chew-chew!"

"Gr-r-r-r!"

The unhappy Remove coughed and sneezed, and sneezed and coughed. The bell rang for afternoon lessons, and they went reluctantly to the Form-room. Mr. Quelch, for the first time on record at Greyfriars, smoked his pipe in the class-room. It was a measure of precaution, and it was needed, with almost the whole Form in the throes of sneezing and coughing and snuffling and sniffing.

The hour of dismissal was very welcome when it came. The Remove drifted listlessly out of the class-room. The weather had dried up, but they had no heart even to punt a footer about in the Close. Many of the Remove started off to walk to Friardale, to pay a visit to the chemist's there. They were willing to do anything, take anything, and suffer anything for the purpose of getting rid of those dreadful colds.

Harry Wharton had obtained the oil of eucalyptus from the matron. When Bob Cherry went to look for him a little later, he found him in the dormitory, with his head over a steaming basin of water, inhaling steam and the pungent odour of eucalyptus. Bob Cherry sniffed and drew back.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What are you up to?" he demanded.

"Guring my gold."

"Blessed if I wouldn't rather have the gold," said Bob. "My had! How that stuff niffs!"

"Yes; id isn't pleasant, I know."

"There's Nugent bolting a lot of Purple Pilules for Goughs and Golds," said Bob Cherry. "Filthy-looking things. It says on the bottle that you're to take three for a child and four for an adult, and Nugent thought he had better take both as his was a bad case."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's taken seven. I don't know much about it, but it seems to me that seven was too many. I say, do you think there's anything in the Purple Pilules?"

"No good, I expect."

"Well, a fellow must take something. No good lettig a gold run on, you know. Lend me half-a-crown, will you Whartod?"

"Take it out of my pocket. I can't leave this till I'm finished."

"Right-ho! There isn't half-a-crown here, but these two two-shilling pieces will do. Ta-ta!"

And Bob Cherry walked out, leaving Wharton to inhale his steaming eucalyptus.

"I say, Cherry—"

"Don't bother, Bunter. I've god to ged to Friardale."

"Just a minute before you go. Don't you think it's a jolly good idea to feed a cold?"

"Oh, rads! Ged away!"

"Look here, I feel so concerned about you fellows that I feel you must have a good feed to cure your colds, and so I'm going to stand one."

"Now you're talking! I'll cub."

"Good! I'll have it ready in the study, then, by the time you get back from Friardale. What do you think you would like?"

"Oh, anythig—nothig—it doesn't madder."

"Yes, it does matter, Cherry. It's very important. Do you fancy a little chicken, with fried onions, and chips, and sausages?"

"Well, yes, that would be ribbing."

"I thought you would like it. You'll have a pretty sharp appetite after walking to Friardale and back, so I may as well have plenty. Suppose we say some ham and beef, and a rabbit pie to

follow? Do you think you could tackle it all?"

"Well, I'd do my besd, you know."

"And after that I suppose jam roll and marmalade tarts would be all right?"

"Oh, ribbing!"

"Then it's settled!"

"Good! Now led me go. I've god to ged to the chemist's at Friardale."

"Just a moment. I'm expecting a postal order—"

"Ged out of the way, fadhead!"

"I'm expecting a postal order this evening. It should have come by the morning's post, but it's bound to be in this evening at the latest. At the present moment, owing to that delay in the post, I'm short of cash. I suppose you can lend me ten bob till my postal order comes?"

"Ged out of the way!" roared Bob Cherry.

"But really, Cherry—"

The exasperated Bob hurled the fat junior aside and passed him. Billy Bunter sat down on the linoleum, with a shock that jarred every bone in his body. He sat there for some moments, breathless, and then slowly scrambled up.

"Beast!" he murmured. "Fancy not trusting a fellow with a few bob for a few hours, when I only want it for the sake of feeding him up and curing his cold for him. I call it horrid, mean, and beastly selfish! They don't really deserve that I should take any more trouble about them. I suppose I had better, though."

