

Next
Thursday:

"ASHAMED OF HIS SISTER."

A Story of Tom Merry
& Co. and Cousin Ethel

Every

Thursday.



Complete Stories for All and Every Story a Gem.

THE RAIDING of the RIVAL SCHOOL.

A Splendid, New, Long, Complete Tale of Tom Merry & Co.—and their Rivals, Gordon Cay & Co.
of the Grammar School. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.



CHAPTER 1.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy is Mysterious.

"YAAS, let me like a soldier fall——"
 "Shut up, Gussy!"
 "Weally, Blake——"
 "There's a letter for you."
 "That is no weason for intewwuptin' me when I am pwactisin' a tenor solo, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, jamming his monocle into his eye and turning a severe look upon Jack Blake of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's. "Pway be quiet!"
 "But there's a letter——"
 "Yaas, let me like a soldier fall——"
 "Shut up!" roared Blake, Digby, and Heeries, in chorus. They had come suddenly into Study No. 6, in the Fourth Form passage in the School House at St. Jim's, and Blake had a letter in his hand. "Here's your letter——"
 "Weally——"
 "Take it, you ass!"

Arthur Augustus took the letter, and put it into his trousers' pocket. Then he picked up the sheet of music again, and recommenced:

"Yaas, let me like a soldier fall
 Upon some open plain;
 This bweast expandin'——"

Three pairs of hands seized the amateur tenor of St. Jim's, and shook him, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's fine tenor voice died away in a sputtering quaver.

"Ow! Oh! You uttah asses!"
 "Open that letter!"
 "There's no hawwty to open the lettah, deah boy, and I was just pwactisin'——"
 "Ass!"
 "Weally, Blake——"
 "Fathead!"
 "Weally, Hewwies——"
 "Open that letter!" roared the three juniors together.
 Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gazed at them in astonishment.

Next Thursday:

"ASHAMED OF HIS SISTER!" AND "DEEP SEA GOLD."

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As a rule, the chums of the Fourth did not take such a deep interest in his correspondence.

"But what's the huwvy, deah boys?" he inquired.

Jack Blake snorted.

"Ass! Isn't the whole study stony, and waiting for a chance to raise the wind?" he exclaimed. "If that letter's from your governor, there may be a remittance in it. You can hand us over the remittance, and then go on singing as long as you like, so long as you keep the door shut."

"Hear, hear!" said Herries and Digby together.

"Weally, deah boys—"

"Open the letter!"

"Oh, vevy well!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy drew the letter from his pocket. He held it in his hand, and looked over the outside of the envelope.

"It isn't fwom my govannah," he said. "I should know his hand. So there's no need to open it now."

"Fathead! It may be from one of your uncles, aunts, cousins, grandmothers!"

"It has the local postmark, deah boy—Wylcombe!" said D'Arcy. "It is pwobably only a bill fwom some twadesman."

"Well, open it, and see."

"Oh, vevy well," said D'Arcy resignedly.

He selected an ivory paper-knife, from his desk, and carefully slit open the envelope.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was never slovenly, and he would not have burst open an envelope with his thumb for any consideration whatever.

Blake and Herries and Digby stood round watching him. They were very keen. Stoniness had descended like a blight upon Study No. 6 in the School House, and each of the juniors had been waiting eagerly for possible letters. It was only Tuesday, and all their pocket-money had already been expended, and they were faced with a prospect of being stony-broke until Saturday, unless chance remittances arrived.

There was always a possibility that some uncle or aunt, whose existence they had forgotten, would remind them of it through the medium of a postal-order, and they had watched for every post.

D'Arcy's "governor" was the relative who was most likely to turn up trumps on an occasion like this, and a letter for D'Arcy was welcomed with open arms, so to speak, by the whole study.

Arthur Augustus's leisurely mode of opening the letter made the juniors fume, but they let the swell of St. Jim's take his time. If there was a remittance from his Uncle Homy or his Aunt Adelina, it might save the study from famine at tea-time.

D'Arcy drew the letter out of the envelope with leisurely fingers, and unfolded it. There was no enclosure. The chums could see that. Arthur Augustus glanced over the letter, and uttered an exclamation of amazement.

"Bai Jove!"

Blake grunted.

"No remittance?" he demanded.

"Wemittance!"

"Yes, remittance, ass!"

"Oh, no?"

"What is it, then?" growled Digby. "A tailor's bill?"

"Tailor's bill!"

"Yes, ass!"

"Oh, no!"

Arthur Augustus answered mechanically. He seemed hardly to hear what was said to him. He was gazing upon the letter, feasting his eyes upon it, as it were, in rapt contemplation. The chums gazed at him in amazement.

"What is it?" demanded Blake.

"What?"

"What is the letter about?"

"About?"

"Yes, fathead!" Blake roared. "What is it about?"

"Weally, Blake—"

"You don't mean to say that it's a blessed secret!" exclaimed Digby, in astonishment.

"A—a secwct!"

"Yes, what is it?"

"Oh, it's—it's a lettah, deah boy!"

"We can see that for ourselves!" growled Jack Blake.

"We want to know what it is about?"

"Undah the circs, deah boy, it is impos. for me to show you this lettah."

"What the dickens—"

"You have shown a remarkable lack of appweciation of my tenor voice," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, with dignity.

"There may be othahs, deah boys, who are more appweciative."

"Eh?"

"There may be othahs who are delighted to listen to me,

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and who regard my voice as bearin' a wesemblance to silvahy chimcs."

"What?"

"Somebody's pulling his silly leg!" gasped Blake. "What's in that letter, Gussy?"

"I must decline to tell you, undah the circs., Blake."

"You ass!"

"I wefuse—"

"Fathead!" roared Blake. "As your elder, and the boss of this study, I insist upon knowing what's in that letter. I'm not going to have anybody pulling your leg without my knowing about it."

"Weally, Blake!"

"Hand over that letter!"

"I wefuse!"

And Arthur Augustus thrust the letter into his pocket, and quitted the study quite abruptly, forgetting even his unfinished tenor solo. Blake, Herries, and Digby stared at him blankly for a moment, and then rushed after him. But the swell of St. Jim's darted down the passage, and ran.

Blake halted, in sheer astonishment.

"What on earth does it mean?" he exclaimed. "What is the champion ass so blessed mysterious about?"

"I give it up," said Digby. "But there's no remittance in the letter, anyway. Let's go and see if we can make a raise in Kangaroo's study."

And Blake nodded assent; but he was still very much puzzled by the mysterious conduct of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the swell of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 2.

The Unknown Admirer.

"POOR gal!"

Tom Merry jumped.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther—The Terrible Three of the Shell—were coming across the quadrangle from the tuck-shop, when the voice was heard under the elm-trees.

It was the voice of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth.

The chums of the Shell halted. They had just been discussing the advisability of spending an hour or two that evening in raiding Gordon Gay & Co., of Rylcombe Grammar School—an establishment with which the juniors of St. Jim's were generally on terms of warfare. But all thoughts of the Grammar School were driven out of their minds by the sound of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's voice. Arthur Augustus had a very pleasant voice, and now it sounded very soft and tender indeed. The Terrible Three looked round for him.

"There he is!" murmured Tom Merry.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was standing under one of the elms, with an open letter in his hand, which he was gazing upon with dreamy eyes. It was clear that he was quite unconscious of the fact that eyes had fallen upon him. He was in that state described by the poet as "the world forgetting, by the world forgot." The chums of the Shell stared at him, but D'Arcy did not raise his eyes from the letter.

"Poor gal!"

"My only hat!" murmured Monty Lowther.

"Like silvahy chimcs!" muttered D'Arcy, loud enough for the chums of the Shell to hear. "Yaas, it has often struck me like that myself. It is vevy pleasant to be appweciated, and I should like to know who w'ote this lettah! Yaas, wathah!"

Monty Lowther stepped up quietly behind the swell of St. Jim's. D'Arcy was far too engrossed to see him or hear him. Monty Lowther brought down his hand upon the shoulder of D'Arcy's elegant jacket with a sounding smack.

Smack!

"Yawwoh! Oh!"

D'Arcy jumped, and swung round. His monocle had fallen out of his eye with the shock, and he groped for it, and jammed it in again, and glared at Lowther.

"Lowthah! You utter ass!"

"Hallo!" said Monty Lowther genially. "I thought I'd wake you up, you know. Thought you'd gone to sleep standing up like a horse."

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Is that letter from Cousin Ethel?" asked Tom Merry.

"Certainly not."

"Who's the poor girl, then?"

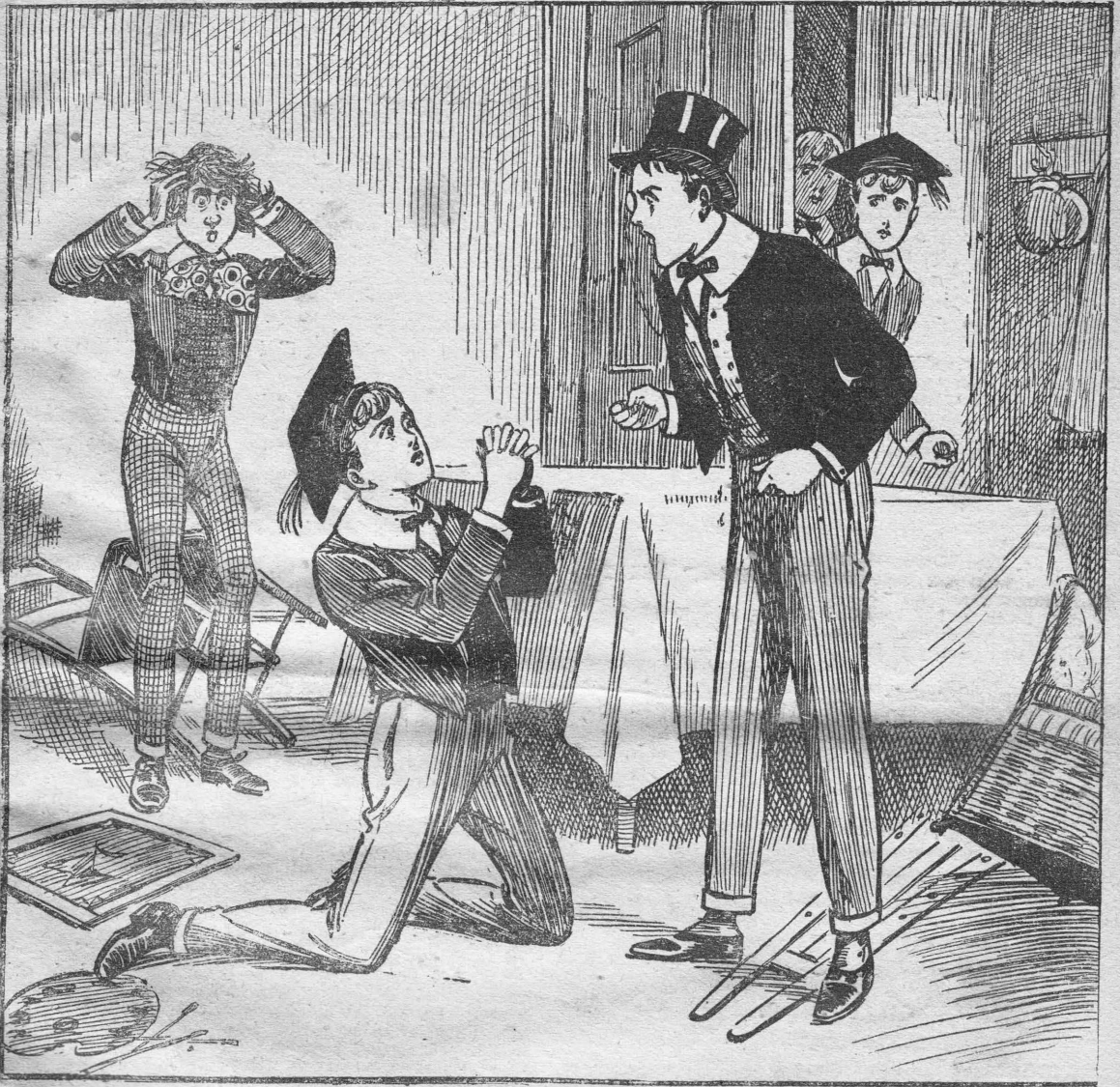
"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Poor gal, you mean," said Monty Lowther. "You haven't got the pronunciation correctly. I distinctly heard Gussy say 'poor gal!'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I regard you as a set of wottahs," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "You have no wight to surpwise me in this w'ay. I have received a vevy wemarkable lettah!"

"Read it out!"



Gordon Gay threw himself upon his knees in front of D'Arcy and clasped his hands. "Mercy!" he shrieked. "Think of my grandmother in far-off Australia. Spare me, for her sake!" "You fwrightful fathead" said D'Arcy. (See Chapter 5.)

"Undah the cires, it is imposs. to do that. It is weally in confidence. Tom Mewwy!"

"Yes?"

"Have you evah—" D'Arcy paused.

"Certainly," said Tom Merry blandly. "Lots of times."

"Have you evah—"

"Frequently."

"Have you evah—"

"Almost daily."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pway don't be a silly ass, deah boy. Have you evah—"

D'Arcy paused again. He evidently wanted to ask a question, but he did not seem to be able to get it quite out. Monty Lowther tapped his forehead significantly, and Tom Merry and Manners chuckled.

"Have you evah—er—evah—have you evah been in the pish. of weceivin' a lettah fwom a lady you don't know?"

"My hat!"

"Expressin' admiration for you and for your—er—gifts." "How could you make a lady gifts if you don't know her?" asked Monty Lowther.

"Ass! I mean for your personal gifts, such as a tenah voice. The lettah is evidently fwom some nice gal who has heard me sing."

"Is she ill, then?"

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"You were saying 'poor girl,' you know," Monty Lowther explained.

"Was I? Ahem! Well, I was thinkin' that it's wathah vuff on her to be stwuck with me in this way, when pewwaps I have nevah taken any notice of her at all." Arthur Augustus explained. "Of course, I twust I am not a conceited ass, but she says so plainly that she wegards me with tendahness!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, you fellows!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Lowther. "Somebody's pulling your leg! Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you do not stop that idiotic cacklin', Lowthah, I shall have no resource but to give you a feahful thwashin'. If you fellows will pwomise not to tweek the matter in a wibald spiwit, I will show you the letter."

Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther became quite grave at once. That somebody was making fun of the innocent and trustful Gussy they felt quite certain, and whether it was a joke of the New House fellows, or of the Grammarians, or of anybody else, they were curious to get at the bottom of the matter.

"We'll be serious as—as boiled owls," said Tom Merry.

"Grave as judges," said Manners.

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NEXT WEEK:

"ASHAMED OF HIS SISTER!"

"Solemn and sad as a comic paper," said Monty Lowther. "Vewy well! Pway wead this, Tom Mewwy! I wegard it as vewy cwuous and vewy touchin'!"

And Arthur Augustus handed the letter to Tom Merry. The Shell fellow took it and glanced at it, and gave a whistle of astonishment. Then he read it out. It ran in rhyme:

"Sing to me, sweetest
In tenor sublime,
Lovely your singing,
Like silvery chime!
You are my dearest,
And I would be thine,
Sing to me, loved one,
Sing songs divine!"

"My only hat!" ejaculated Monty Lowther.
"Great Scott!"
"Great pip!"

Arthur Augustus adjusted his monocle in his eye, and regarded the chums of the Shell seriously. They tried to remain solemn, but it cost them tremendous efforts.

"What do you think of it, deah boys?"
"If Sappho hadn't been dead about three thousand years, I should think it was Sappho," said Monty Lowther musingly.
"But it can't be, can it?"

"Weally, Lowthah—"
"A young lady who is fond of sing-songs!" Tom Merry remarked. "Surely she doesn't mean that she goes to smokers—"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"
"That's what she says—sing-songs divine," said Tom Merry innocently.

"You uttah ass! The word sing is used as an active verb—sing songs divine."

"Oh, I see! And you don't know who it is?"
"No."

"You don't know the writing?"
"No."

"What's the postmark on the letter?"
"Wylcombe."

"Rylcombe! Ha, ha, ha! It's the Grammar cads, then Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, you fellows—"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"I wefuse to think anythin' of the sort. This lettah is from a young lady who has heard me singin' a tenah solo, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy crushed the letter in his hand, and walked away with his nose very high in the air. He left the Terrible Three roaring with laughter.

CHAPTER 3.

The Acrostic.

FIGGINS, of the Fourth, was sitting on the corner of the table in his study in the New House. Kerr was at work upon a Latin imposition, and Fatty Wynn was roasting chestnuts at the study fire. Figgins was laying down the law, emphasising his remarks with thumps upon his knee at intervals.

"Something will have to be done," said Figgins.
"Certainly!" said Kerr, without looking up from his work. "Fama est etiam, Hannibalem—"

"Oh, cheese that!" said Figgins crossly. "You can write out rotten Latin at any time. I say that something will have to be done."

"They're nearly done," said Fatty Wynn, turning a warm and crimson face from the fire.

"Eh? What are nearly done?"
"The chestnuts."

"Fathead! I'm talking about the Grammar cads!" said Figgins. "Since we've licked the School House and put the bouncers in their place, my idea is that we ought to take the lead in licking the Grammarians."

"Hear, hear!" said Kerr.
"Oh, certainly!" said Fatty Wynn. "Will you have some of the chestnuts, Figg?"

"Oh, blow the chestnuts! Those Grammar School bouncers have been getting their ears up altogether too much lately, and they ought to be put in their place."

"Well, we could do it if the School House chaps backed us up," said Kerr.

"Yes," said Figgins, a little excitedly. "That's what I've tried to explain to Tom Merry and Blake and Kangaroo and the rest. We could whip the Grammarians hollow, if the School House backed us up. But they want us to back them up instead, and, of course, that's—"

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"Rot!" said Kerr.

"Exactly! Rot!"

Tap!

"Oh, come in, fathead!" said Figgins resignedly, as there was a knock at the door of the study.

"Weally, Figgins—"

"Hallo! It's Gussy!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of the School House, came in. Figgins picked up a ruler, and glanced past Gussy to see if there were any other School House fellows in sight. But it was evidently not a raid. Arthur Augustus was alone, and his manner was quite pacific. Figgins put the ruler down.

Figgins looked inquiringly at the swell of the School House. Kerr went on with his work. Fatty Wynn rose from the grate, looking exceedingly ruddy, and placed a plate of chestnuts on the table.

"Pile in!" he said.

"Have some chestnuts, Gussy?" asked Figgins hospitably. D'Arcy shook his head.

"Thanks, no, deah boy!" he replied. "I came over heah—" He paused.

Figgins nodded.

"Yes, I can see you did," he replied.

"Pway don't be funnay, Figgins! I come ovah heah—"

"Go hon!"

"As a mattah of fact, I am in a wathah peculiah posish," said the swell of St. Jim's, turning a little pink. "I came ovah here to speak to you chaps."

"Go ahead!"

"I should like Kerr to look at a lettah I've weecived. It is a vewy remarkable lettah, and I should like to know who it's from. Kerr is a beastly keen chap, and he might be able to work it out for me."

Kerr looked up from his work at once. The Scottish member of Figgins & Co. was famous for his keenness and "canniness." There were very few things that Kerr could not do. No one had ever been able to devise a problem, a puzzle, or a cryptogram that he could not solve. He was exactly the fellow to help Arthur Augustus in the present emergency.

"I'm your man!" said Kerr at once. "What's the trouble?"

"I've weecived a lettah," D'Arcy explained. "It is witten in rhyme, and appeals to come from a young lady who has heard me sing, and wegards me with gweat tendahness in consequence. Of course, that is vewy pweable."

Figgins slid off the table, and collapsed into an arm-chair with a gasp. Fatty Wynn paused with a chestnut half-way to his mouth, and stared at the swell of the School House. Kerr remained perfectly serious.

"Extremely probable," agreed Kerr. "And the letter is anonymous?"

"Well, it is not signed."

"And you want to know whom it's from?"

"Well, I should like to be assuahed that it is quite sewious," said D'Arcy. "Tom Mewwy persists in wegardin' it as a wag, but my opinion is that it is quite sewious. I have heard of ladies witin' enthusiastic lettahs to famous tenahs. Of course, I am not Cawoso or Tamagno, but I must remark that I have a wippin' tenah voice, and—"

Figgins made a peculiar sound, as if he were trying to swallow something, and D'Arcy looked round.

"Did you speak, Figgins?" he asked very distinctly.

"N-n-no!" gasped Figgins.

"Gro-o-o-o!" gurgled Fatty Wynn.

"Did you address me, Wynn?"

"It was only this—this chestnut," said Fatty Wynn.

"Vewy good! Will you wead the lettah, Kerr, and give me your opinion?"

"Certainly!"

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Arthur Augustus D'Arcy laid the famous letter from his unknown admirer upon the table, and Kerr looked at it. He looked puzzled for a moment, and Figgins and Fatty Wynn came round and read the letter over his shoulder. Figgins gave a peculiar gasp.

"What do you think, Kerr?"

Kerr was staring at the letter. His face was very serious. Whether he was trying to trace the handwriting or to deduce the name of the writer from the way the "t's" were crossed, after the manner of the celebrated Sherlock Holmes, the juniors could not guess. But Kerr's expression changed. There appeared a smile on his serious face; the smile became a grin, which broadened; the grin became a laugh, the laugh a roar, and the roar a wild, hysterical yell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally Kerr——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Kerr wildly.

"You uttah ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

D'Arcy snatched up the paper.

"I wegard you as a wude ass!" he exclaimed. "Undah the cires——"

"But I've found it out!" yelled Kerr. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"You've found out what?"

"It's an—ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a what?"

"A—ha, ha, ha, ha! It's an acrostic!" shrieked Kerr.

"A—a what?"

"An acrostic! Ha, ha, ha!"

"An acrostic!" gasped D'Arcy.

"Yes, rather! Read the initial letter of each line downwards!" gasped Kerr. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Does that give the w'itah's name?"

"No, Yours!"

"Mine! Bai Jove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Kerr.

D'Arcy unfolded the paper again. The four juniors read the initial letters of the lines downwards together. Then there was a yell of laughter in the study.

"Sing to me, sweetest,
In tenor sublime,
Lovely your singing,
Like silvery chime!
You are my dearest,
And I would be thine.
Sing to me loved one,
Sing songs divine!"

"Read the initials!" almost sobbed Kerr.

And D'Arcy read them:

"S-i-l-l-y a-s-s!"

"Two words!" gurgled Kerr.

"Silly ass!" yelled Figgins. "Silly ass! Ha, ha, ha!"

D'Arcy's face was a study.

For a moment he stared at the acrostic, speechless. Then he grabbed up the paper and fled. He left Figgins & Co. in hysterics. Kerr laid back in his chair and shrieked, Fatty Wynn held on to the table and roared. Figgins threw himself on the hearthrug, and kicked up his feet in a paroxysm of merriment.

CHAPTER 4.

Arthur Augustus Knows What to Do.

"Gussy!"

"Gussy!"

"Where's Gussy?"

"Anybody seen the one and only?"

The bell was ringing for afternoon classes, and the Fourth Form were going in to their Form-room. But Arthur Augustus was missing. Blake, Herries, Digby, Reilly, Lumley-Lumley, and Brooke, looked for him up and down the passage; but the swell of St. Jim's was not to be seen. Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn came in together, and Blake slapped Figgins on the shoulder.

"Seen Gussy?"

"Ha, ha! Yes."

"Some of your rotten New House japes, eh?" said Blake suspiciously. "Where is he?"

"Oh, it's a quarter of an hour since I've seen him!" said Figgins. "He's given us the laugh of a lifetime. Have you seen his letter?"

"His letter! No."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What's the joke?" demanded Blake. "What——"

But Figgins & Co. went into the Form-room, still chuckling, and without replying. Jack Blake gazed after them in astonishment. He was inclined to suspect that there had been a House jape, and that Gussy had been shut up somewhere by the heroes of the New House; but it would be carrying a joke a little too far to keep a fellow late for lessons. The

matter was settled by D'Arcy hurrying into sight as the last of the Fourth were going into the Form-room. Little Mr. Lathom was already there, and Blake seized D'Arcy by the arm, and rushed him in just in time.

"Where have you been, you ass?" he exclaimed.

"Weally, Blake——"

"You've kept us all late looking for you."

"I am sowwy, but——"

"Didn't you hear the bell?" demanded Lumley-Lumley.

"I was thinkin' of somethin' else. It is a feahful bothah havin' to attend classes this atnahnoon."

"What's the matter?"

"I have been insulted."

"Go hon!"

"Weally, Blake——"

"Sit down, ass!"

"Undah the cires——"

"No, on the form."

"You uttah ass!"

"Hush!"

Mr. Lathom glanced in the direction of the chums of Study No. 6. The juniors subsided into silence at once. But Arthur Augustus D'Arcy rose to his feet in his place, and little Mr. Lathom peered at him over his spectacles.

"If you please sir——"

"What is it, D'Arcy?"

"May I wequest you to excuse me fwom lessons early to-day, sir? I have some vewy important bizney to attend to, sir."

"Indeed! What is the business, D'Arcy?"

Arthur Augustus hesitated.

"I trust you will not inquire, sir," he replied. "But it is weally vewy important, and——"

"You may sit down, D'Arcy."

"Weally, sir——"

"Sit down at once!"

"Oh, vewy well, sir!"

D'Arcy sat down. The first lesson proceeded, Mr. Lathom several times casting a severe glance in the direction of the swell of St. Jim's. There was a frown upon Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's aristocratic brow, and it was evident that serious and indignant thoughts were working in his mind. Blake tapped him on the arm as soon as he thought that Mr. Lathom was sufficiently occupied with Mellish's mistakes in geographical matters.

"What on earth is the matter, Gussy?"

"I have been insulted, deah boy. Look at that lettah."

D'Arcy laid the famous letter on Blake's desk. Blake read it, and giggled softly. Mr. Lathom looked round, and an expression of almost preternatural solemnity came over Jack Blake's face.

"There is nothin' whatever to laugh at, Blake!"

Blake suppressed another chuckle.

"Quite so, Gussy. But I don't see anything insulting in that letter. It's quite admiring and enthusiastic."

"It's an acwostic, deah boy."

"What!"

"Wead the initials of the lines downwards."

Blake did so, and burst into a sudden yell of laughter that rang through the class-room.

"Silly ass! Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Lathom jumped as if he had been suddenly electrified.

"Blake!" he shouted.

"Ha, ha, ha, ha!"

"Blake!"

"Ha, ha—— I'm sorry, sir. Ha, ha! Sorry."

"Blake, take a hundred lines!"

"Oh! Yes sir."

"And remain in this Form-room, sir, an hour after class is dismissed, and write them out," exclaimed Mr. Lathom angrily.

"Oh! Yes sir."

"And if there are any more unseemly interruptions on your part, Blake, I shall cane you."

There were no more unseemly interruptions on Blake's part. But he had hard work to suppress his merriment several times. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy regarded him with a cold and dignified eye. He did not see anything to laugh at. It was a quarter of an hour later when Blake ventured to speak on the subject without the danger of bursting into a yell of laughter again.

"Gussy! Who wrote that?"

"The postmark on the lettah was Wylcombe, deah boy."

"The Grammarians," murmured Blake.

D'Arcy nodded.

"Yaas, watah; it must have been the Gwammah cads. I am goin' ovah as soon as lessons are finished, to see the wottahs."

"My hat!"

"It was Gordon Gay, of course. I am goin' to give him a feahful thwashin'!"

NEXT
WEEK:

"ASHAMED OF HIS SISTER!"

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"My dear ass—"

"I wefuse to be called an ass!"

"But you can't go over there, fathead! They'll rag you!"

D'Arcy sniffed.

"I shall wefuse to be wagged. I am goin' to give Gordon Gay a feahful thwashin'! I shall not allow a Gwanmawian to call me a silly ass with impunity."

Blake smothered a giggle. Arthur Augustus turned away his head, and refused to be drawn into any further discussion with a fellow who could not remain serious on an exceedingly serious subject.

But Blake was really anxious about his elegant chum. If Arthur Augustus D'Arcy carried out his intention of going over to the Grammar School to thrash Gordon Gay, Blake could guess what the result would be—the swell of St. Jim's would be hopelessly ragged by the Grammar School juniors.

But Blake was not able to keep a fatherly eye on his chum. He was detained, and Mr. Lathom had not forgotten that circumstance. Blake had apparently forgotten it, for when the Fourth Form were dismissed, Blake rose to go out with the others.

Little Mr. Lathom called him back.

"Blake!"

"Ye-e-es, sir."

"You are detained, I think."

"Ye-e-es, sir."

"Then you will kindly resume your place. You may go when you have finished your hundred lines, and not before," said Mr. Lathom.

"Ye-e-es, sir."

Blake "wired into" his hundred lines with a speed that had probably never before been equalled in the Fourth Form class-room. Lines ran off his pen at almost electric speed. He was desperately anxious to get out of the Form-room in time to stop the swell of St. Jim's going over to Rylcombe Grammar School.

But it was useless! The lines, written at express speed as they were, took time to write, and when Blake had finished them, and had taken them to Mr. Lathom's study, and started to look for the swell of St. Jim's, D'Arcy was gone. Blake hunted for him high and low, but Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was no longer within the walls of St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 5.

Arthur Augustus on the Warpath.

"MY hat!" ejaculated Gordon Gay, of the Fourth Form at Rylcombe Grammar School.

"What's the matter?" asked Jack Wootton.

"Here he comes."

"Who does?"

"The silly ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Gordon Gay was standing in the gateway of the Grammar School—that big, new, painfully white gateway which contrasted so much with the grey, old stone arch of the gate at St. Jim's. Everything about the Grammar School looked new, from the white gateway to the red-brick walls and the square windows. The "Saints" prided themselves upon being of ancient foundation, and the Grammarians upon being up-to-date. It was only a different way of looking at it. Gordon Gay, with his mortar-board on the side of his head, and his hands in his trousers' pockets, was leaning on the aggressive white stone, and whistling as he looked out into the lane. When his whistle suddenly ceased, and he uttered an ejaculation at the sight of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

His comrades, Jack Wootton, Frank Monk, Lane, and Carboy, immediately joined him in the gateway, and they looked with grinning faces at the approaching figure of the swell of St. Jim's. They could guess why D'Arcy had come, but they were rather surprised to see him alone. A raid from the rival school would not have surprised them, but what Arthur Augustus expected to effect alone against the whole Grammar School was a mystery to them. But there never was any telling what the swell of St. Jim's would do.

D'Arcy marched up to the gates of the Grammar School with his aristocratic nose very high in the air. He did not raise his silk hat as he halted before the group of Grammarians; a most unusual omission for the swell of St. Jim's. He gave Gordon Gay a cold bow, and held out a letter. Gordon Gay inspected it, as if it were a curiosity of some sort held out for his entertainment.

"Wead that lettah, please," said D'Arcy stiffly.

"Certainly!" said Gordon Gay.

And he read out the beautiful verses upon the subject of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's tenor voice, which had caused so much merriment at St. Jim's.

The Grammarians grinned.

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"Well, that's ripping!" said Frank Monk. "Is that an unsolicited testimonial, Gussy?"

"Weally, Monk—"

"I should have that framed, and hung up in the study," said Carboy.

"Yes, rather."

"I wefuse to do anythin' of the sort! That wotten thing is an acwostic, and it contains an impertinent reflection upon me."

"By Jove!"

"And I believe you wottahs w'ote it."

"Ha ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy adjusted his monocle very carefully, and stared accusingly at Gordon Gay. The Grammarians roared with laughter.

"Did you write that, Gordon Gay, you uttah ass?"

Gordon Gay looked reflective.

"Did I write it, Monkey?"

Frank Monk turned to Carboy.

"Did you write it, Carboy?" he inquired.

Carboy looked at Lane.

"Did you write it, Lane?"

And Lane, in his turn, looked inquiringly at Gordon Gay.

"Did you write it, Gay?"

The question went round the circle without any answer being obtained, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's face became pinker and pinker with anger. It was easy for the elegant junior to see that he was being "rotted," and his wrath was rising crescendo.

"Unless you deny havin' written it, Gay, I shall take it for granted that you did!" he exclaimed.

"Did I write it, Lane?"

"Did he write it, Carboy?"

"Did he write it, Monkey?"

The question was going round again. But Arthur Augustus was growing "fed up" by this time. He made a sudden rush at Gordon Gay, hitting out. The Cornstalk junior moved aside quickly, and Arthur Augustus's gloved knuckles rapped on the hard stone of the gateway, where Gay had been leaning. The swell of St. Jim's gave a wild yell.

"Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Gay.

"You uttah wottah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Bai Joye!"

Arthur Augustus turned upon his enemy again. Gordon Gay dodged round Lane and Carboy, the swell of St. Jim's in hot pursuit. Then Gay made a break into the quadrangle, and Arthur Augustus rushed after him. The swell of St. Jim's was too excited to realise that he was being led into a trap.

He dashed after Gordon Gay across the quadrangle, and Grammarians on all sides yelled encouragement to the race.

"Go it, Gay!"

"Put it on, D'Arcy!"

"Hop it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Frank Monk and his comrades followed, gasping with merriment. They knew that Gordon was leading the swell of St. Jim's into a trap, and they would be wanted to secure the bold invader. Gay reached the big red-brick School House, and looked round, with a very scared expression, over his shoulder. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was whizzing after him like an arrow from a bow.

"Stop, you uttah wottah!" gasped D'Arcy. "I insist upon your stoppin' immediately, so that I can give you a feahful thwashin'."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You feahful wottah!"

Gordon Gay ran into the house. Arthur Augustus, careless of danger, followed him. Gay was disappearing upstairs, and D'Arcy came into the hall, and the swell of St. Jim's darted up the stairs after him without the slightest hesitation. Gordon Gay sprinted along the Fourth Form passage, and burst into his study.

There was a shout from a junior already there. This was Tadpole, of the Fourth, who shared that study with Gay and Wootton major and minor. Tadpole was an artist, and he generally had an easel, a canvas, and a colour-box going strong in the study. At the present moment he was busy at the window, though it was getting dark, catching the last gleam of the sun, and putting it down in a vivid red that would have made the most post of post-impressionists feel a little ill. Tadpole looked round wrathfully as Gordon Gay came dashing in and bumped into the easel and sent it flying.

"Oh, you fathead!"

"It's all right, Taddy—"

"All right!" yelled Tadpole. "Look at my painting! It's in the grate!"

"Well, that's the proper place for a great painting."

"Look here, Gay——"

"Bai Jove! I've got you now!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy burst into the study. Tadpole stared at him in amazement. Alarums and excursions between the juniors of the Grammar School and of St. Jim's were not at all infrequent, but an invasion of the Grammar School by a St. Jim's junior single-handed was a surprise. D'Arcy rushed into the study, taking no heed of Tadpole, and chasing Gordon round the table.

There was a roar from Tadpole as his easel was trampled on and his colour-box crunched under a hasty heel and when Gordon Gay stumbled and fell with his elbow through the fallen canvas, Tadpole tore his hair. Tadpole wore his hair long, and there was plenty of it to tear. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy overtook Gay as the latter extricated himself from the painting, and grasped him by the shoulder.

"Now, you wottah——"

Gordon Gay threw himself upon his knees, and clasped his hands. Gay was a born actor, and he could turn on the heavy dramatic style at a moment's notice.

"Mercy!" he shrieked.

"Weally, Gay——"

"Spare me!"

"You uttah ass!"

"Think of my grandmother in far-off Australia!" sobbed Gordon Gay. "At this very moment she is probably having fried onions for her tea. Think of it!"

"You fwabjous ass!"

"Spare me, for her sake!"

D'Arcy snorted.

"Get up immediately, so that I can thwash you!" he bawled. "I have come here specially to thwash you, you uttah ass!"

"Mercy!"

"You fwightful fathead!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was a roar of laughter at the door. Frank Monk & Co. had arrived. They crowded into the study. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy backed against the wall, and put up his hands. For the first time it dawned upon him that he had got himself into a dangerous corner.

Gordon Gay jumped up, laughing.

"Collar him!" he exclaimed.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Gordon Gay——"

"Don't hurt him—just collar him."

"I came here to thwash you, Gordon Gay. I insist upon your puttin' up your hands immediately, and these wottahs can see fair play."

"I don't want to hurt you, Gussy, or I'd fight you with pleasure," grinned Gordon Gay. "Collar the duffer, you chaps! Ha, ha, ha!"

The Grammarians rushed upon the swell of St. Jim's. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy hit out desperately, and there was a terrific struggle for a couple of minutes. Then the swell of St. Jim's was on the floor, and half-a-dozen Grammarians were sprawling over him, and he was a prisoner.

CHAPTER 6. Under False Colours.

"YOU uttah wottahs!"

"And mother said I was so nice," grinned Frank Monk.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pway get off my beastly legs, Gordon Gay!"

Frank Monk & Co. pulled D'Arcy into a sitting posture. His hands were firmly held behind him. There was not much chance of escape. In a brief look round Arthur Augustus realised something of the effect of falling into the hands of the Amalekites.

"What shall we do with him, kids?" asked Gordon Gay.

"Boiling oil?" asked Frank Monk.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

D'Arcy wished that he had been able to fix his monocle. He felt extremely indignant, and the proper expression of indignation did not seem possible without the inevitable eyeglass.

"I shall pwobably thwash you also, Fwank Monk," he said, with no little asperity. "You seem to be gwinnin' wathah——"

"Oh, no! Not at all, old chap!" smiled Gordon Gay.

"This is only a dream. You'll be thrashing me like anything shortly. Hold him!"

D'Arcy, in a forlorn hope, had begun another struggle. The swell of St. Jim's made things hum for a few more minutes, but when it was over he looked a trifle more dusty and dishevelled—nothing more. Frank Monk & Co. were too much for him.

"Oh, rot this!" said Carboy. "Let's get to business. Here's a fellow comes to our giddy place to punch Gordon Gay, and swanks——"

"You uttah beast, Carboy!" said Arthur Augustus, in a fearfully outraged voice. "I could not possibly assent to bein' called a swankah——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

D'Arcy gazed in speechless horror at Gordon Gay and his friends. Rivalry, with the always understood but never mentioned superiority of St. Jim's, he admitted. But that even a Grammarian should consider him guilty of swanking, D'Arcy felt was overstepping the international law of colleges, as understood in such matters of honourable enmity as this of St. Jim's and the Grammarians.

"I said boiling oil," said Frank Monk.

"By Jove, that's not a bad idea, Monk!" said Tadpole.

Arthur Augustus's look of horror perceptibly increased. He knew that some juniors were obsessed with stories of cannibal islands and the like. But that South Sea methods of punishment should flourish at such a place as the Grammar School was disconcerting, to say the least. He longed for a free hand—to use his monocle.

"What wot!" he said at length.

"Oh, I don't know, D'Arcy!" said Gordon Gay, as if the ragging of the swell of St. Jim's was a thing to be desired most of all by D'Arcy himself. "Tadpole could do it very nicely for you, you know——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Grammarians "caught on" to their leader's drollery.

D'Arcy maintained a stony silence. He was resolved to ignore everybody. Let the Grammarians do their worst; he would remain perfectly impassive.

"I say, do him up in oils, and then pack him off to his own shanty," said Frank Monk.

"Hear, hear!"

Arthur Augustus, who had picked up some cannibal island lore from Herries, wondered how a junior could "be done up in oils" and packed back to "his shanty." Dead men did not pack back as a rule, and D'Arcy's idea of "done up in oils" was something in the cheerful nature of Far Eastern tortures. Further reflection was suddenly cut short by a general hurrying of events. Tadpole had disappeared. As Tadpole had been mentioned by Gordon Gay as doing it very nicely for D'Arcy, the swell of St. Jim's had some misgivings.

"Don't he look nice!" said Carboy.

"Shall we take his collar off, so as to get at him better?" asked Lane, with a grin.

"I should wewuse to have my collah, especially my tie, touched!" said Arthur Augustus.

"Of course!" said Gordon Gay. "Very well, old son, we'll do those up in oils, too!"