And Billy Bunter set out to search for Harry Wharton, to raise funds for a record feed in Study No. 1.

Generous of Bunter!

HARRY WHARTON lifted his head from the steaming basin at last. He felt much better, and his head was clearer. He hadn't taken cold so much as the others, and the cold did not get a real grip in his system. As he rubbed his face and head hard with a rough towel, Bunter came into the dormitory. The Owl of the Remove blinked at him through his big spectacles.

"I say, Russell, do you know where Wharton is?"

Wharton laughed.

"Do you know where the beast is?" went on Bunter, in cheerful ignorance of the fact that he was talking to Wharton himself. "I believe the rotter knows I want to see him about some money, so he's keeping out of sight. I say, Russell, I suppose you couldn't lend me ten bob till my postal order comes this evening, could you? I wish you were captain of the Remove. You'd make a much better one than Wharton. What are you laughing at, Russell?"

"Ha, ha, ha! You young ass!"

"I say, is it you, Wharton?"

"Yes, you silly young idiot!"

"I—I thought it was Russell. You see, I wanted to see you. I—I don't think—I mean, I hope you don't think I really meant that you are a beast, Wharton. I wouldn't have dreamed of saying it if I had known it was you."

"I dare say that's quite true," said Harry, laughing. "But you had better be a little more careful in the terms you use, Bunter. You might get a licking, you know."

"Certainly, Wharton. I'd do anything for a chap I respect as much as I do you. You know how different things have been since you became captain of the Remove."

"Oh, cheese it! What do you want?"
 "I—I really want to do you a favour, Wharton. I think you fellows ought to feed your colds, and I want to stand a feed in the study at tea-time, and I want you all to come."

"All right; I'll be there."
 "Would you care for sausages and chips and fried onions, chicken, and ham and beef, to be followed by jam puffs and marmalade tarts and cake?"
 "That would suit me down to the ground, Bunter!"

"Good! I want to get exactly what you would like. I've got a postal order coming this evening, which will pay for the food and leave some over. What I wanted to see you about was to ask you if you could lend me ten bob till this evening?"

Harry Wharton picked up the basin of warm water.

"Do you want a ducking, Bunter?" he asked.

"N-no, Wharton; certainly not!" said Bunter, eyeing the basin nervously.

"Then you had better get out. If you're not outside this dormitory by the time I've counted three, this little lot goes over you."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"One!" said Harry quietly.

"But I say, my postal order's coming this evening for certain, and I really—"

"Two!"

"It's necessary for you to feed your cold, and—"

"Three!"

The "three" was never fully uttered. Bunter made a bound to the door and disappeared. Harry Wharton laughed as he set down the basin. Bunter did not linger. He bolted along the passage and ran down to Study No. 1. There he ran into Nugent, who was just coming to the study from the lower staircase. Nugent staggered against the door, and there was a clink of breaking glass.

"I—I say, I'm sorry, Bulstrode!" gasped Billy Bunter.

"You ass!" roared Nugent. "You've broken my bottle of pilules."

"I say, is it you, Nugent? What have you broken?"

"My bottle of purple pilules. They're all over the floor!" roared the enraged Nugent. "How am I to cure my rotten cold now, you pig idiot?"

"Oh, that's all right!" said Billy Bunter, keeping out of reach of Nugent.

"The best thing to do for a cold is to feed it. You feed a cold and starve a fever, you know."

"You pig ass! Come and pick up my purple pilules!"

"I'm so short-sighted, Nugent, I don't suppose I could find them," said Billy Bunter. "Besides, I don't believe

in purple pilules. What you want is a really good feed, and I want you to let me stand you one."

"Well, there's something in that," said Nugent. "I'm getting hungry, and I've blued my last bob on these beastly pilules."

"Eh?"

"I say I've blued my last bob on these purple pilules."