The grin that went round the study alarmed D'Arcy. He began to have a suspicion that something really dreadful was going to happen. There was an air of quiet expectation about Carboy and Lane that somehow reminded Arthur Augustus of butchers. They held him securely the while and when Tadpole burst into the room with a palette on his thumb, D'Arcy started. The little puddles of colour—mostly red—looked unmistakably like the small what-nois of the meat-man's window. Tadpole, mixing the colour with a brush, somewhat reassured Arthur Augustus.

"Make him a pretty boy, Tadpole!" cried Gordon Gay.

"If you put those beastly things on my face——"

"Guessed it, D'Arcy!" said Monk. "What penetration——"

"You're a howwible boundah, Fwank Monk!" said D'Arcy.

"I insist on Tadpole, wemembewwng what he is about to do——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't think I need trouble to remember anything, except that he came here to knock Gordon Gay about," grinned Tadpole. "If you will do these naughty things, Gussy——"

And he approached Arthur Augustus with a brush full of colour. Arthur Augustus writhed.

But it was useless to try to escape the deft hand of Tadpole. Held as he was by Gordon Gay, Frank Monk, Carboy, and Lane, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy simply had no chance.

"Do his ears first, Tadpole!" suggested Carboy.

Tadpole grinned. In the twinkling of an eye, or more quickly, Arthur Augustus's left ear looked as if it had recently sustained a March wind or a killing frost.

"Make the other a pickled cabbage colour, Taddy," said Lane.

"You uttah boundahs——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

D'Arcy's right ear having been reduced to the glowing tint of a familiar vegetable, Tadpole pushed on, so to speak. D'Arcy's eyes were decorated in a manner that suggested a

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atherine wheel after serious complications. A protest from the patient—sitter, rather—earned him a mouthful of "real ultramarine." Carboy next suggested using a little vermilion as a hair-restorer. Arthur Augustus turned pale. Even under his gorgeous panoply his alarm was very evident to his tormentors. They smiled as only honourable enemies can smile. D'Arcy spluttered. The wretched pigment, plentifully diluted by the ingenious Tadpole, ran down the wrinkles of severe torture into Arthur Augustus's eyes, nose, and mouth.

"Ow!" he gasped. "Ooch! Ooh, weally! Oo!"

"Ain't he just hammering Gordon Gay?" said Carboy facetiously.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You wotten cads! You feahful wufflars! You—Ow!—ow!—ow!"

The three last ejaculations were occasioned by the playful Tadpole inserting his brush into D'Arcy's mouth after each cry. The brush only contained megilp, but megilp has a taste something like an omelette gone wrong when applied as a dentifrice. D'Arcy struggled, but he could not break his bonds. He was held by the enemy in no uncertain fashion, and they had yet some more will to work upon him. Wondering in a brief respite what was to be his next humiliation, Arthur Augustus had the mortification of sitting out the decoration of his waistcoat and shirt-cuffs. A few final touches to his face, and he was complete—a complete work of art, and quite worthy to be hung, as Tadpole facetiously remarked.

The Grammarians yelled as they looked at him. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was allowed to rise, his hands being tied behind his back loosely, in case he should attempt violence—as he was very likely to do, under the circumstances. As he was not able to hit out, he had to content himself with telling the Grammar youths what he thought of them, which he did in quite forcible language, but the more he shouted with wrath, the more the Grammarians yelled with laughter.

"Let him look at his lovely chivvy!" grinned Gordon Gay. "Give him a glass, Taddy."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tadpole held up a glass before the swell of St. Jim's. Arthur Augustus gasped.

"Ow! You uttah wottahs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Take him out!" sobbed Gordon Gay, wiping away tears of merriment. "Lead him to the gates, and set him on the homeward path. Ha, ha, ha!"

"You uttah wottahs! I cannot return like that!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus had no choice about the matter. Three minutes later he was dropped outside the gates of the Grammar School, and the Grammarians, yelling with laughter, retired within, and left him there.

CHAPTER 7.

Wet!

"WHAT on earth—"

"Great Scott!"

"Great Julius Cæsar!"

"Phew!"

"It's the Wild Man from Borneo!"

Tom Merry & Co. halted, staring at the wild, strange figure that was coming towards them in the dusk of the lane. It was strange enough to cause ejaculations of amazement. It had its hands tied behind, and a silk hat stuck on one side of its towled head, and its hair ruffled, and one of its ears painted a brilliant red, and its face decorated in impressionist style.

It required a very close examination to reveal the fact that the wild, bizarre figure was in reality the most elegant junior of St. Jim's—Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth Form.

"My only hat!" shouted Blake. "It's Gussy!"

"Gussy!"

"My word!"

"Bai Jove, deah boys!" gasped the strange figure. "I've had a frightful time, you know. I have weally!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The St. Jim's juniors roared with laughter. They could not help it. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy glared through his paint.

"You uttah asses! There is nothin' whatevah to laugh at."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Blake unfastened the swell of St. Jim's. The juniors gathered round him, yelling with merriment. Blake had collected a party to hurry to the rescue, knowing that the swell of St. Jim's had gone alone to the Grammar School to try conclusions with the writers of the famous acrostic. The rescuers were too late for the rescue evidently. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had lost no time. It would have been better for him, as a matter of fact, if he had done so.

"I fail to see any cause whatevah for this absurd mewwiment," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy coldly. "Pway stop it, deah boys!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you fellows will back me up, I will go back and thrash the lot of them," said Arthur Augustus, whose warlike spirit was quite unsubdued.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Faith, and we're not going along the road with the Wild Man from Borneo," said Reilly. "You can go home and wash."

"Weally, Weally—"

"Quite right," said Tom Merry. "We'll go on and lick the Grammar cads, but you can't come along in that state, Gussy. It's not respectable."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Come on, you chaps. Buzz off, Gussy!"

"But you chaps will get into some twouble if I'm not there," said D'Arcy anxiously.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, you fellows—"

"Oh, buzz off, Gussy, before you give me a pain in the ribs," said Digby pathetically.

"Weally, Digby—"

The juniors marched on towards the Grammar School, and the curiously disguised swell of St. Jim's, after a moment or two of hesitation, tramped on homeward. Much as he desired to meet Gordon Gay & Co. again, he felt that it would not do to remain out of doors in his present state.

Tom Merry & Co. were still laughing as they hurried on towards the Grammar School, but they were feeling very warlike, all the same.

"Gussy has got himself into a bother, as usual," said Blake; "but we can't have the Grammar cads crowing over us. We've got to give them a jolly good licking, or we shall never hear the end of this."

"Hear, hear!"

"I don't suppose they'll be expecting us," said Tom Merry. "We may take them by surprise."

"Looks like it!" said Blake, as he halted, and peered in at the gates of the Grammar School. It was not yet quite dark, and the gates were not closed. In the gateway and the quad, there was nobody to be seen. Lights were gleaming from the windows of the big red-brick house.

"They seem to be gone in," he remarked.

Kerr looked about cautiously.

"Unless they've seen us coming, and are waiting for us," he remarked.

Figgins nodded.

"I shouldn't wonder," he said.

Blake sniffed. He had no wish to have his opinion overruled by that of a New House fellow.

"Oh, rats!" he said. "They've gone in, and we can get in and rush the Fourth Form passage quite easily, and wreck every blessed study in it before they know what's happening. Come on!"

"Yes, come on," said Tom Merry.

The crowd of St. Jim's fellows crowded into the gateway. There was no sound from within.

The dusky quad, seemed to be deserted.

Kerr was still suspicious. He felt almost certain that a keen fellow like Gordon Gay would have had his eyes open. Gay would have guessed that other St. Jim's fellows would come to look for D'Arcy, and he must have known that an attack was quite probable. It was not likely that he would be off his guard.

Kerr proved to be right.

As the St. Jim's juniors crowded in there was a sudden sound in the dusky quadrangle of the Grammar School, from the direction of the porter's lodge.

Then—

Whiz!

Swish!

"Yaroo!" roared Tom Merry, as a jet of cold water caught him suddenly on the legs, drenching his trousers.

"Oh! Oo-och!"

Whiz! Swish! Splash!

There was a yell of laughter from the dusk—from the direction of the hidden Grammarians, who had turned the garden hose upon the invaders.

Whiz! Swoosh! Splash!

"Yaroo!"

"Yow!"

"Yoop!"

"Grooh!"

The St. Jim's fellows surged back wildly into the gateway. The whizzing jet of water from the garden hose followed them, splashing and foaming.

"Ow!"

"Oh!"

"Yah!"

"Gerrooh!"



Mr. De Courcy stamped and raved at the poor wolf. "If you're going to sing like that to-night, Brown," he exclaimed, "I don't know what's going to happen to the show! For goodness' sake, buck up!"

(An incident taken from the splendid, long complete tale of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled "WINGATE'S FOLLY," which is contained in this week's Grand Christmas Double Number of our companion paper "THE MAGNET" Library. Now on sale at all newsagents. Price Two pence.)

"Yowp!"

Out into the lane surged the drenched and draggled juniors. There was a roar from the still unseen Grammarians within the gates.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Who's top school now?"

"Grammar School—Grammar School!"

"Hurrah!"

Tom Merry & Co. surged into the lane, defeated and furious. They could not charge through the whizzing stream of water, they knew that. Gordon Gay & Co. had been ready for their attack, and the attack had failed. They had made up their minds to it.

"Oh, come on!" growled Tom Merry. "We're done!"

"Ow!"

"Oo-oo-ch!"

"Faith, and I'm goin' for the spalpeens!" yelled Reilly.

"Come back!" shouted Blake.

"Sure, I'm goin' in—"

The Belfast boy rushed into the gateway.

Whizzzzz! Splash!

The jet of water caught him full in the chest, and bowled him over like a cannon-ball.

He reeled out into the road, drenched and choked and blinded, and fell in the dust at Tom Merry's feet, gasping and snorting.

"Tare an' 'oun's! Ow! Howly smoke! Groop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Had enough?" grinned Blake.

"Groo! Ow! Yes!"

And the Saints, drenched and defeated, took the homeward route, leaving the Grammarians yelling with laughter behind them.

CHAPTER 8.

Arthur Augustus Thinks it Funny.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY, washed and brushed, was waiting on the steps of the School House for the return of Tom Merry & Co. D'Arcy, newly swept and garnished, so to speak, looked his old elegant self. By great good fortune he had been able to slip into the School House unseen, and into a bath-room, where he had removed the traces of his unfortunate visit to the Grammar School. Now he was waiting for Tom Merry & Co. to return, with a mixture of feelings. As a loyal "Saint," he certainly hoped that Tom Merry & Co. had succeeded in "downing" the rival juniors; but his feelings would not have been wholly of dissatisfaction if they had returned defeated like himself. It would certainly make things easier for him. He waited on the steps of the School House, while the dusk deepened into night, and lights shone out from the windows, and from the windows of the New House across the quad. Kildare of the Sixth, the captain of St. Jim's, came and looked out into the quadrangle, and then turned to D'Arcy.

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"Do you know where Tom Merry and the rest are?" he asked.

D'Arcy coughed.

"I believe they're gone out, deah boy," he replied.

Kildare frowned.

"They are late for locking up," he said. "I suppose it is some more of that nonsense with the Grammar School. When they come back—"

Kildare broke off. There was a tramp of weary footsteps in the quadrangle, and a crowd of juniors came in sight of the doorway, looming up in the radius of light,

The captain of St. Jim's stared at them blankly.

Tom Merry & Co. had returned.

Drenched, muddy, and dishevelled, and weary and worn, the unfortunate heroes of St. Jim's had come home. Figgins & Co. had gone to their House. But there were a score or more juniors with Tom Merry and Blake, and a dirtier and muddier crowd had seldom returned to the school. Kildare stared at them, and burst into a ringing laugh.

"Where have you been?" he exclaimed.

Tom Merry blinked at him.

"Out," he replied.

"Grammar School, I suppose?"

"H'm! Well, yes."

"This is a nice state to come back in," said Kildare.

"Grooh!"

The captain of St. Jim's looked over the muddy crowd as they filed in, and laughed loud and long. Darrel and Rushden, of the Sixth, and Knox and Platt, came out of their studies, and laughed too. Fellows came from all sides, from studies and from the common-room, to stare at Tom Merry & Co., and laugh too. Lefevre, of the Fifth, and a crowd of more Fifth-Formers stood round, shrieking, and fellows belonging to the Shell and the Fourth were equally amused at their Form-fellows' plight. Tom Merry & Co., with crimson faces, walked in through the laughing crowd, wishing that the solid floor of the School House hall would open and swallow them up. But the most amused of all was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the swell of the Fourth. He so far forgot the repose that stamps the caste of Vere de Vere as to yell with laughter as loudly as Levison and Mellish themselves.

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

Jack Blake gave him a glare.

"Where does the cackle come in?" he demanded crossly.

"Ha, ha, ha! Gwest Scott! Ha, ha, ha!"

"You cackling ass!" growled Lumley-Lumley.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shut up!" roared Monty Lowther.

The dirty, muddy, drenched heroes of the School House tramped upstairs. Kildare did not give them lines for being out after lock-up. He was laughing too much to think of it. Amid a storm of merriment the defeated juniors tramped upstairs, and disappeared into the dormitories. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, still laughing, went into Study No. 6, to wait for Blake & Co. to come down. It was half an hour before Blake, Herries, and Digby came into the study, and then they were in dry clothes, and had a very newly-washed look, and were also looking decidedly cross.

Arthur Augustus greeted them with a smile.

"Feel bettah now, deah boys?" he asked.

"Oh, rats!" growled Blake.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, if you're going off like a cheap alarm clock, you'd better get out into the passage!" roared Blake.

"Ha, ha, ha! It is wathah funnay, you know!"

"It's all your fault," Blake growled. "You got us into this!"

"If you had followed my lead, deah boy—"

"Br-r-r-r!"

"I do not regard that as an intelligible wemark, Blake, and I decline to answah it. If you had followed my lead, we should have licked the Gwammah cads—"

"Oh, cheese it!" growled Digby.

"I wefuse to cheese it! If you fellows had seen yourselves when you came in, you would have laughed. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shut up!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, bump him!" growled Herries.

"I wefuse to be bumped! I— Oh! Ow! Yow!"

Three pairs of hands seized upon the hilarious swell of St. Jim's, and he was swung off his feet, and bumped upon the study carpet.

"Ow! Yawooh!"

"Give him another!"

"Yowp!"

Bump, bump, bump!

Arthur Augustus sat dazedly on the carpet, gasping for breath, when the chums of Study No. 6 released him. He staggered to his feet, and groped for his eyeglass, and jammed it into his eye—the left eye, by mistake, in his excitement.

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THE GRAND CHRISTMAS "THE MAGNET" LIBRARY

"Gwoo! You uttah wottahs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Blake, in his turn.

"You fwabjous ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The study door was kicked open, and Tom Merry put his head in.

"Meeting at half-past seven sharp!" he called out.

Blake looked round.

"Meeting! What for?"

"Council of war."

"Oh, all right!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy dusted down his clothes. He had been about to commit a violent assault and battery upon Blake, but the news from Tom Merry made him change his mind. He assumed a kind smile.

"It's wathah a good ideah to hold a meetin', and decide on a plan of campaign," he remarked. "We've simply got to lick the Gwammah School wottahs, or they will cwow ovah us no end, ovah the lickin' they've given you fellows."

"What about the licking they gave you?" demanded Herries wrathfully.

"Pway don't wandah fwom the point, deah boy! I was goin' to say that the whole question wewolves itself into this—we want a good leadah! What is required at the pwesent junction is a fellow of tact and judgment."

"That's right enough," said Digby.

"Then I twust I can wely upon you fellows to back me up!"

"Rats!"

"Weally, you know—"

"Oh, bosh!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Br-r-r-r-r!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy relapsed into dignified silence. The chums of Study No. 6 had their tea, hurrying over the meal to be in time for the meeting. When they left the study they found most of the juniors of the School House hurrying in the same direction. The defeat of Tom Merry & Co. had caused general excitement. The juniors had laughed heartily at the woebegone appearance of the drenched and dragged heroes; but they all agreed that something had to be done to put the Grammarians in their places. Exactly where the "place" of the Grammarians was, the juniors did not define, but they all agreed that the Grammarians should be put there, and with the least possible delay.

The Terrible Three came down the passage arm-in-arm, pretending not to notice the grins they were greeted with by fellows who had not taken part in the raid at the Grammar School. The meeting was being held in the Hobby Club room—a large room on the ground floor which the juniors were allowed to use for their meetings. New House fellows as well as School House were coming, for Tom Merry had justly remarked that this was a matter in which both the Houses of St. Jim's should stand shoulder to shoulder, and that if Figgins & Co. wanted to back him up, they ought to have a chance.

There were a good many fellows in the Hobby Club room when the Terrible Three entered, closely followed by Blake & Co. Juniors of both Houses were pouring in. Figgins & Co. came in together, and Arthur Augustus politely inquired if they had made themselves quite "dwy," a polite query which Figgins & Co. totally ignored.

Tom Merry had brought in a cricket stump, to be used as a chairman's hammer, and he proceeded to tap on the table with it.

"Now we're all here—" he began.

"But we're not all here," said Figgins. "There's some more fellows from the New House to come—Pratt, French, and Thompson, of the Shell, and—"

"Well, never mind! We're enough to begin!"

"Yes, New House fellows don't matter," remarked Kangaroo.

"Look here, you ass—" began Figgins warmly.

"Now, I hope you New House fellows aren't going to give trouble!" exclaimed Blake.

"If you School House asses—"

"Look here—"

"Order!"

The cricket stump came down sharply.

Rap, rap, rap!

"Order! Order!"

A fresh crowd of fellows poured in, and as pretty nearly all the Fourth and the Shell of both Houses had turned up, it was agreed that the door should be closed. As for the Third and the Second, they did not count. Mere fags could not

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expect to take part in the deliberations of the elders of the Fourth and the Shell.

Rap, rap!

"Gentlemen——"

"Hear, hear!"

"The meeting is now open——"

"And the door is closed," remarked Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gentlemen——"

"Hear, hear!"

CHAPTER 9.

A Stormy Meeting.

TOM MERRY rapped sharply on the table with the cricket stump. The room was in a buzz, as was only natural with fifty or sixty juniors crowded in it, all talking at once. There was considerable excitement in the meeting already, more or less suppressed. The New House fellows had come there determined to stand no nonsense from the School House, and the School House fellows had come to exactly the same resolution with regard to the New House. Added to that, there was a strong feeling among the Shell fellows that the Fourth-Formers ought to take a back seat, and the Fourth were grimly resolved that if the Shell put on any airs there would be trouble. Upon the whole, it was likely to be a somewhat excitable meeting, and not easy for the chairman to control.

Rap, rap!

"Gentlemen——"

"Hear, hear!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy——"

Rap, rap!

"As chairman of this meeting, I call——"

"Hold on a minute!" exclaimed Figgins. "Who appointed you chairman of this giddy meeting, Tom Merry?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Oh, rats!" said the chairman. "Irrelevant questions are not in order. As chairman of this meeting, I call upon you to keep order, and shut your heads up for a bit. It is against the rules for chaps to talk all at the same time."

"What rules?" demanded Kerr.

"Oh, the rules!" said Tom Merry, rather vaguely. "Now, as chairman of this meeting, I call for silence while I speak!"

"Check!"

"Rats!"

"Bosh!"

"Yaas, wathah! Wats, deah boy! The fellows have gathahed together to hear a sensible chap speak, and you had bettah sit down. I have a few wemarks to make——"

"Order!"

"Undah the circs.——"

"Sit down!"

"As a fellow of tact and judgment——"

"Ring off!"

"In the pwsent state of affaiahs," pursued D'Arcy, unheedingly, "it becomes impewative for the juniahs of St. Jim's to select a leadah who can lead, and for that weason, I beg to pwopose myself as leadah. Under the circs.——"

"Order!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Rap, rap!

"Weally, Tom Mewwy——"

"The next idiot who interrupts will be ejected—I mean chucked out!" bawled Tom Merry. "Order, and silence for the chair! Gentlemen——"

"Hear, hear!"

"Gentlemen——"

"Hurrah!"

"Weally, deah boys——"

"Gentlemen, I rise to address you on the subject of the parlous state to which the affairs of the coll. have come. The deplorable state of affairs at the present moment——"

"Oh, good!"

"He's made all that up in advance," said Figgins.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Rap! Rap!

"The deplorable state of affairs at the present moment is due to the fact that insubordination is rife in the ranks of St. Jim's. If the Fourth Form showed a proper respect for the Shell——"

There was a roar at once from the Fourth, and the voice of the chairman was lost. It was some minutes before Tom Merry could make himself heard again.

"Gentlemen——"

"Booh!"

"Rats!"

"Wats!"

"Bosh!"

"Gentlemen, I insist upon a hearing. Matters have now

reached such a point that we must either lick the Grammar School, or acknowledge ourselves beaten. For this purpose we must elect a leader, and follow his lead——"

"Yaas, wathah! What is wequired is a fellow of tact and judgment——"

"A New House chap——"

"Rats!"

"Look here——"

"Bosh——"

"Shut up, you New House bounders——"

"Ring off, you School House chumps——"

There was a roar of voices and a stamping of feet. The voice of the chairman was lost in the uproar. Even the persistent rapping of the cricket stump on the table was almost inaudible. Tom Merry rapped and waved his hands in vain.

There was a thump at the door, and it flew open, and Knox, the prefect, thrust an extremely bad-tempered countenance into the room.

"Stop that row!" he roared.

"Yah!"

"I'll bring the prefects along and clear out the room if you're not more quiet!" bawled Knox.

And he slammed the door and retired.

"Now, do be more quiet, you New House chaps," said Tom Merry as the din died away somewhat. "This is a serious meeting, and we have got to discuss a plan of campaign. We've got to make the Grammarians sit up——"

"Or lie down!" suggested Monty Lowther.

"Oh, don't be funny, Lowther," implored Figgins.

"Look here, Figgins——"

"Oh, rats!"

"Order!"

Rap! Rap! Rap!

"Gentlemen, as the leader of the juniors of St. Jim's," began Tom Merry.

There was a roar.

"Who made you leader?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Go and cat coke!"

Blake jumped on a stool.

"Tom Merry's been talking piffle quite long enough!" he exclaimed. "It's time for the Fourth Form to have a look in, I think."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Hear, hear!" roared the Fourth.

"The Shell being famous for mucking things up, I suggest that a leader be selected from the Fourth!" said Blake.

"Hear, hear!" from the Fourth.

"Rats! Rats!" from the Shell.

"And it stands to reason that the leader must be a School House chap——"

"Rot!" roared Figgins & Co.

"Shut up, you New House bounders! I suggest that I lead——"

"Weally, Blake, I do not appwove of a fellow puttin' himself forward in this way. I suggest that I am selected as leadah——"

"Look here, it comes to this!" Figgins roared. "We want a leader, and the leader ought to be some use. We must have a New House chap. I am the chap! Quite recently I've licked the School House hollow, and that shows——"

"Yah!"

"Rats!"

"Check!"

"Get down, Figgins!" roared Tom Merry and Blake together.

If they agreed upon no other point, they agreed that Figgins's claim was quite beyond all reason and quite inadmissible.

"Rats!" retorted Figgins. "You School House wasters have been talking piffle long enough, and it's time some chap talked sense. What I say is——"

"Piffle!"

"I repeat——"

"Bosh!"

"Drag the bounder down!"

There was a rush to drag Figgins off the table. The excitement was quite out of control now. Half a dozen pairs of hands grabbed at Figgins's legs, and he was heaved over; but he caught at the table and refused to be dragged off. There was a rush of the New House juniors to the aid of their leader.

"Rescue!" roared Figgins.

"Buck up, New House!" yelled Kerr.

Figgins struggled violently as Tom Merry and Blake and a crowd of other School House fellows dragged at him. Kerr and the crowd from the New House swarmed to the rescue, even Fatty Wynn leaving off eating sandwiches to rush to the rescue of his leader. There was a terrific scrimmage immediately. New House and School House fellows

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forgetting all about their laudible intention of uniting against the Grammar School, and remembering only that they belonged to the rival Houses at St. Jim's.

"Go it, New House!"

"Buck up, School House!"

"Give 'em socks!"

"Lam the bounders!"

"Huwway, deah boys! Thwash the wottahs!"

"Go it!"

There was a wild and whirling fight. The table rolled over on Figgins, and chairs and stools were knocked aside and trampled on. In the midst of the uproar the door was flung open, and Kildare and half a dozen prefects rushed in with canes in their hands. The din of the meeting had made itself heard all over the school, and the prefects had come to stop it. They stopped it in drastic style. They did not stop to speak; they lashed round them with their canes, and New House, and School House, Shell, and Fourth, came in for their attention in the most generous and impartial way.

The combat stopped, and the juniors yelled and roared, and made wild rushes to escape.

They trampled over one another to the door, and scattered in the passages, and the club-room was deserted excepting for the overturned table and chairs and the panting prefects.

Kildare gasped with laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha! That will be the last meeting here for some time!" he exclaimed.

And he quitted the room and locked the door on the outside and put the key in his pocket. The meeting was over!

CHAPTER 10.

A Turn for the Worc.

THE next morning, when the juniors of St. Jim's came down, they showed very visible traces of the evening's meeting. Some of them had black eyes, and some of them had swollen noses, and some of them had cut lips, and very nearly all of them had bruises, and many of them.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's aristocratic nose seemed to be set a little sideways, and the swell of St. Jim's regarded it in the glass many times with growing dismay. Somebody had punched that unfortunate organ hard, in the melee in the club-room; but D'Arcy had not seen whom the aggressor was.

Not that that mattered; it was the damage to his nose that troubled the swell of the Fourth. He examined it very carefully in the glass before coming down in the morning, and he examined it again in the study, and he looked at it once more in a little pocket mirror as he sat at the breakfast table in the dining-room of the School House.

The other fellows grinned as they observed it. Until his nose resumed its proper shape, there was likely to be a great worry upon the mind of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

After breakfast, when the juniors swarmed out into the hall, Arthur Augustus paused by himself to look in the pocket-mirror once more. Holding the mirror in his left hand, he tested his nose, as it were, with his right, and regarded the reflection with anxious eyes. The terrible thought that the injury might be permanent was in his mind, and it was a very disturbing one. If the aristocratic nose should remain permanently a little sideways, what was life worth to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy?

"I say, Blake, deah boy," he said as Blake passed him.

"Hallo!" said Jack Blake.

"Look at my nose!"

"Certainly."

"Does it look a little bit cwooked to you?"

Blake surveyed his chum's nose carefully. He shook his head.

"No," he replied.

D'Arcy drew a breath of relief.

"It does not look a little cwooked to you?" he asked.

"No. It looks a lot cwooked!" said Blake blandly.

"Oh, weally, Blake—"

"Better put it in splints," said Digby. "It would be very unpleasant if it were to grow sideways, and lap round your ear, or something of that sort. I don't see how we could stand you in the study if that happened."

"Weally, Dig—"

Blake shook his head solemnly.

"Of course, it could always be amputated," he remarked.

"Weally, Blake, you ass—"

"Or Taggles would lend you his wood chopper, and you could chop it off," said Digby. "Or, as a last resource, there's Herries' bulldog; Towser would snap it off in a moment."

"That he jolly well wouldn't!" said Herries promptly.

"Towser's jolly particular what he bites, I can tell you."

"Weally, Hewwies—"

Arthur Augustus regarded his nose in the mirror again, THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 200.

and the chums of the Fourth walked on, grinning, to punt a ball about in the quad, before first lesson.

But the brow of the elegant junior was clouded with anxiety. He did not think of punting a footer about. He was thinking wholly of his nose. A slap on the shoulder interrupted his reflections on the subject, and the little mirror dropped from his hand and broke.

"Bai Jove!"

"Hallo!" said Monty Lowther. "Too bad!"

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"You shouldn't look in a glass with your face like that," said Lowther with a serious shake of the head; "it's bound to break it."

Tom Merry and Manners chuckled, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy turned crimson with indignation.

"Weally, Lowthah, you uttah ass—"

"Wasn't it that broke the glass?" asked Lowther in surprise.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No, it wasn't, you fwabjous ass! You jolted it out of my hand. I wegard you—"

"Oh, I see," said Lowther. "I'm sorry! What's the matter with your nose? It seems to have a more southern aspect than usual."

"Pway don't wot, deah boy. Some uttah ass punched me on the nose last evenin'. I do not know who it was, or I would pwoceed to give him a feahful thwashin'. Does my nose look cwooked to you?"

"Well, yes, I must say it does. What do you think, Tom Merry?"

"Well, rather twisty," said Tom Merry.

"What do you think, Manners?"

"I don't know about twisty," said Manners thoughtfully.

"Just a bit gnarled, I should say."

"Bai Jove! I suppose it's bound to come all wight again?" Arthur Augustus remarked in tones of great distress.

"Very likely," said Monty Lowther; "but if it doesn't, it will look distinguished. You don't often see a nose with a southern aspect like that. But if you'd like it to be set straight again—"

"Of course, I should, you ass!"

"Then you'll have to put it in splints," said Lowther.

"That will force it straight, and keep it so till the swelling goes down."

Arthur Augustus looked very doubtful.

"Won't it look wathah odd?" he asked.

"Well, it looks rather odd now," said Lowther, "and, anyhow, it's better than having a permanently cwooked boko, isn't it?"

"Yaas, wathah! But—"

"I know how to administer first aid in cases like this," said Monty Lowther modestly. "I don't mind making the splints, if you like. If you come up to my study just before lessons, I'll have the thing ready."

"You're awfully good. But—"

"Not at all. I should be sorry to see your Romo-Greco boko turned into a cheap imitation of a waterspout."

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"I'll go and get the thing ready now. It will take some time."

"Thanks vevy much, deah boy."

"Oh, don't mench!" said Lowther politely.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, caressing his nose a little, as it were affectionately, walked out into the quad. He was anxious about his nose, but although he was grateful to Monty Lowther for his kind offer, he was somewhat doubtful about accepting his aid. He had a feeling that it would excite a great deal of remark if he appeared in the Form-room for lessons with his nose in splints like a lame leg. But, as Lowther had said, anything was better than having a permanently twisted nose.

Figgins & Co. were strolling in the quad, and Figgins was sporting a very nicely-coloured eye, and Kerr had a lump on his cheek, and Fatty Wynn's hat was on sideways on account of a big bump. But the three New House juniors grinned at the sight of the swell of the School House. D'Arcy's nose tickled them very much.

Arthur Augustus frowned haughtily. The New House grin annoyed him, especially as he suspected Figgins & Co. of being really responsible for the unhappy state of his nasal appendage.

"Feeling rocky this morning?" grinned Figgins.

"I see your nose has taken a turn for the worse," Kerr remarked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, Kerr—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Figgins & Co. Arthur Augustus glowered at them through his eyeglass. His eyeglass did not fit so well as usual, owing to the damage to his nose.

"You uttah asses! I believe it was you damaged my nose, Kerr, you wottah!"

"No," he replied. "I remember hitting out at you in the tussle, but my hand hit something soft, so it must have been your head."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy raised his damaged nose high in the air, and walked away haughtily. He was very much inclined to thrash Figgins & Co., but he reflected that his nose might be further damaged if he did, and he could not afford that at present.

His nose, indeed, was affording considerable amusement to the juniors. Fellows stopped him in the quad, to ask him what had happened to it, whether the twist in it was the latest fashion in noses, and whether he was thinking of keeping it permanently like that. His younger brother Wally, of the Third Form, stopped before him in the quad, and stared at him blankly, and went off into a yell of laughter which brought a flush of indignation to the cheeks of Arthur Augustus.

"Wally, you young wascal—" he began.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wally. "My only Aunt Jane! Where did you dig up that boko?"

"Weally, Wally—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Wally staggered away almost in hysterics. D'Arcy walked towards the School House. He began to think that he would remain indoors till first lesson. He was growing tired of the attention his nose was exciting in the quadrangle. Manners met him on the steps of the School House, camera in hand. Manners was an indomitable camera-fiend, and Lowther had declared that if Manners was ever sentenced to execution, as he ought to be, he would take his camera with him to take a final snapshot of the execution. Manners called to Arthur Augustus as he came up the steps.

"Hold on a minute, Gussy!"

D'Arcy turned towards him.

"Yaas, deah boy, what do you want?"

Snap!

"It's all right," said Manners blandly.

"Eh!"

"I've got you."

"Got me!"

"Yes, and I think it will be very satisfactory."

D'Arcy gave a gasp.

"You utah wotah! Do you mean to say you have photographed me in this state?" he yelled. "Bai Jove, I'll bweak the wotten camewa!"

And he rushed at Manners. Manners dashed into the House, and took refuge in the Shell Form-room, where Mr. Linton was already at his desk. D'Arcy glared in at the door, but he could not pursue the amateur photographer of St. Jim's any further in the presence of the Shell Form-master. He shook his fist at Manners, who levelled the camera as if for another snap, and then D'Arcy hastily retired.

He hurried up to Lowther's study. He did not like the idea of a nose in splints, but anything was better than going round with a crooked nasal organ, and becoming the victim of camera-fiends. He shuddered at the idea of his mishap being perpetuated on Manners' negative, and perhaps printed out and framed and hung up in the study. Monty Lowther's kind assistance was really a boon and a blessing. And Monty Lowther was more than willing to render it. Arthur Augustus found the humorist of the Shell quite ready for him, and quite enthusiastic.

CHAPTER 11.

A Close Attachment.

MR. LATHOM, the little, short-sighted master of the Fourth, came into the Form-room, and went up to his desk. Most of the Fourth were in their places; the hand of the clock pointed almost to nine. Blake and Herries and Digby and Lumley-Lumley came in a minute after the Form-master; but one junior was still missing. It was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. Blake & Co. had been looking for him, but he was not to be found.

"Where's Gussy?" whispered Figgins, as Blake passed him to go to his place.

Blake shook his head.

"Blessed if I know! I've been looking for him, but I can't find him."

"I guess he'll be late," Lumley-Lumley remarked.

Mr. Lathom looked over his class. He was about to speak when the Form-room door was hurriedly opened, and a junior came in.

It was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Every eye, of course, was turned upon the late comer at once, and the Fourth Form simply gasped at the sight of him.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's nose was fastened up in a most peculiar manner. Pieces of wood and pieces of wire and twisted rag made it about three times its natural size. The juniors stared at it blankly. Little Mr. Lathom, short-sighted

as he was, noticed that remarkable nose at once, and stared at it, and adjusted his glasses carefully, and stared again.

"My only hat!" gasped Blake.

"Great Scott!"

"What's the matter with him?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Fourth Form found their voices at last. A yell of laughter rang through the Form-room. Mr. Lathom was staring blankly, but everybody else in the Form-room roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus turned crimson. But he walked steadily towards his place.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good old Gussy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Dear me!" gasped Mr. Lathom. "This is most—most extraordinary!" Dear me! D'Arcy!"

"Yaas, sir."

"What is the matter with your nose?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence, boys! D'Arcy, kindly explain what is the reason of your coming into the class-room with your nose in this—this extraordinary state."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I have had a—knock on it, sir," stammered the swell of St. Jim's. "It came into contact with somethin' hard, sir."

The Fourth Form chuckled. The "something hard" had been a fist or an elbow, but D'Arcy did not think it essential to explain that to Mr. Lathom.

"But—but what is that on your nose?" exclaimed Mr. Lathom, in growing astonishment. "You have some—some remarkable attachment upon the organ, D'Arcy."

"That's the splints, sir."

"The—the what?"

"Splints, sir."

"Wh-wh-what!"

"You see, sir, my nose was knocked a little sideways, sir, and I was afraid that it would remain so, sir, and Lowther, of the Shell, was kind enough to put it into splints for me."

Mr. Lathom gazed at Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

His first impression was that D'Arcy had come into the Form-room in that extraordinary fashion as a jape against the Form-master; but the looks of the swell of St. Jim's showed that he was speaking in good faith.

Mr. Lathom stared, and smiled, and laughed. He could not help it. He certainly ought to have frowned; but, in spite of all his efforts, a laugh came instead of a frown.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Fourth Form needed no more encouragement. They roared!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Weally, you fellows—" said D'Arcy.

"Ha, ha, ha! Dear me!" gasped Mr. Lathom. "I—I am afraid you have been the victim of a ridiculous joke, D'Arcy. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, sir—"

"You must at once take that—that ridiculous thing off your nose, D'Arcy!"

"If you please, sir—"

"Take it off at once!"

"I am afraid my nose may remain cwooked, sir."

"I do not suppose there is any danger of that, D'Arcy. At all events, you cannot remain in the Form-room in that ridiculous state," said Mr. Lathom. "Take that thing off your nose!"

"Oh, vewy well, sir!"

Arthur Augustus spoke with great dignity. The Fourth Form were nearly in convulsions.

Mr. Lathom stood with his eyes fixed upon the swell of St. Jim's, as the latter put up his hand to the peculiar appendage to his nose, and essayed to pull it off. A look of surprise came over D'Arcy's face. The thing had gone on easily enough when the humorist of the Shell had placed it there. But it did not come off as easily. Arthur Augustus pulled at it, but it did not move.

"Bai Jove!" murmured D'Arcy.

"Take it off at once, D'Arcy!"

"Ya-a-a-s, sir."

"The lesson is waiting," said Mr. Lathom severely.

"Ya-a-as, sir."

"Make haste, then."

"Ya-a-s, sir."

Arthur Augustus pulled harder at the unfortunate appendage. It seemed to him that he was pulling his nose off, and the water came into his eyes with the pain. Mr. Lathom blinked at him impatiently through his glasses.

"How long are you going to be, D'Arcy?" he rapped out.

"If—if you please, deah boy—I—I mean, sir," stammered D'Arcy—"I—"

"A long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull all together," murmured Lumley-Lumley.

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NEXT WEEK: "ASHAMED OF HIS SISTER!"

A Splendid, New, Long, Complete School Tale of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Bai Jove, I——"
 Mr. Lathom was not laughing now. He was frowning. He felt that his authority was being made light of.
 "D'Arcy! If you do not immediately take that ridiculous thing off, I shall cane you severely!" he exclaimed.
 "I—I—I can't, sir!" gasped the unfortunate junior.
 "What!"
 "It won't come off, sir."
 "Do you mean to say it is fastened on?"
 "It—it seems to be, sir. I—I suppose it was glue Montay Lowthah was wubbin' ovah my nose, when I come to think of it. I thought it was cold cream."
 The class yelled. The idea of the contrivance being glued fast upon Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's aristocratic nose was too funny. They shrieked. Even Mr. Lathom had to laugh again.

"Blake, see if you can help D'Arcy get that thing off his nose!" he exclaimed.
 "Yes, sir," said Blake.
 He jumped up from his place, and approached D'Arcy. The swell of St. Jim's eyed him rather nervously. His nose was already paining considerably.
 "Pway don't be wuff, deah boy!"
 "Lemme get hold of it with both hands," said Blake.
 "It's best to have a sharp jerk in a case like this; it's like having a tooth out, you know."
 "Weally, Blake——"
 "Now then, you hold on to the desk, and I'll have that thing off in a jiffy!"
 "Ow! Yow! Yawwoh!"
 "Hold on to the desk, you fathead!"
 "Yawwoh!"
 D'Arcy did not hold on to the desk. As Blake pulled at the appendage to his nose, D'Arcy followed him, gasping with pain, and yelling wildly.
 "Ow! Yow! Leggo, you fwabjous ass! Yow!"
 "Hold on!"
 "Yowp! Yarp! Oh!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Fourth.
 "Dear me!" gasped Mr. Lathom. "Perhaps, Blake

"Yawwoop!"
 "Another pull, and I'll have it off!" gasped Blake.
 "I—— Oh, oh!"
 Biff!

Arthur Augustus had hit out, and Blake, taken by a terrific right-hander on the nose, went over backwards, with his heels in the air. There was a fresh roar from the class.

"Hurrah! Well hit!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Oh!" gasped Blake.
 "Yow! You frumptious fat-head!"
 "You feahful ass——"
 "Shall I lend a hand?" asked Herries, rising.
 "You had bettah not, you ass, or I shall give you a feahful thwashin'!" gasped D'Arcy.