"H'm! Then I'm afraid the feed's off. You see, I shan't have any cash till my postal order comes this evening, and I wanted you to lend me ten bob—really to cash my postal order in advance."

"You—you—you—"

"Do you know whether Inky has any tin?"

"Go and ask him, you young idiot!"

"I think I'd better. Atchew-ew-ew!"

"Hallo!" exclaimed Nugent, looking up with a grin. "That you sneezing?"

"Yes," said Bunter, with a look of alarm. "I believe I've caught your beastly cold. That's all through your selfishness in sticking to this study instead of keeping down in the Common-room till you got well."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's nothing to laugh at. I must get a good feed from somewhere. I shall have to feed my cold and keep up my strength on good grub. A-chew-chew!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter left the study hurriedly in search of the Nabob of Bhanipur. He found Hurree Jamset Ram Singh in the Hall, looking out rather dolefully into the Close. A fine, drizzling rain was beginning to fall. The English climate was a terror to the native from India at any time. Billy Bunter tapped him on the arm.

"Is that you, Inky? I say, I'm catching a cold."

"The sorrowfulness of my worthy self is terrific, my esteemed Bunterful chum."

"Yes, of course; but it isn't exactly sympathy I want. Sympathy won't cure a cold, you know. What you have to do with a cold is feed it."

"Then why doesn't the esteemed Bunter proceedfully go to feed it?"

"The fact is, Inky, that I'm expecting a postal order this evening, and by the time it comes my cold may have become much worse. Only a good feed now at once will save me. Will you lend me ten bob, and have my postal order when it comes?"

"The lendfulness is impossible, my worthy chum."

"I must feed my cold, or I shall very likely expire. A cold that's not properly fed—I mean, not properly attended to—often turns to pneumonia. Suppose you saw me expiring in agony on the floor of the study, what would you do then?"

"I should borrow Russell's camera and take a snapshot of the worthy Bunter in his esteemed agonies," said the nabob, "and I should have it framed and keep it always hanging up in my palace in Bhanipur, to remind me of the worthy rotten Bunter."

"Oh, really, Inky! If you could lend me five bob it might save my life."

"I cannot give you the five bob lendfully, my worthy fat Bunter, but I can give them to you giftfully, if that will suit."

"Oh, I'm not the sort of chap to make a fuss about a trifle," said Bunter, as he took the five shillings from the nabob's dusky palm. "Of course, I shall consider that I owe you this, Inky. A fellow has his self-respect to consider, you know. I shall put this down in our account."

The nabob chuckled as Bunter walked away. He had long forgotten the number of items down in Billy Bunter's account.

Bob Cherry came in, shaking the rain-drops from his cap. The nabob approached him.

"You found it wetfully damp on the road to Friardale, I opine, my worthy chum?"

"Oh, that's just my beastly luck!" grunted Bob Cherry. "I never get caught in a shower except when I've got a cold, and I didn't think of taking a coat. Never mind, I think I shall be cured pretty soon."

"What have you got there, my esteemed Cherryful chum?"

"Only a bottle of Dr. Pink's Marvellous Medicine for Sneezing Snottlers. It beats Nugent's purple pilules hollow. Would you like some?"

"I thank my worthy chum, but I don't like the look of the honourable marvellous muck for silly sneezers."

"You've got it wrong. Marvellous Medicine for Sneezing Snottlers. It's wonderful stuff. It says on the bottle that it cures you in two doses, and the whole bottle costs half-a-crown. You get fifteen doses out of it, so that it is at the rate of curing a cold for about fourpence. Cheap, I call it."

And Bob Cherry carried his bottle up to the study. There was a groan from within Study No. 1 as he approached it, and he hastened his footsteps. Nugent was lying extended in the only armchair, with his face pale and perspiring, and groaning away as if under contract to utter so many groans per minute!

(The Remove have got it in the neck properly this time! Read how they fare in next week's humorous chapters, which also deal with the arrival of Wm Lung, the Chinese boy. Make sure you don't miss this treat.)

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