"Ahem!" said Mr. Lathom.
 "You can go back to your place, Blake!"
 "I'll have it off with another pull, sir," said Blake.
 "You uttah ass——"
 "Ahem! Never mind, Blake!" said the Fourth Form master hastily. "Sit down! D'Arcy, if that ridiculous thing is really glued to your nose, you had better get some warm water and soak it off, and gradually work it off that way. Do not return to the class-room until it is gone. You have been the victim of— a most reprehensible joke. Go!"
 "Ya-a-as, sir."
 And Arthur Augustus quitted the class-room. It was more than an hour before he returned. His face had a

shining, new-washed look, and the "splints" which the humorist of the Shell had so kindly glued to his nose were gone. But in the struggle to get rid of that unfortunate appendage, D'Arcy's nose had become a brilliant crimson, and a brilliant crimson it remained for the rest of the morning. And whenever a member of the Fourth Form glanced towards Arthur Augustus D'Arcy he burst into an irrepressible chuckle, and Mr. Lathom really had to forbear to rebuke offenders, because he could not look at the red nose of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy without wanting to chuckle himself. And by the time morning lessons were over, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's ears and cheeks were as red as his nose, and his rage was also at red-hot point.

CHAPTER 12.

D'Arcy Makes It Pax!

THE TERRIBLE THREE came down the passage arm-in-arm after morning lessons. The Fourth Form were dismissed at the same time, and they met in the passage in a noisy swarm. A red-nosed junior of the Fourth Form strode across the passage to encounter the Terrible Three, and he halted before them with burning indignation behind his eyeglass.

"Lowthah, you wascal!"
 Monty Lowther winked at Tom Merry and Manners with the eye that was turned away from Arthur Augustus, and then turned a countenance as solemn as that of an owl upon the indignant and simmering swell of St. Jim's.

"Better, by Jove!" he exclaimed. "But why have you taken the splints off, Gussy? They ought to have been kept on till the evening."

"You uttah wottah!"
 "Eh?"
 "You fwightful outsiders!"
 Monty Lowther looked amazed.
 "Is that a new dodge for expressing your gratitude?" he asked.

"Gwatitude! You fwightful wottah——"

"Blessed if this isn't the last time I try to do Gussy a service!" said Monty Lowther. "He can go through life with a crooked nose next time, for all I care! This is the thanks I get for trying to make him good-looking."

"Serve you right for attempting the impossible!" said Kangaroo.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Weally, Kangawoo——"
 "I'm sure your nose is a splendid red now," said Lowther. "I've very seldom seen a red like that outside a sunset. You ought to get Tadpole of the Grammar School to take that down in one of his impressionist pictures."

"I am goin' to give you a feahful thwashin'!"

"What for?" said Lowther, in astonishment.

"For fixing' that wotten thing on my nose, and gluin' it there."

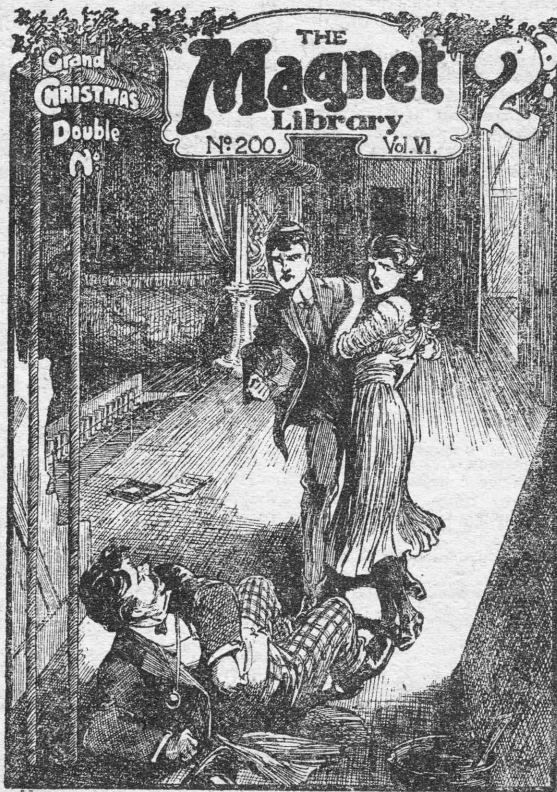
"But I was afraid it might come off otherwise," Lowther explained.

"Put up your hands, you fwabjous ass!"

"Pax!"
 "I wefuse to pax—I I mean——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus's fury simmered over. He rushed at the humorist of the Shell, hitting out. A youth with a big bald forehead and a large pair of spectacles came up, and rushed between them. It was Skimpole, of the Shell, the peacemaker and humanitarian enthusiast of the School House.



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A few final touches on his face, and D'Arcy was complete—a complete work of art, and quite worthy to be hung, as Tadpole remarked. His hands were tied behind his back loosely, and he was allowed to rise. The Grammariaus roared as they looked at him. (See Chapter 6.)

"My dear D'Arcy!" he exclaimed. "My dear Lowther, desist! I implore you— Oh! Ow!"

Biff! Biff!

Skimpole was swept over by Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's doughty blows. The swell of St. Jim's was too blind with fury to see whom he was hitting.

"Ow!" gasped Skimpole, clutching wildly at Arthur Augustus, and dragging him down as he fell. "Ow! Yow! Yooop!"

"You uttah wottah!" gasped D'Arcy, pommeling away.

The juniors shrieked with laughter.

"Ow!" gasped Skimpole. "My dear D'Arcy— Ow!"

"Bai Jove! Is it you, Skimmay? Where is that wottah Lowthah?"

"Ow! I am hurt!"

"Sowwy, deah boy!" D'Arcy jumped up. "Where is that wottah?"

The Terrible Three had gone out. Arthur Augustus rushed out of the School House doorway brandishing his fists in the air. Monty Lowther waved a friendly hand to him across the quad, and D'Arcy rushed in his direction. The humorist of the Shell retreated round the School House in the direction of the stables, and Arthur Augustus followed him furiously, and a crowd of laughing juniors followed D'Arcy to see the fun.

"Where on earth are you going, Monty?" exclaimed Tom Merry.

Monty Lowther chuckled.

"Look here!" he replied.

Outside the wood-shed was a bucket of tar, with the brush still in it. Taggles had been tarring the shed roof—a job upon which Taggles had been engaged, on and off, for weeks. Monty Lowther extracted the tar-brush from the bucket, and faced round at his pursuer. Arthur Augustus rushed up with brandished fists.

"Now, you uttah wottah! Ow!"

Monty Lowther made a gentle and playful thrust at the swell of St. Jim's with the tar-brush. The tip of the brush came in contact with the tip of D'Arcy's nose, changing its hue suddenly from fiery red to midnight blackness.

"Ow! Gwool! Bai Jove!"

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

"Put down that bwush!" shouted D'Arcy. "I am goin' to thwash you, you uttah wottah! I wogard you as an unspeakable beast! Ow! Keep that bwush away! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus rushed at the Shell fellow again. This time the tar-brush dabbed upon his mouth, and he staggered back sputtering and spluttering and gasping. There was a shriek of merriment from the juniors.

"Ow! Ow! Ow! Gwoop! Yooop!"

"Make it pax," said Lowther, advancing as Arthur Augustus retreated. "Make it pax, or I'll dab you all over and mottle you! Pax!"

"I wefuse! Ow! Ow! Gwool!"

Dab, dab, dab!

"Yow—ow—oop! On second thoughts—yowp!—I make it—gwoo!—pax, you uttah wottah! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Monty Lowther returned the tar-brush to the bucket, and grinned serenely. Arthur Augustus dabbed his tarry face with a cambric handkerchief, quickly reducing the latter to a tarry rag, without making much difference to his face.

"Glad to be friends again," said Monty Lowther blandly.

"Friends! You—you uttah wottah!"

"Yes; we've made it pax, haven't we?" said Lowther, in mild surprise.

Arthur Augustus looked speechlessly at the humorist of the Shell for a moment, and then walked away. His feelings were too deep for words.

CHAPTER 13.

Something Like a Wheeze.

THE meeting called by Tom Merry, for the purpose of forming a plan of campaign against the Grammar School, had been quite a failure. It left no results save those traceable on the features of the juniors who had taken part in the meeting. But Tom Merry & Co. were still thinking about it. Unless the Grammarians were "put in their place," it was quite clear—to the juniors, at least—that everything was going to "pot." True, the masters were apparently unconscious that anything was amiss at the old school, and the Fifth and Sixth went on their way as if nothing out of the common was transpiring. But to the Lower School it was very clear that the Grammarians must be downed, or else St. Jim's, as Blake put it, might as well go out of business altogether. The juniors gave the matter a great deal of thought during morning lessons—somewhat to the detriment of morning lessons—and they were thinking of it at dinner-time, and after dinner they turned it over in their minds very seriously.

It was a fine winter's afternoon, and the ground was in an excellent state for football; but Tom Merry & Co. did not give even a thought to the great game. The pressing necessity of the moment was downing the Grammarians, and the grand question was—how was it to be done?

More than one attempt had been made of late, and the attempts had all ended disastrously. The Grammarians, with their peculiar obstinacy, had refused to be downed, and had even had the cheek to get the best of it. All the Saints were agreed that it would not do. It was perfectly clear to Arthur Augustus especially, that his usage in Gordon Gay's study at Rylcombe School must be avenged. And if the fellows chose to back him up, he had not the slightest doubt that he could lead them to victory. But they did not choose, and there was another difficulty.

But although the many leaders were all keen to lead, and the many followers were by no means keen to follow, it was certain that they would unite to back up any plan with a reasonable chance of success. But nobody seemed to have a plan. A raid of the Grammar School, in great force, was the idea the Saints liked best, but it was very doubtful if it would be a success, and they did not want to add to the triumphs of the Grammarians by giving them another victory. Gordon Gay & Co. were certain to be on the look-out, and it was as easy to catch a weasel asleep as to take Gordon Gay by surprise.

Tom Merry & Co. were standing outside the School House in an earnest group, discussing pros and cons, when a carriage drove up to the Head's house, and a little old gentleman in white whiskers and white hair, and a kindly old face, adorned with a pair of large spectacles, stepped out.

The juniors took off their caps at once. The little old gentleman was Dr. Monk, the headmaster of the Grammar School, and the father of Frank Monk of the Fourth Form there. The rivalry between the two schools did not extend to the masters, and the two headmasters were old college friends, and on the best of terms. Dr. Monk gave the juniors a kindly nod as he passed into the Head's house. There was a twinkle in his eyes behind his spectacles. He knew all about the alarms and excursions between the juniors of the two schools, and he had often enjoyed a laugh with Dr. Holmes of St. Jim's about the rivalry and its results. So long as it was kept within bounds, neither of the headmasters had any great objection to it, and they were tactful enough to keep their eyes closed to many little incidents which it was more judicious for them not to see.

"That's Monk's governor," remarked Monty Lowther. "He's a decent old boy. He's come over to jaw to the Head about the examinations. Good chance to raid the Grammar School while he's here. While the cat's away, you know."

"My hat!" ejaculated Tom Merry suddenly.

The juniors looked at him.

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"Got an idea?" asked Blake.

Tom Merry's eyes sparkled.

"Yes, by George!"

"If you fellows choose to back me up, you know, I would undertake to waid the Gwammah School, and bring those boundahs to their senses," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Othahwise, I do not see what is to be done."

"Ring off, Gussy, old man! What's the wheeze, Tom Merry?"

"Weally, Blake—"

"I expect it's rot," said Blake, in his candid way. "But we may as well hear it."

Tom Merry laughed.

"Do you remember a long time ago, Kerr got himself up as Dr. Monk, for a jape on the Grammarians?" he asked.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"By Jove!" said Blake.

"Well, Dr. Monk is going to be here all the afternoon," said Tom Merry. "Where's Figgins?"

"Fatty's Wynn's in the tuckshop," said Kangaroo. "I think Figgins and Kerr went in with him. But—"

"Come on, then!"

Tom Merry ran across towards the school-shop. The other fellows followed him quickly. They burst into Dame Taggles's little shop, where Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn were standing at the counter. Fatty Wynn was sampling some new steak-and-kidney pies, triumphs of Mrs. Taggles's art, although it was not half an hour since dinner. Fatty Wynn was always "up" to negotiating a steak-and-kidney pie.

The chums of the New House looked a little alarmed as Tom Merry & Co. came swarming in. They put their backs to the counter, and looked warlike. But Tom Merry held up his hand in sign of amity.

"Pax!" he exclaimed.

Figgins grinned.

"Oh, all right!" he said. "Have you come to see Fatty feed? It's worth watching!"

"Oh, really, Figgins—"

"No," said Tom Merry, laughing. "We want Kerr."

"Here I am!" said Kerr, who was sipping ginger beer. "What's wanted?"

"You are!"

"It's wathah a good ideah, Tom Mewwy," remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, in a thoughtful way. "But don't you think that pewpaws I could cawwy it out bettah than Kerr? What is required in a mattah of this sort is a fellow of tact and judgment."

"Rats!"

"Weally, dear boy, I don't want to put myself forward in any way; but—"

"Cheese it, Gussy!" said Blake. "Kerr's the man!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"It's a wheeze," Tom Merry explained. "Now, although we beat you New House chaps hollow at footer, and cricket, and everything else, we're willing to admit that Kerr is on top when it comes to making-up, and that kind of thing."

"Thanks awfully!" said Kerr, in a sarcastic tone.

"Not at all!"

"Don't mench, deah boy!"

"Dr. Monk has come over to see the Head," said Tom Merry, lowering his voice. "He's going to be over here most of the afternoon, so we understand. It's a jaw about the combined exam., you know, and it's bound to take some time. Now, if Kerr made himself up as old Monk—"

"Phew!"

"And went back to the Grammar School as Dr. Monk—"

"My hat!"

"He took the Grammarians in once before that way, and I don't see why he couldn't do it again," said Tom Merry.

"I'm willing to try," said Kerr.

"My only chapeau!" said Figgins. "Why, it's ripping! But where do we come in?"

"We can be on hand, ready to chip in," said Tom Merry. "But if Kerr went to the Grammar School and took them in, you can see how he could make them sit up. Of course, if they bowled him out, he would get it in the neck. But that's only a risk to run."

"I should not mind wunnin' the wisk."

"You see, you couldn't do it, Gussy."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"And your beautiful accent would give you away, in any case," grinned Manners.

"Weally, Mannahs—"

"Kerr's the man!" said Figgins. "No doubt about that! And we'll jolly well take it on! Come on, you chaps, and let's get to work!"

"Weally, Figgins—"

"Just a minute, while I finish this pie!" said Fatty Wynn.

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Figgins slipped his arm through Fatty Wynn's, and led him out forcibly, and the pie had to be abandoned. The juniors crowded over to the New House. House rivalry was dead for the time being; at the thought of taking so big a rise out of the Grammarians, the rival juniors of St. Jim's united almost affectionately. Arthur Augustus followed the rest with a wise shake of the head. He thought the idea was a good one, but he would have preferred it to be entrusted to his experienced hands.

Kerr was the son of an actor, and he was very keen on anything of that kind. He could make-up as almost anybody, and imitate anybody's voice, and he had often given impersonations to amuse his chums in the New House. There was no doubt that he could carry out the wheeze with ordinary luck. Figgins's study was soon crowded by eager juniors, and private theatrical "props" were brought out, examined and selected. Everybody lent a hand in making Kerr up. His process of transformation from a Fourth Form junior to a kindly old gentleman with white hair and glasses was rapid and convincing. When the make-up was finished, the juniors surveyed him in amazement and satisfaction. He had come out even better than they had anticipated, and the general verdict was that it was ripping.

It had been decided that Kerr was to walk over to the Grammar School alone, and the other fellows were to follow a little later, and to be "on hand" in case they were wanted. A programme had been drawn up which was certainly ripping enough. Kerr had sketched out what he would do. In the character of Dr. Monk, he would cane all the Fourth Form of the Grammar School, and order the fellows to turn their studies out, and "muck things up" generally for Gordon Gay & Co. When he quitted the New House, he walked with the slow and sedate step of a gentleman of sixty. Mr. Ratcliff, the master of the New House, passed him just outside, and raised his hat, never for a moment dreaming that he was raising it to a Fourth Form junior. Kerr walked away to the gates, and several fellows whom he passed touched their caps to him. Tom Merry & Co. watched him with suppressed grins. He disappeared through the gates, and was gone.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I must admit that Kerr does it jolly well! But pewwaps it would have been bettah—"

"Oh, rats!" said Digby cheerfully.

"Weally, Dig—"

"Dr. Monk's carriage is gone," Tom Merry remarked, glancing towards the Head's house. "I suppose it wasn't to wait for him. That means that he's going to stay here for a long time, and the coast will be clear for Kerr."

"Yaas, wathah!"

Tom Merry & Co., had to wait some little time. It was best to give Kerr ample time to reach the Grammar School without exciting suspicion. It was about a quarter of an hour later that Jerrold Lumley-Lumley of the Fourth joined them. Lumley-Lumley had just come in, and there was a puzzled expression upon his face.

"Anything wrong?" asked Tom Merry.

"Well, no; but it's queer."

"What's queer?"

"What I've just seen," said Lumley-Lumley. "Blessed if I can make it out. You know Dr. Monk, of the Grammar School, of course?"

The juniors grinned.

"Yes, rather!"

"Well, I've just passed him in the road."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Nothing wonderful in that, is there?" asked Figgins.

"I guess there is," said Lumley-Lumley. "I never knew he had a twin-brother, but the chap I just passed was either himself or a twin-brother of his. It's queer, I guess. You see, I've been down to the village, and just outside the village when I was coming back, Dr. Monk's carriage passed me, and he was in it."

"What!"

"And then in the lane I passed him again. I was taken aback, I can tell you. To make sure I touched my cap to him, and said 'Good-afternoon, Dr. Monk,' and he answered me quite as usual. I guess it's queer."

The juniors stared at Lumley-Lumley.

"You passed him in his carriage?" muttered Tom Merry.

"I guess so."

"You're sure the carriage wasn't empty?"

"Yes, of course!"

"My only hat!"

The juniors stared at one another with sickly looks. The terrible truth dawned upon them at once. While they were disguising Kerr in the New House, Dr. Monk had left St. Jim's—his stay at the school had not been so long as the juniors had expected it to be. He was gone—gone back to the Grammar School, and he would be there when Kerr arrived.

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"M-m-my hat!"

"Oh, dear!"

"We—we must make sure!" gasped Tom Merry.

He ran into the house. Toby, the page, was in the hall, and Tom Merry caught him by the shoulder, shaking him in his excitement. Toby stared at him.

"Oh, Master Merry!"

"Is Dr. Monk still with the Head?" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"No, Master Tom!"

"He has left?"

"Yes!"

"Did he go in his carriage?"

"Yes, Master Tom."

"How long ago?"

"About half-an-hour, I think, Master Tom."

"Oh, crumbs!"

Tom Merry ran out to join his chums.

"Well?"

Every voice uttered the interrogatory monosyllable at once.

"It's true!" gasped Tom Merry, in utter dismay.

"The doctor's gone?"

"Yes."

"There's a chance!" muttered Lowther. "He may not have gone back to the Grammar School. Where was the carriage going when you saw it, Lumley?"

"It was just turning out of Rylcombe Lane, to go up to the Grammar School."

"My hat!"

"We're done!"

"Poor old Kerr!"

"Oh, come on!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Kerr will be done in, of course. We'd better be there to help him if we can. Come on!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

And Tom Merry & Co. dashed down to the gates. They ran into the road, and dashed off in the direction of the Grammar School. They had a faint hope that they might overtake the disguised junior before he reached the gates of the Grammar School. But the hope was vain. They came in sight of the Grammar School, and there was no sign of the hero of the New House on the road. Kerr, all unconscious of his danger, had gone unsuspectingly into the lion's den.

CHAPTER 14.

Dr. Monk the Second!

KERR had lost no time on the road.

Little dreaming that the real Dr. Monk had returned to the Grammar School, and had preceded him there by a quarter of an hour or more, the disguised junior walked in at the gates with an assured tread. The quadrangle was crowded with Grammarians.

Frank Monk & Co. were on the footer field, playing a match with a Fourth Form team, captained by Gordon Gay, and there was a crowd round the field.

Kerr glanced towards them, through his spectacles, which were made of plain glass, and did not impede his vision.

He grinned under his white beard and whiskers.

Several Grammarians in the quadrangle glanced at Kerr in surprise. They did not dream that he was a St. Jim's junior in the guise of an old gentleman. But as they had seen their headmaster go into the house ten minutes or a quarter of an hour before, they were naturally surprised to see him walk in at the school gates again. Mr. Adams, the master of the Fourth, met him in the quad., and stopped blankly. Mr. Adams was going out for the afternoon, and he had waited till Dr. Monk's return before doing so, and now he had left the house and was walking down to the gates. His amazement at seeing a new Dr. Monk may be imagined. Only five minutes before he had taken his leave of Dr. Monk, in his study, and here was a new Dr. Monk walking towards him sedately. Mr. Adams stopped dead, and stared blankly. He wondered whether his eyes were deceiving him, or whether he was dreaming.

"Dr. Monk!" he ejaculated.

Kerr nodded to him.

"Yes, I have—er—returned, you see," he said, in an exact imitation of the Grammar School headmaster's somewhat thin and wheezy tones.

"Oh, sir! But—but—"

Kerr nodded again, and walked on, leaving the Fourth-Form master rooted to the ground. Mr. Adams rubbed his eyes. He was certainly dreaming, or else there was black magic in the air. He stood rooted to the ground for some minutes, and then strode away to the house to see Dr. Monk again, and make sure that he was not mistaken.

The disguised junior walked on with the deliberate step of a middle-aged schoolmaster, towards the footer ground.

The two junior teams were playing hard, and Gordon Gay had the ball at his foot, and was making a rush for goal, when a wheezy voice called to him:

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NEXT
WEEK:

"ASHAMED OF HIS SISTER!"

"Gay—er—Gay!"

Gordon Gay kicked before he replied, and the ball found the net. There was a shout from the spectators.

"Goal! Bravo, Gay!"

"Gay! Gay!" rapped out Dr. Monk II.

"Yes, sir," said Gordon Gay.

"Come off the field at once!"

"Ye-es, sir."

Gordon Gay, looking very much astonished, came off the ground. The play, of course, ceased, and the juniors gathered round in amazement. Dr. Monk had never been known to interfere like this in the middle of a game of football before, and the fellows did not know what to make of it.

The little old gentleman looked at Gordon Gay through his glasses, and frowned. It was evident that he was wrathful.

"Gay!" he thundered.

"Yes-s, sir."

"Go in immediately!"

"What for, sir?"

"Do not question my orders, Gay. Go in immediately, and go to the Form-room and write out a hundred lines from Virgil!"

"Oh, sir!"

"Two hundred lines, Gay!"

"But, sir—"

"Three hundred lines!"

"Very well, sir."

Gordon Gay walked away towards the red-brick house. The other fellows stared at Dr. Monk II. in blank amazement. What did it mean?

"Carboy! Lane! Wootton major!"

"Yes, sir."

"Go in with Gay and write a hundred lines each!"

"Oh, sir!"

"Two hundred lines each!"

The juniors named tramped off after Gordon Gay with grim faces. They wondered whether their headmaster was "off his rocker!" But they had no choice but to obey. Frank Monk stared at the doctor in blank dismay. He had never known his father like this before. But his own turn was coming.

"Frank!"

"Yes, father."

"You will also write out a hundred lines! Not a word! Go at once, sir!"

"Yes, father."

And Frank Monk went. Dr. Monk waved his hand towards the football ground.

"Take those goalposts down!"

"Eh!"

"What!"

"Oh, sir!"

"Take those goalposts down at once and put the ball away. I will cane you all if you hesitate one moment. When you have taken them down, go out for a walk for two hours. That will be a better exercise for you than playing football. Obey me! You are to walk as far as Wayland. Do you hear?"

"Ye-es, sir!" gasped the unfortunate juniors.

Dr. Monk turned away from the football field. The dismayed Grammarians obeyed the inexplicable command. Dr. Monk had always been popular with the boys, but he was not popular at this moment. Why he should give such orders was inconceivable; but as the orders were given, they had to be obeyed. The juniors of the Grammar School had no choice about that. Slowly and sullenly they took down the goalposts, and then proceeded to change their clothes to go out for the commanded walk.

Dr. Monk II. walked towards the house. Kerr intended to make havoc in the Fourth-Form quarters in the red-brick School House, and he had thought of that device for getting the Fourth Form off the scene while he did it. Slowly the juniors tramped away towards the gates, to go out for their walk—a walk they were very unwilling to take. Outside the gates they came in sight of a crowd of St. Jim's fellows. Tom Merry & Co. had arrived. At any other time, probably, there would have been a row; but the Grammarians were too dismayed and puzzled to be looking for trouble now, and their leaders were detained in school. And the Saints were anxious about Kerr.

Wootton minor glared at the Saints, and the Saints glared back at him. Tom Merry stopped, with a cheerful grin.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed. "Going out?"

"Yes!" growled Wootton minor.

"You don't look particularly cheery about it?" said Blake. Wootton minor grunted.

"Our Head's gone off his rocker!" he explained.

"Oh!" ejaculated all the St. Jim's fellows at once.

They were anxious for information about Kerr. Was it possible that the real Dr. Monk was absent after all, and that

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the disguised junior was carrying through the deception with out let or hindrance.

"What's wrong?" asked Tom Merry sympathetically.

"Blessed if I know!" growled Wootton minor. "He's suddenly ordered us to stop playing footer, and to go to Wayland for a walk."

"Can't make it out," said Tadpole. "I should have liked to argue the point with him, but he looked very angry."

"Oh, he's off his silly rocker!" said Carpenter.

"Gay and Frank and Lane and Carboy are detained," went on Wootton minor, "so is my major! They haven't done anything. It's a giddy mystery. Come on, you chaps; there'll be trouble if we don't go!"

And the Grammarians tramped away on the road to Wayland.

The Saints watched them go, and chuckled softly.

"Kerr's been at work!" murmured Figgins.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"And they haven't bowled him out!"

"That's certain!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But where is Dr. Monk, then?" Blake muttered, puzzled.

"He may have gone out again."

"I wish we knew."

The St. Jim's fellows pressed on towards the gates of the Grammar School. It was clear that Kerr was at work, and that he had been successful so far. But how would it end? Tom Merry & Co. remained outside the gates. If Kerr was not yet suspected, it would only arouse suspicion if they showed themselves within the walls of the Grammar School. And if he was found out, and needed their help, he might be able to give some signal. The only thing for them to do was to wait—and they waited anxiously enough.

CHAPTER 15.

Cornered!

DR. MONK II. entered the red-brick School House with a stately tread. Fellows were looking at him from all sides in great surprise. His arbitrary and tyrannical orders to the Fourth Form had caused general consternation, and the Grammarians did not know what to make of it. Dr. Monk II. was frowning, and no one felt inclined to remonstrate with him. Indeed, there was a general desire to keep out of his way, in case his unexpected wrath should fall upon some more unfortunates who had not offended. After what had happened on the junior football ground, there was no telling what the Grammar School headmaster would do next.

Dr. Monk II. walked down the Form-room passage, and opened the door of the Fourth-Form-room. The detained juniors were there, sitting at their desks, with their books before them, but they were not at work. They were talking in excited tones, which died away as the face of the headmaster looked into the Form-room.

"You are not at work!" said Dr. Monk II.

The juniors looked at him glumly. Even Frank Monk, who was very fond of his father, was angry and exasperated.

"We're just going to begin, sir," said Gordon Gay.

"That's not good enough! I—I mean, that will not do! You will take a thousand lines each, and not leave this Form-room until they are written!" said the doctor.

"Oh, sir!"

"Mind what I say!"

The doctor withdrew, and closed the Form-room door after him with a bang. The juniors exchanged glances of hopeless bewilderment.

"Has he ever been like this before, Franky?" asked Gordon Gay.

Monk shook his head.

"Never!"

"He's off his rocker, of course," said Wootton major.

"Clean off!" said Lane.

"Mad as a hatter!" said Carboy.

Frank Monk looked gloomy.

"I don't know what to make of it," he said. "He's just been over to St. Jim's, I believe, and Dr. Holmes may have made some complaint about our rows with the Saints—perhaps about hose-piping those chaps last evening."

Gordon Gay grinned.

"But Tom Merry & Co. wouldn't sneak!" he said.

"No. But they may have been seen coming in wet and draggled, and their headmaster might get his back up. You never know what these blessed masters will do."

"Well, it's possible."

"That's the only way I can account for it."

"It's jolly odd!"

"Oh, it's rotten!"

"Better get to work," said Wootton major. "If he looks

in again and sees nothing done, there may be more trouble. A thousand lines is quite enough for me. Enough to keep us going till dark, confound it!"

And the juniors, with frowning faces, set themselves to writing out their lines. There was no danger of their getting out of the Form-room and interfering with Kerr's little games. There was not the slightest suspicion as to the Scottish junior's real identity. But for the unfortunate fact that the real Dr. Monk had returned to the school, the coast would have been quite clear for the impersonator. And of that fact Kerr was as yet unaware, nor did the Grammarians know that there were two Dr. Monks in the house at that moment.

Kerr grinned under his white beard as he drew the door of the Form-room shut. He walked away to the Fourth Form passage, upstairs. He intended that the Grammarians should be surprised when they saw their studies again. A late raid made by Gordon Gay on the junior quarters at St. Jim's was in his mind, and he intended to outdo the havoc wrought by the Cornstalk.

He entered Gordon Gay's study first.

The study was empty. Tadpole's easel stood in one corner, with a half-finished canvas upon it. The canvas represented a study in crimson, but whether the picture was a landscape, or a seascape, or a study of a group of Highland cattle, was not quite clear. Tadpole probably knew, but it was a secret from the uninitiated eye. Tadpole was a painter of the impressionist school, and his pictures were so exceedingly impressionist that, on looking at them afterwards, he sometimes failed himself to remember what they were intended to represent.

Kerr chuckled softly at the sight of the canvas. He picked up Tadpole's brush and dipped it in colour, and proceeded to make the picture still more impressionist by dabbing heavy colour over it in chunks, in shrieking disharmony. Then, still making use of Tadpole's brush, he scrawled on the looking-glass:

"DOWN WITH THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL!"

Then he wrecked the study.

He turned over chairs and tables, emptied out drawers and desks, ripped up the carpet, and emptied the ashpan over all.

It did not take Kerr many minutes; but the study when he had finished looked as if a tribe of Red Indians had been let loose upon it.

Kerr grinned cheerfully as he surveyed the havoc he had wrought. It would remind Gordon Gay of the state he had left some St. Jim's studies in, not so long ago, when he saw it. The disguised junior turned to the door, and was about to open it and pass out into the passage, to pay a similar visit to Frank Monk's study, when there was a footstep outside, and a voice that made Kerr turn cold all over.

It was a somewhat wheezy but pleasant voice—though it sounded anything but pleasant or agreeable in Kerr's ears at that moment:

"You amaze me, Mr. Adams!"

"My hat!" murmured Kerr.

For it was the voice of Dr. Monk!

Kerr stood rooted to the torn study carpet.

Dr. Monk!

And he was coming to Gordon Gay's study, with the master of the Fourth! In a moment the terrible truth flashed upon Kerr. He understood now the strange looks of Mr. Adams when the latter had met him in the quadrangle.

Dr. Monk had returned—he was at the Grammar School all the time!

Kerr felt a cold chill run down his spine.

He was caught!

Before he could think it out—before he could decide what to do—the study door opened, and the two masters stood in the doorway.

Kerr backed away across the wrecked study.

The two Dr. Monks—the real and the imitation—stood face to face!

CHAPTER 16.

The Coolness of Kerr.

DR. MONK the real stared at Dr. Monk the imitation in blank amazement.

The old gentleman was utterly bewildered.

Mr. Adams had found him in the study, and had had some difficulty in making him credit that another gentleman, exactly resembling himself, and speaking with his voice, had arrived at the Grammar School.

But when the doctor understood, he had come out with the Fourth-Form master, in a state of great astonishment, to find the intruder.

The amazement of the Grammarians when they saw Dr. Monk came out of his study with Mr. Adams, may be better imagined than described.

They had seen Dr. Monk go upstairs, and now they saw him come out of his study on the ground-floor, and they rubbed their eyes and wondered whether they were dreaming.

Mr. Adams quickly learned that the intruder had gone upstairs, and he followed with Dr. Monk, and arrived at Gordon Gay's study, guided by a sound of crashing therein, caused by Kerr's efforts to break up the happy home in the shortest possible space of time.

Kerr was cornered now.

There was no doubt about that.

He had backed away to the wall, and stood facing the two masters, desperately, his eyes gleaming through his glasses.

Dr. Monk was unable to speak for some moments. He could see his reflection in the glass opposite, and he could see Kerr, and he was almost in doubt which was which, so excellent was the junior's make-up.

Mr. Adams was frowning angrily. He knew that there was some trick being played, of course, and he suspected something more serious than a junior jape. Some vague idea of a disguised burglar after the school plate was in his mind.

"There he is, sir!" he exclaimed, raising his right hand dramatically to point at the cornered "japer."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Dr. Monk.

"That is the cheat—the impostor!"

"Dear me!"

"Explain yourself, you scoundrel!" exclaimed Mr. Adams.

"Dear me!"

"Who are you?" thundered the Fourth-Form master.

There was a buzz of voices behind him in the passage. Fellows had come from all quarters to see what was amiss, and necks were craned round the doorway to catch a glimpse of the amazing impostor in the study.

Kerr was silent.

His brain was working quickly; but he did not yet know what to do. If he was captured now, it was pretty certain that the Grammarians would give him a ragging that he would remember for a very long time.

Frank Monk, and Gordon Gay, and the rest had come out of the Form-room, and were in the crowd outside the study. The general furore had reached their ears, and brought them upon the scene, at the risk of more trouble with the irascible Head. At the sight of two headmasters exactly resembling one another they simply gasped. Even Gordon Gay was "knocked into a cocked hat," as he expressed it afterwards.

"Who is it?"

"Who's the bounder?"

"Look at what he's done to the study!"

"Wrecked it, by Jove!"

"Look at what's written on the glass!" yelled Wootton major.

There was a roar.

"DOWN WITH THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL!"

There it was, daubed in sprawling letters right across the looking-glass over the mantelpiece in the study.

It gave a clue!

"St. Jim's cads!"

"It's a jape!"

"It's a jape of the St. Jim's rotters!" roared Gordon Gay.

"Dear me!"

Mr. Adams waved back the eager juniors, who would have

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crowded into the study. It was not for Gordon Gay & Co. to take the matter into their own hands.

"Stand back, boys!"
 "It's a giddy jape, sir!"
 "Stand back!"

Mr. Adams advanced into the study, towards the dismayed japer, who stood with his back to the wall, and his eyes gleaming desperately through his spectacles.

"Who are you?" demanded Mr. Adams.
 "I know jolly well who he is!" came a voice from the passage. "He's one of those blessed St. Jim's chaps got up!"

"Yes, rather!"
 "Dear me!" said Dr. Monk.

The worthy headmaster of the Grammar School seemed to be able to express his feelings by no other formula.

"Will you explain yourself?" thundered Mr. Adams.
 "I will explain to Dr. Monk," said Kerr cheerfully.

"Ahem!" said the doctor.
 "I can explain quite easily," said Kerr, "if you will kindly leave me alone with Dr. Monk for a minute or two."

"This is—is very extraordinary!" said the doctor.
 "Pray do as he wishes, Mr. Adams. Boys, you must not come into the study!"

Mr. Adams hesitated a moment. But Kerr did not look, after all, like a very desperate ruffian, and the inscription on the looking-glass made the same impression upon Mr. Adams as upon the Grammarian juniors.

"Very well, sir," he said.

And the Fourth-Form master stepped out into the passage, and drew the door shut after him, leaving the real Dr. Monk alone with the impostor. Dr. Monk looked mildly at the disguised junior.

"Now, kindly explain yourself," he said. "Is this—ahem! —is this—er—an egregious joke?"

"Yes, sir," said Kerr cheerfully.
 "And who are you?"

"I am a St. Jim's chap, sir."
 "Dear me!"

"It's only a joke, sir," Kerr explained eagerly. "We—I—thought you were staying over at St. Jim's for the afternoon. Of course, I didn't mean anything disrespectful to you, sir. It was only a joke!"

"Ahem!"
 "If you will kindly let me go now, sir——"

Dr. Monk shook his head.

"I am afraid it will be necessary to cane you," he said.
 "You have done a great deal of damage here. You must—ahem!—be punished. And you must take off your absurd disguise, and—ahem!—I will cane you in the presence of my boys!"

Kerr's eyes gleamed.

The jape, which had been so successful so far, would have an absurd ending indeed, if he were caned in public before all the grinning Grammarians, and had his disguise torn off him, and were paraded in his true colours, to be jeered and grinned at.

But Kerr was not a safe customer to corner. His keen Scottish brain worked quickly. He was already edging towards the door. As the passage was blocked with Grammarians, and Mr. Adams was just outside the door, the doctor did not imagine that the impersonator was thinking of escape.

Kerr was still facing the doctor, and as he did so he felt behind him with his hand for the handle of the door. He had one chance yet; it was a desperate one, but he had the nerve to take it. It was neck or nothing now.

Suddenly he pulled the door open, and stepped into the passage, and closed the door behind him quickly. Mr. Adams made a movement. Kerr stepped up to him quickly.

"Please secure him at once!" he exclaimed, in Dr. Monk's wheezy tones. "Boys, take him prisoner at once! I am convinced that he is a dangerous character!"

"Certainly!" said Mr. Adams.

Not for a moment did the Fourth Form-master dream that he was being taken in. The boys were only too eager to lay hands on the impersonator. Mr. Adams pushed the door open, and strode into the study, and the juniors crowded in after him. There was a rush at the little old gentleman in the study, and in a moment Dr. Monk, too astonished to know what was happening, was struggling blindly in the grasp of his own boys.

Kerr, with beating heart, walked down the corridor.

He had probably about a minute's grace before the Grammarians discovered that they had been done, and in that minute he had to make his escape.

He reached the stairs, descended them by a headlong slide down the banisters, and made for the open door. In a second more he was flying across the quadrangle, his coat-tails streaming in the breeze.

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There was wild confusion in Gordon Gay's study.

The real Dr. Monk, gasping for breath, was slammed up against the wall by the eager juniors, and Gordon Gay dragged at his hair, and Frank Monk at his beard.

"Collar him!"
 "Have his wig off!"
 "Go for the bounder!"
 "Bump him!"

"Hold!" exclaimed Mr. Adams. "Don't be too rough! Surrender, you scoundrel!"

"Dear me!" gasped Dr. Monk. "I—I— Oh! I am Dr. Monk! How dare you! I—I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "He's keeping it up still!"
 "The cheek!"
 "Down him!"

"Have his whiskers off!"
 "Help! Oh, I am Dr. Monk! Dear me! Ow! Oh!"

"Stop!" shouted Mr. Adams, in alarm. "We have been deceived! This is Dr. Monk! It was the impostor who passed us! Good heavens! What audacity!"

"Great Scott!"
 "My only hat!"
 "By George!"

It was only too clear. For the tugs at Dr. Monk's beard had failed to pull it off, though to the unfortunate doctor it seemed as if his beard, and his head, too, were coming off under the rough usage of the juniors.

The Grammarians released the doctor as if he had suddenly become red-hot.

"Sorry, sir!" gasped Gordon Gay. "We—we thought——"

"Dear me! Oh, dear!"
 "Sorry, sir! I—I——"

"The impostor is escaping!" exclaimed Mr. Adams. Gordon Gay gave a yell.

"He's getting clear! After him!"

They understood the trick now. With a yell the Grammarians swarmed out of the study in pursuit of the impersonator who had tricked them so cleverly.

But the passage was empty!

"He's gone!"
 "After him!"
 "Come on!"

Down the stairs and out of the House the infuriated Grammarians rushed, while Dr. Monk gasped for breath in the study. Out in the quadrangle there was a glimpse of a hatless figure with flying coat-tails disappearing through the gates. Frank Monk gave a shout.

"There he goes!"

"After him!"

And the Grammarians rushed in desperate pursuit.

CHAPTER 17.
 Victory.

TOM MERRY gave a shout as the hatless, breathless figure came dashing out of the gateway of the Grammar School.

"Here's Kerr!"
 "Bai Jove!"
 "Rescue!" gasped Kerr.
 "Here we are, deah boy!"

Kerr reached the St. Jim's crowd breathless.
 "They're after me!" he gasped. "Get into cover, and you can jump on them—it's all right! I'll draw them into the trap!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Good egg!"
 "Cover, quick!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

The St. Jim's juniors swarmed into cover. There was a big crowd of the Fourth and the Shell with Tom Merry and Blake and Figgins now, more than enough to handle the Grammarians at close quarters, now that the greater part of the Grammarian Fourth were well on their way to the town of Wayland.

They crowded behind the hedges of the lane, and Kerr dropped into a walk, as if overcome by his exertions, remaining solely visible in the eyes of Gordon Gay & Co. when they came whooping out in the gates of the Grammar School.

Of the proximity of Tom Merry & Co. the Grammarians knew nothing. Gordon Gay and a dozen juniors came tearing out of the gates in pursuit of the fellow who had impersonated their headmaster, and given them so exhilarating a time in writing out lines in the Form-room.

"There he is!" roared Gordon Gay.
 "There's the bounder!"
 "After him!"

The Grammarians put on a spurt. They came racing up

and Kerr turned round to face them. His hat was gone, his beard was hanging by a single wire, and his wig was sideways. In spite of his make-up, it was possible to recognise him now, and the Grammarians shouted his name as they dashed up.

"It's Kerr!"

"Collar him!"

"We'll tar and feather him for this!"

"Collar the rotter!"

Kerr had halted, apparently alone on the dusty road.

"It's Kerr—the bounder!"

"Collar him!"

The Grammarians were all round him now, and right in the middle of the ambush. Kerr gave a yell.

"Rescue, St. Jim's!"

"What ho!"

"Look out!" yelled Gordon Gay.

But it was too late.

The road which had seemed so lonely and deserted became suddenly alive with St. Jim's caps. From the hedges on both sides of the road the juniors of St. Jim's sprang into view, and they rushed upon the Grammarians in overwhelming numbers.

"Go for 'em!" roared Blake.

The onslaught was irresistible. From all sides the St. Jim's juniors bore down upon the enemy like wolves upon the fold.

The Grammarians were simply overwhelmed by the rush of the victorious Saints. Two or three of them ran, but the rest were surrounded, and they stood back to back, and put up a desperate fight against odds—but the struggle was brief.

Down they went, clinging to the Saints who downed them, and rolling in the dust in desperate resistance.

In a minute or less the Grammarians were all down, and the St. Jim's juniors were sprawling over them, keeping them there.

"Got 'em!" yelled Tom Merry.

"Lemme go!" gasped Gordon Gay, who had Fatty Wynn sitting on his chest and Herries standing on his legs. "Groo! Gerroff!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tie them up!" grinned Tom Merry. "We'll give them what they gave Gussy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

Twine and whipcord galore were produced from pockets, and handkerchiefs were twisted into bonds. The Grammarians were tied by their wrists, till there was a long row of them, all secured together, and utterly unable to help themselves. Then they were allowed to rise.

Figgins scooped mud out of a puddle in his cap. He daubed it liberally on the faces of the Grammar juniors. Other fellows followed his example, and in a few minutes Gordon Gay & Co. were in a state as unenviable as that of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy the day before. The daubing was not quite so artistic, but it was quite as effective. With thick daubs of mud on their faces, in their hair, and in their collars, they looked as woebegone a crew as the Saints could wish them to look.

"Groo!" gasped Frank Monk. "You—you rotters——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"One good turn deserves another, dear boy!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, adding a few finishing touches to Gordon Gay's features.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now we'll get off!" grinned Tom Merry. "There will be a crowd of the bounders on the scene soon. Who's top school now?"

"St. Jim's! St. Jim's!"

"Hurrah for St. Jim's!"

And, leaving the muddy and defeated Grammarians to stumble back to school as best they could with their hands tied, the victorious Saints streamed off towards St. Jim's, roaring with laughter.

Tom Merry & Co. marched into St. Jim's in triumph. Kerr's recital of what had happened in the Grammar School was received with roars of laughter. Rivalry between School House and New House was quite forgotten now; juniors of both Houses united to do honour to the hero of the hour.

For many a day after that the juniors of St. Jim's chuckled over their triumphs, and even the Grammarians themselves could not deny that Tom Merry & Co. had had the best of it in the raiding of the rival school.

THE END.

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Dick Dauntless and Jack Orde, chums of Welton College, are bathing in the sea early one morning, when they are suddenly seized by enormous octopus-like tentacles and dragged swiftly down beneath the surface of the water.

They are pulled aboard a submarine motor-car, and are soon introduced to Captain Flame, the captain of the Octopus, as the strange craft is named.

The crew consists entirely of boys, with whom Dick Dauntless and Jack Orde are soon on good terms.

The chums learn that Captain Flame is bound for the Pacific with the express intention of searching for Dick Dauntless's millionaire father, who was a friend of his, and whose yacht the Morning Star, has long been reported missing.

They make for that dreaded mass of floating weeds known as the Sargasso Sea, and there, stuck fast in the midst of the weeds, they find both the Morning Star and the tug that had been sent out to aid her. While investigating, the Octopus is attacked by a body of Tankas—huge men who dwell in the crater of an extinct volcano. They defeat these, and invade the underground world, where these strange men live. Dick Dauntless and Jack Orde are sent to the Island of Rest for chemicals, but on arriving at their destination, they find that the prisoners who are kept on an adjoining island, the Island of Lost Hopes, have rebelled. The boys escape with the chemicals, and, after rescuing Mr. Dauntless from the hands of the Tankas, rejoin the Octopus. Captain Flame destroys the castle of the Tankas, and leaves the underground world for the Island of Lost Hopes.

Dick Dauntless, who is at the wheel, notices in the distance three sunken ships. He halts the submarine motor-car near them, and then tells Captain Flame of his find.

"Is not that the ship Himalayas?" asks Dick Dauntless excitedly.

(Now go on with the story.)

The Lost Treasure Ship.

"You are right, my lad," ejaculated the inventor, after he had studied the three ships through a telescope. "It is the Himalayas. Now the mystery of her disappearance is explained. See, some of the hawsers with which the three ships were lashed together are severed, others are partly cut through.

"Those craft on either side are two French privateers which vanished from their usual haunts at the same time as the Himalayas. It must have been a stirring sight to see those two waspish-looking little craft closing upon the mighty Indiaman, to see her fighting them off as a whale strives to beat away the attack of the thresher shark.

"Then came the sudden rush at night—for, see, there are battle lanterns still swinging from the yards—the rush of the boarders, the stirring cheers of the British sailors as they repulsed their yelling foes.

"Again and again the rovers attempt to board, again and again they are repulsed. Each time the numbers of the defenders are lessened, until at length the gallant hero who

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commanded the Himalayas determined that if he must perish, his foes should perish also.

"And now the final onslaught, the clash of steel, the loud report of pistols and muskets. See, a smoke-begrimed bleeding figure dives below. In vain the privateers' men, guessing his errand, rush after him, whilst others, retreating pell-mell to their vessel, try to cut the lashing which binds them together.

"Too late! Pistol in hand, the desperate man has reached the magazine, and, thrusting his pistol into the powder, pulls the trigger.

"There is a sudden concussion, a deafening report, and the British ship, with a gaping hole in her bottom, settles down, dragging her would-be captors with her. Ah, my lad, when our time comes, may you and I die as gloriously!"

So vivid had been Captain Flame's description that Dick had almost seen the fight raging on the wreck, as though it had been taking place before his eyes.

For nearly a minute after Captain Flame had ceased, neither spoke. Then the flush of enthusiasm which had mounted his pale cheeks vanished. The inventor said calmly:

"Order away two boys to go with us to explore the wreck. Ask Mr. Dauntless if he would like a walk beneath the waves."

Imitating his captain's imperturbability as well as the excitement under which he laboured would allow, Dick saluted, and hastened off on his errand.

A Fearful Encounter.

Ten minutes later, Mr. Dauntless, Captain Flame, Dick, Jack, and Will, their swords by their sides, their axes at their belts, each also armed with steel-pointed boathooks and carrying between them coils of rope and pulleys, made their way across the yellow sands to the hulls of the three ships.

The bow of the nearest privateer was almost flushed with sand, and thus offered an easy mode of access to the tall bulwarks of the Indiaman, which had settled down on a perfectly level keel.

Dick Dauntless was the first to reach the Indiaman's deck. As he did so, his feet rattled amongst the bones and skeletons of attacked and attackers which littered the deck.

A round shot was buried in the Indiaman's still standing mizzen mast. The bulwarks were torn and riven in a hundred places, and were pitted with the smaller wounds of musketry fire.

Gallant indeed must have been the Indiaman's stand against her swarming foes.

Following the perpendicular lines of the stout mast, Dick felt the blood surging swiftly through his veins as he saw the glorious folds of the British flag nailed to the mast.

Even as he gazed, stirred by some imperceptible lower current, the grand old flag spread out its noble folds, fluttering defiantly over her unconquerable dead.

Instinctively Dick's hand flew to his forehead in salute, an action which was imitated by each of his companions as they stepped on to that battle-strewn wreck.

An ill-suppressed cry of alarm from Will Avery drew all eyes towards him, and Dick saw the boy's gleaming axe fall upon some round object squirming at his feet.

The next moment the water was darkened by a thick stream of sepia, and he knew that his chum had just slain a small octopus which had wound its tentacles round his ankle.

Laughingly he turned to the companion-way, towards which Captain Flame had just beckoned him.

Suddenly he saw the inventor spring back and draw his sword.

The next moment a round, greyish object, like an oblong bubble, floated from out the cabin below.

It was followed by scores of others, which came towards the little group, their tentacles writhing, until they looked like floating nests of hideous serpents.

Springing forward, Captain Flame slashed at the leading octopus. Its distended body collapsed like a thick bladder.

By this time all five were busy slashing away at the loathsome creatures, which were pouring in a continuous, apparently unending, procession from the ship's cabin.

"Keep together, lads! On your lives, don't separate!" shouted Captain Flame.

Back to back the five Britishers stood on the deck of that long-submerged East Indian, slashing, cutting, thrusting, yet apparently making no impression on the thousands of repulsive creatures which floated overhead and around them, or, squirming about on the deck, twined their writhing tentacles round their legs.

It was indeed a fearful fight.

Again and again Dick feared lest they would be overwhelmed.

Their foes, though not of great size, were formidable by their numbers and the tenacity with which their sucker-armed tentacles clung to whatever they touched.

To add to their peril, the sea became as black as ink from the sepia ejected from the wounded and slain squids.

A cry of pain drawn from Dick's unwilling lips caused his father to turn swiftly round. A moan of despair burst from Mr. Dauntless's lips when, through the inky fluid in which they fought, he saw an octopus had fastened on his son's shoulder.

Its tentacles were clasped tightly round the boy's throat, its hideous talon-like beak was already rattling on the back of Jack's helmet.

There was not a moment to be lost.

The metal could not long resist that sharp beak.

Forgetful of his own danger, Mr. Dauntless thrust the hilt of his sword between the squid's mouth and Dick's helmet; then, as the fearful jaws closed upon it, wrenched them asunder with a smart twist of his wrist.

Even as he did so, a streak of light seemed to flash over his shoulder, and the octopus fell, its body pierced by Captain Flame's sword.

Tearing off the tentacle which, even in death, seemed to threaten suffocation, Dick Dauntless drew in a deep breath, and, with an encouraging cheer to his comrades, laid about him with a hearty good will.

By this time they were standing knee-deep in an awful mass of bladder-like bodies and writhing tentacles.

Their arms ached, their clothes were torn to shreds. Fortunately the stout leather fastenings of their helmets had resisted the squids' onslaught.

Captain Flame's voice rang out.

"To the left, lads; to the quarter-deck!" he cried.

The boys obeyed, passing, as it were, from out a mound of squids, which made no attempt to follow them. With the cannibal instinct of their loathsome species, they were fighting and struggling over the bodies of their slain companions.

All save two. One, with its beak entangled in the buckle of Will Avery's belt, was making fierce struggles to escape, whilst the other had fixed its parrot-like mouth on Jack Orde's shoulder, from which it hung like some fearful, living epaulet.

These two hideous creatures slain and hurled to their comrades, the adventurers looked ruefully at each other.

A sorry spectacle they presented. Their clothes were torn to shreds, and through the rents appeared red, inflamed wounds where the octopuses' suckers had taken hold.

All were more or less wounded, but Jack Orde and Will Avery were the only ones whose wounds were sufficiently severe to compel Captain Flame to send them back to the car.

Leaning on the shell-encrusted balustrade of the Indian's quarter-deck, Mr. Dauntless, Captain Flame, and Dick watched their late foes gorge themselves upon their slain comrades, then crawl or float sluggishly away, until at length the wreck was freed from their awful presence.

With drawn swords, the three cautiously penetrated into the interior of the huge vessel.

In the main cabin they found a heap of human bones that rattled beneath a mass of embroidered silk and colourless muslin, and they knew that there the terrified women and children had perished when the Indian sank to her last home beneath the waves.

For some minutes Captain Flame and his companions stood with reverently bowed heads over the relics; then, leaving them where they lay, made their way through holds filled with merchandise to the stern.

And there, hurled in all directions by the force of the explosion, partly buried in sand, partly intermixed with a large quantity of cannon balls, moulded into a huge lump by rust and shell-fish, were chests of coins, bars of gold and silver, and quaintly-carved, crumbling boxes of sandal-wood filled with precious stones.

Whilst Dick returned to the Octopus with orders to bring every available man to the work of recovering the treasure, Captain Flame and Mr. Dauntless explored the holds of the two ships.

Evidently the privateers had enjoyed a successful cruise, for their holds were filled with rich cargoes, taken from the unfortunate merchantmen who had fallen into their power; but it had all long since been spoiled and rendered useless by the action of the water and sand which had drifted through parting planks into the vessel's holds.

The privateers' cabins provided a considerable treasure of another kind, consisting principally of jewels and gems of Eastern workmanship.

Assisted by the Octopus's wire rope tentacles, the car's crew had soon almost filled the strong-room with the spoils of the three wrecks, and, after a delay of twelve hours, they resumed their journey towards the islands.

The Assault.

"Hurrah! The Island of Rest at last!" cried Dick Dauntless, as he brought the Octopus to a halt on the shelving beach of the cave which formed the only practicable landing-place to the islands.

As the welcome words reached the ears of those in the general-room, they burst into a loud, strident cheer, for they longed to stretch their cramped legs on the island's greensward and to breathe once more the fresh, invigorating sea air.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The cheers were hushed.

All held their breath as the ominous sounds, terribly distinct, though rendered faint by distance, fell upon their ears.

Captain Flame entered the conning-tower. His face was hard-set and stern.

"Firing from the castle, sir?" asked Dick anxiously.

"Yes. I had hoped the colonel would have driven the wretched rats back to their holes ere this," replied Captain Flame.

Taking Dick Dauntless's place at the steering-wheel, he set the engines in motion once more.

The next moment they were plunging swiftly through the tunnel leading from the sea cave to the centre of the island.

As they swept onward the roar of guns, mingled now with loud, shrill cries, rang in their ears.

Presently they burst through a thicket-shrouded opening into the brilliant light of day.

They were now on the slope of a hill some two miles from the castle, round which a horde of rebels were swarming.

Commanded by men experienced in military matters, the attackers had approached by a series of zigzag entrenchments to within a hundred yards of the castle wall.

Captain Flame and his companions had arrived just in time to witness the final assault.

Yelling like fiends, some waving pikes, swords, and huge iron clubs, welded at the furnace in the centre of the Island of Lost Hopes, others carrying scaling-ladders, the rebels rushed to the assault.

Even as those on board the Octopus came upon the scene the foremost attackers had placed their ladders against the wall. Others followed suit, until the castle was hemmed in on three sides by a ring of scaling foemen.

"Why don't they bring the machine-guns into action?" cried Dick, in a fever of anxiety. "The garrison are outnumbered. Once let the rebels get a footing on the castle walls, and they are lost!"

The perplexed frown on Captain Flame's forehead showed that similar thoughts were passing through his own mind.

Then the truth burst upon him. Through some mishap the garrison had run short of ammunition.

"Call the men to quarters, Dauntless!" snapped out Captain Flame, as he set the Octopus in motion once more.

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NEXT WEEK:

"ASHAMED OF HIS SISTER!"

A few seconds later they were thundering to the rescue of the hardly-pressed garrison.

So engrossed were the rebels on the attack, that the Octopus reached to within a hundred yards of the castle wall unperceived.

A wild, triumphant yell, fearful in its intensity, told that the attackers had gained a footing.

Peering through the plate glass of the conning-tower, Dick saw to his horror that the defenders, stubbornly contesting every foot, were being driven slowly back from the battlements.

The next moment the loud, threatening, booming roar of the Octopus's syren rang out above the din of battle.

The fighting ceased, as though the combatants had been suddenly turned to stone. Then, above a wild, hopeless, despairing yell from the attackers, arose the joyful, resounding cheers of men who had been snatched from certain death, as the hard-pressed warders realised that Captain Flame had come to their succour.

Dick Dauntless glanced into his commander's face. What he read therein sent a thrill, almost approaching terror, sweeping through his veins.

Captain Flame's features seemed set in a stone mask; every line, every curve denoted fierce rage and angry determination.

Again the warning note of the car's syren rang out; then her huge body trembled beneath the throbbing of her mighty engines as her inventor hurled her straight at the terror-stricken rebels.

To right and left and in front of her rounded bows the remorseless steel tentacles writhed and hissed.

Paralysed with terror, Dick saw a ladder laden with swarming rebels snatched from the earth by one of the tentacles, and hurled a score yards away.

Another and another was served in the same way, until within three minutes of the Octopus's appearance on the scene not a ladder remained standing, not a foe but was flying, terror-stricken, in the direction of the Island of Lost Hopes.

Rushing with lightning speed backwards and forwards, now tearing a shrieking rebel from beneath some flourishing shrub, now dashing into the midst of a body of desperate men, who had paused, as though determined to make one last despairing stand, striking terror into the hearts of the stricken mob, the Octopus herded the defeated rebels like sheep towards the drawbridge, across which they rushed in such terror that many were jostled off the iron platform into the raging sea below.

Not until the last foe had reached the temporary safety of the honeycombed mountain that formed their prison, and the drawbridge had been raised, did Captain Flame bring the Octopus to a standstill.

Throwing open the top of the conning-tower, he stood upon the car's rounding roof, and, his face still contorted with rage, surveyed trampled fields and ruined homesteads where he had left a thriving, happy, contented colony.

Leaving Jack Orde on guard over the bridge, with orders to shoot down without challenge anyone who showed himself on the opposite side of the chasm, Captain Flame steered the car back to the castle.

Already the gates had been flung open, and the lawns before the huge building, now scarred with the earthworks of the attackers, were crowded with women and children, who had taken shelter in the castle, whilst on the battlements, and drawn up beneath the castle walls, were the men who had so nobly defended their trust.

As Captain Flame and his comrades emerged from the Octopus they were greeted with loud, hearty cheers from the men, and shrill shouts of welcome from the women.

As the shadow of a cloud passes from off a smiling landscape, so the fierce anger which had convulsed Captain Flame's face in the hour of battle vanished.

Dick Dauntless could scarcely believe that the man who moved towards the castle gates, his every step hampered by laughing, shrill-tongued children, was the same stern avenger from the wrath in whose face he had shrunk shortly before.

He had yet to learn that, terrible though Captain Flame could be to his foes, the unerring instinct of children recognised him as one in whom the innocent and helpless would surely find a friend.

Beneath the castle's frowning archway they were met by the grey-haired old commandant, who, escorting Captain Flame, Dick Dauntless, and his father into a private apartment, gave an account of the siege.

At first the rebels had contented themselves with lying hidden during the day, confining their energies to a series of attacks, which caused the garrison to expend a tremendous amount of ammunition with little result, during the night.

The day preceding the Octopus's return had been marked by a terrible catastrophe.

Whether by treachery or accident, it was impossible now to say, the magazine, which was fortunately situated on a tiny island beneath the rocky cliff on which the castle stood, had exploded, leaving the defenders with only the shells in the lockers of the quickfiring, a few belts for the machine-guns, and the cartridges in the warders' bandoliers.

This scanty store had been sadly depleted during a determined assault the previous night, which had with difficulty been repulsed.

That morning, for the first time, the foe had ventured on a daylight attack, which must inevitably have placed the castle and all within it at their mercy but for the fortunate appearance of the Octopus on the scene.

Punishing a Traitor.

"Well done, old friend! You've acted splendidly! Now, to finish with yonder rebellious scum whilst the fear of death is still within their souls," said Captain Flame when the colonel had brought his report to a conclusion. "Dauntless, a word with you," he added; and, followed by Dick's father, he left the room.

Ten minutes later he returned alone.

"Your father has gone away on pressing business, my boy. I was to say good-bye to you for him," he said, with a kindly smile at his young second-in-command.

"Gone away!" repeated Dick, in amazement. "Do you mean left the island?"

Captain Flame smiled.

"Yes, left the island," he replied; then, probably to escape further questioning, beckoned the boy to follow him, and left the room.

Dick obeyed, the expression of surprise on his face only partly betraying the bewilderment he felt.

He almost expected to see the Octopus gone, but she still stood where they had left her, surrounded by a crowd of curious colonists.

How, then, could Mr. Dauntless have left the island?

As though guessing his thoughts, Captain Flame touched him on the shoulder, and pointed to where, through a gap in the hills, appeared a streak of glistening sea.

Bending over before a smart breeze, a cutter of about ten tons burthen was skimming lightly over the waves.

Even as he gazed a puff of smoke arose from her stern, and the faint boom of a distant signal gun reached their ears. It was his father bidding farewell to the Island of Rest.

The next minute a bugle blew, and, in obedience to its summons, a squad of warders some twenty strong fell in.

Ordering Dick to muster the crew of the Octopus and place them at the head of the little body, Captain Flame led the way towards the Island of Lost Hopes.

As the reverberating bridge echoed to the tramp of his marching comrades, Dick Dauntless loosened his sword in its scabbard, and examined the magazine of his pistol.

There was still an overwhelming number of desperate prisoners at liberty on the Island of Lost Hopes.

It seemed madness to face them, in their despair, with so small a party.

Yet, as he marked the calm way that Captain Flame strode unarmed at their head, he felt ashamed of his fears.

Nor were they justified.

As, scorning the protection of the barred gallery, they marched straight into the open space surrounded by the dark, frowning, precipitous walls of the extinct crater, he saw the disheartened prisoners shrink back, and gaze in breathless terror at the little band.

"Halt!"

As the order echoed and re-echoed from the rocky walls that hemmed them in on every side, and the butts of the men's rifles clanged to the ground, a shiver, accompanied by a whimper of fear, arose from the shrinking crowd.

Advancing boldly to within a few paces of the prisoners, Captain Flame beckoned a senior warder, who had accompanied the little force, towards him.

Slowly the warder advanced, and placed a large book into Captain Flame's hands.

Without a word the great inventor took the volume, then, opening it, held it above his head, and deliberately tore it in halves.

A moan of despair burst from the prisoners. Well they understood the significance of the act.

The destroyed book bore the record of every prisoner. Against each name was the number of marks they had gained towards liberty, or alleviation of their sentence.

And now their labour in the past was all in vain. Every man would have to start afresh.

Then for the first time Captain Flame spoke.

"Bring Beppo Frascati!" he commanded.

There was a short struggle in the centre of the prisoners. The next moment a man was hauled to the front by three of his confederates.

It was the sculptor whose art had beautified the entrance to the Island of Rest, and who had been sentenced to the lower circle of the Island of Lost Hopes for his murderous attempt on Captain Flame.

At a sign from the inventor two warders with loaded rifles placed themselves on either side of the prisoner.

Though deathly pale, Frascati had ceased to struggle with his captors, and faced Captain Flame with an expression of concentrated hatred and sullen defiance.

"Beppo Frascati, once before you have forfeited your life, but I had mercy on you," began Captain Flame.

"Mercy!" interrupted the sculptor, with a dry, mirthless laugh. "Your mercy is cruel as death itself."

"Yet I gave you what you asked—your life. Once more I give you your choice. Will you be shot as the ringleader of the late rebellion, or be chained at my pleasure to yonder rock?"

As he spoke Captain Flame pointed to an enormous boulder projecting from the face of the cliff, close to where they stood, half-way up which was a rugged ledge some six feet wide by three deep.

Again that mirthless laugh escaped the prisoner's lips.

"More of your mercy, tyrant!" he sneered defiantly.

"Choose quickly, or I may find a middle course which will entail the terrors of both," threatened Flame.

"Then I choose the rock," cried Frascati, without further hesitation. "Not that I fear death, but because, so long as life lasts, I have a hope of one day thrusting my dagger into your black heart."

Captain Flame heard the threat unmoved.

Turning to the prisoners, he issued a number of short, sharp orders, in obedience to which ladders were brought, and iron staples driven into the rock a man's height from the ledge.

Twenty minutes later Captain Flame, escorted only by Dick and the boys, turned his back upon the Island of Lost Hopes, leaving Beppo Frascati chained, a helpless prisoner, to the rock.

Ere leaving the island Captain Flame entered the cave

where the Red Terror stood, and, having examined the injuries Dick had inflicted upon her, made his way over the drawbridge to the Island of Rest.

As they neared the castle they were met by a guard of four men, in the midst of whom walked a boy, who, as they stood aside to let the little party pass, raised the pale, fear-laden face of Karl Munchen to them.

Dick Dauntless could not resist the appeal in his late comrade's eyes.

Turning to Captain Flame, he pleaded for the youngster.

"If a snake tries to fix its deadly fangs in your flesh, would you let it go free, to strike with better success another time?" asked Captain Flame sternly.

Dick Dauntless held his peace. He knew, none better, how often the inventor had forgiven the German.

"You would not, nor will I. Yet, because he is young, and may not be all bad, he shall have his chance. His doom shall be three years in the upper workshop, instead of in the lower circle of the Island of the Lost."

Karl Munchen looked up, his face suffused with delight; then, flashing a grateful glance at Dick Dauntless, passed on.

"And now, my lads," said Captain Flame, as they entered the courtyard of the castle, "you have been loyal, faithful, industrious, and true, and have deserved a holiday whilst the Octopus and the Red Terror are being fitted out for the purpose for which they were originally built. A month of rest, another journey over the ocean bed, then back to old England once more, and those whom you hold dear."

A wild yell of delight burst from the boys' lips.

Their life had been so full of adventure that they had scarcely had time to think of those they had left behind in far-off old England. But there was not a lad present whose heart did not rebound with joy at the prospect of seeing father, mother, brothers, and sisters once more.

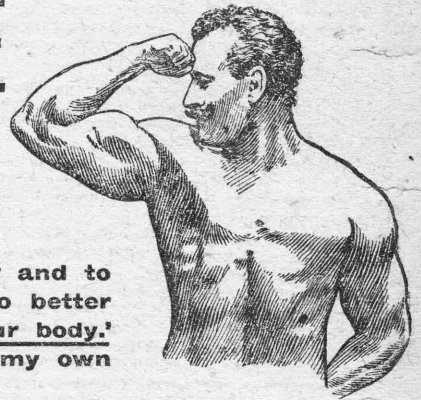
Yet Jack Orde, who had been relieved from sentry duty over the drawbridge by a warder, voiced the thoughts of all when he asked eagerly:

"But we will sail with you again, sir? I hope our travels in the submarine car are not at an end."

Captain Flame's face flushed with pleasure.

(Continued on the next page.)

MR. SANDOW'S ADVICE TO BOYS WHO WOULD BE STRONG.



"To those boys who are ambitious to be strong and to develop a robust, healthy constitution, I can give no better advice than this: **'Study your diet and exercise your body.'** These are the two maxims upon which I founded my own physical development." **EUGEN SANDOW.**

Mr. Sandow's message will be read with eager interest by every boy who takes a proper pride in himself, and who rightly hopes to become a strong and healthy man—a worthy unit of the great British Empire.

There is need, however, to emphasise the first part of Mr. Sandow's advice—"Study your diet."

Physical exercise can help you little if you do not first of all supply your body with the necessary material for its development.

Cocoa was one of Mr. Sandow's own body-building helps in the days when he was transforming himself from a condition of physical weakness to that splendid perfection of physique for which he is now famous.

What helped Mr. Sandow will help you, especially as in his HEALTH AND STRENGTH COCOA you get a Cocoa more nourishing and more digestible than the old-time cocoas. (You can get a ½ lb. tin for 7½d.)

You probably do not like ordinary cocoa. SANDOW'S COCOA, however, is very different. Its flavour is so irresistibly delicious that once you try it you will prefer "a cup of Sandow" to any other.

This "drink-diet" Cocoa will supply your system with the material for its growth and development—steadily building healthy flesh, sound bone, and strong muscles.

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Try the Cocoa and do your companions a good turn by telling them of it. SANDOW'S HEALTH AND STRENGTH COCOA is sold in ½ lb. tins, 7½d., ¼ lb., 1s. 3d., 1 lb., 2s. 6d., at Grocers', Provision Dealers', Chemists', and Stores. If unable to get it locally, you can obtain a supply *post free* by sending direct, enclosing the necessary amount in P.O. or stamps to Mr. Eugen Sandow, Elephant & Castle, London, S.E.

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NEXT WEEK:

"ASHAMED OF HIS SISTER!"

"End, my lad?" he cried enthusiastically. "On the contrary, our life of adventure on sea and land is but begun."

"Are we coming back to the island, sir?" asked Will Avery.

"Maybe; I cannot tell. All I know for certain is that when the Octopus and the Red Terror leave England a second time, there will be men's work for you boys. But come, let the future take care of itself; what you have to do now is to enjoy the present."

An Earthly Paradise.

As Captain Flame spoke he led the way through a low door in the castle's outer wall, and, touching a switch, flooded a winding flight of steps that pierced the rocky foundations on which the castle stood with the beams of numberless electric lights.

Down they went, until Dick Dauntless began to think the descent would prove unending.

For some time they threaded a winding passage, until they came to a second flight of steps, which eventually led them into a large pillared hall, bright with coloured beams from a thousand fairy lights.

Barely had they taken a dozen steps through this hall ere, with startling suddenness, the lights went out, and they found themselves in darkness.

But barely had they time to wonder at the sudden change ere a pair of mighty doors swung open, and the boys rushed eagerly forward, to pause at the top of a broad flight of marble steps, and gaze in admiration and breathless delight at the beautiful scene which greeted their astonished eyes.

Immediately before them was a delicious little bay. Its limpid waters washed a narrow belt of yellow sand, above which appeared wide stretches of the smoothest lawns, interspersed with clumps of trees bearing all manner of fruit.

Dick turned round to question Captain Flame.

He had disappeared, nor, though later on they searched the mighty hall in which they had first found themselves, could they discover the secret door by which they had entered.

To the left of the marble steps was a cluster of the prettiest little bungalows they had ever seen, over each was engraved the name of one of the boys.

Exploring their new abodes, the boys found them luxuriously furnished, and in the wardrobes of the tiny bed-rooms sufficient clothes to last them for months.

In the midst of the bungalows stood a building of the finest marble, terminating in a tower, above which swung a large bell.

Even as they looked in wonder at this building the bell clanged, the door flew open, and they saw a meal such as the greatest gourmand would not have despised, spread on a table which occupied the centre of the building.

In another place they discovered footballs, cricket-bats, fishing-rods, and implements of every game which boys enjoy most, to say nothing of a magnificent library of books, consisting for the most part of tales of school life and adventure.

The seaward end of the bay was blocked by a tall wall of coral, which acted as an effective barrier to sharks, and turned the bay into a delightful bathing place.

In this earthly paradise the boys spent the happiest six weeks of their lives, playing games, lying on the soft sward reading, swimming in the calm waters of the bay, and fed with the tastiest viands and the sweetest and rarest fruits.

One day Dick was reading beneath the shade of a fruit-laden orange-tree, when suddenly the deep, loud boom of a cannon re-echoed in his ears.

Their spell of rest was over; their life of stirring adventure was about to commence once more.

Springing to his feet, he cried:

"Hurrah, lads, there's work for us ahead! I for one am not sorry. Idleness is all very well for a time, but there's nothing one gets tired of sooner than doing nothing."

"What's up, Dick?" asked Charlie Steel, who, with Jack Orde and Harry Monston, had been bathing in the still waters of the little bay, and was rubbing himself vigorously with a rough towel.

"Can't you hear those guns?" replied Dick excitedly.

"And look, there comes a ship!" he added, as the slender tops of two iron masts appeared to seaward of the tall coral rock which hemmed in the little bay.

Wreaths of smoke curling round her tracks showed that the salute was being fired from the stranger's deck.

Suddenly a flag was run up to the taller of the two masts, and Captain Flame's ensign, of a gold flame on a red ground, was unfurled.

"Hurrah, Jack, it's Captain Flame's yacht! My father hasn't been parted from me long this time, at any rate!" cried Dick.

He ceased speaking, and looked anxiously at the masts, which had swung round until the shorter was immediately in front of the taller.

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THE GRAND CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER OF THE "MAGNET" LIBRARY Contains a Long Story by MARTIN CLIFFORD. Now on Sale.

The unknown ship was heading straight for the island. Nearer and nearer she came.

A deep silence had fallen upon the excited boys.

There was something about those masts they could not understand, whilst the roar of the saluting gun was louder, deeper, far greater in volume than could have come from the little signal cannon yachts usually carry.

It was Tom Allstraw who broke the silence.

"Look!" he cried, pointing to the masts, which were rising higher and higher above the top of the coral wall. "She has no yards nor running rigging; only stays. The masts look like—"

He ceased speaking, then added excitedly:

"They are the masts of a cruiser! See! There are her fighting-tops!"

A sudden apprehension flashed through Dick's heart.

What if the stranger was a foe, and the guns were hurling shells at the castle, which was screened from their view by the precipitous cliffs by which they were surrounded?

But ere he could put his fears into words, the five boys started, and rubbed their eyes in amazement.

The wall of coral rock, which had seemed as though nothing short of dynamite could ever burst it asunder, was opening to right and left like a pair of sliding doors, leaving a wide, open channel in the centre.

A huge ram shot into view, followed by a spacious deck from a turret in the centre of which two twelve-inch guns thrust their frowning muzzles.

Then followed an enormous superstructure, pierced with quickfirers, and protected fore and aft with sponsons, from which the muzzles of 4.7 guns frowned.

Next came a second pair of turret guns, and the boys realised that the strange ship was nothing more nor less than a smart, ten thousand ton cruiser, which was passing rapidly through the opening in the coral wall.

Scarce able to believe the evidence of their senses, the boys watched the cruiser come to anchor in deep water within a cable's length of the shore.

So near were they that they could hear the bo'sun's cheery whistle, the calm, deliberate orders, the pattering of the smartly uniformed sailors' naked feet on the iron decks, as they ran, with the nimble readiness of a well-disciplined crew, to execute their officers' commands.

So smartly did the crew of this strange vessel work that within two minutes of her coming to anchor, her tall top masts had been lowered, and she lay so securely hidden behind the coral wall that the scouts of a dozen fleets might have searched for her in vain, for, barely had her stern passed through the skilfully concealed water-gates ere they had closed, apparently of their own accord.

Suddenly Dick, whose eyes had been fixed upon a man in admiral's uniform standing on the upper bridge, uttered a loud shout.

Throwing off the blazer and flannel shirt he wore, he rushed to the water's edge, and, plunging headlong into the waves, swam to where an accommodation ladder had already been lowered from the ship's side.

Dick was a fine swimmer, and, speedily covering the distance between the warship and the land, sprang nimbly up the ladder.

Three minutes later he was shaking hands with his father on the upper bridge of Captain Flame's cruiser, *The Watcher of the Seas*.

"Well, Dick, my lad, how goes it?" was his father's greeting; then, ere the boy could reply, he turned to an officer standing by, saying: "You will take command, Captain Aymes. Kindly have a boat ready to bring off Captain Flame directly he appears on land."

The officer saluted, and, beckoning his son to follow, Admiral Dauntless led the way to a spacious state-room in the cruiser's stern.

With Royal Honours.

"Now, my lad, out with it! I see you are nearly bursting with questions. Those I can answer I will, those I do not, I know you have sufficient discretion not to ask a second time," said Mr. Dauntless, as, with his hand on his son's shoulder, he walked through the state-room to a balcony over the ship's huge rudder.

Dick Dauntless laughed.

"You're right, dad," he admitted. "I'm absolutely parched with thirst for information. The mischief of it is, I don't know where to begin."

"Perhaps, after all, you'd better not begin at all," retorted his father. "But I'll tell you as much as I am at liberty to disclose. In the first place, this vessel is *The Watcher of the Seas*, the flagship of Captain Flame's fleet. Of what that fleet consists, where it is stationed, why it is kept ready armed for service at any moment, I am not at liberty to disclose. All I can say is that the great hour for which

myself and many other friends of liberty and justice have longed, is at hand. There are stirring times before us, Dick, and we may consider ourselves fortunate, inasmuch as we have been chosen to be makers of history."

"Then there'll be fighting, dad?" asked Dick, his eyes sparkling with delight.

"I believe so, though perhaps when our enemies discover our strength they may be wise, and surrender without striking a blow," was the reply.

"Am I at liberty to ask who our enemies are?" queried Dick.

Admiral Dauntless shook his head.

"At any rate, we will not be called upon to fight against Britain?" persisted Dick.

A slight frown furrowed the admiral's brow.

"Would I hold command of this cruiser, or allow you to remain an hour under our great leader if I thought such would be the case? No, my lad, I can assure you that our cause is one in which any Briton may be proud to engage."

At that moment a bugle blared from the deck, and the boom of cannon echoed and re-echoed amongst the rocks.

Glancing shorewards, Dick Dauntless saw the gates of the pillared hall, which had been closed since the previous night, flung open, and Captain Flame, accompanied by the commandant and officers of the castle, descend the marble steps.

A mighty burst of cheering almost drowned the roar of the saluting guns.

Following his father on deck, Dick saw that the ship was manned, as though to receive royalty.

A boat manned by sailors in naval tropical uniform, had already left the cruiser, and, quickly covering the intervening distance, remained motionless alongside a natural landing-stage, from which the boys had often dived when sporting in the calm waters of the bay, with upraised oars, awaiting Captain Flame's approach.

Dick felt the blood coursing swiftly through his veins, stirred by the sonorous roar of the saluting guns.

It was indeed an impressive scene, and, glancing at the faces of the seamen and officers standing at their stations around the cruiser, he was struck by the light of enthusiasm and subdued excitement which blazed from every eye.

Wonderingly he watched the boat leave the shore, and, following his father, approached the ladder head, as Captain Flame stepped on to the grating below.

As the inventor reached the deck, the last report of the saluting cannon died away amongst the cliffs, the ship's band, stationed on the lower bridge, played a tune which might have been—indeed, Dick believed it was—a National Anthem, whilst the Marine guard of honour drawn up between the aft turret and the bridge, presented arms.

Captain Flame shot a swift glance from bow to stern of the cruiser, then, acknowledging the salute, exchanged a few, low-voiced words with Admiral Dauntless, whom he accompanied into the state-room, leaving Dick so impressed and bewildered that he scarcely knew whether he stood on his head or his heels.

Again a bugle blew, a few short, sharp orders echoed through the vessel, the men went about their ordinary duties, and the cruiser resumed the same orderly appearance it had worn ere Captain Flame appeared upon the scene.

Dick felt somebody tugging at his sleeve.

He looked down to see Mopsa standing by his side.

The little Chinaman was clad in the most rich, but grotesque robes of his country, and great was Dick's astonishment to note that he wore the red-buttoned cap and the long peacock's feather of a Mandarin of the highest rank.

How he had come on board, unless, indeed, he had been on the cruiser the whole time, Dick could not say. Certainly he had not accompanied Captain Flame.

But Dick felt beyond further surprise.

After the strange events he had just witnessed, the cruiser might almost have changed into a fishing-boat, and he would have taken it as a matter of course.

"Hallo, Mopsa!" he managed to gasp out.

The little Chinaman regarded him with a look of lofty

concern. "No Mopsa on board big cruiser," he declared. "Me Wing-Hang-Ho-Bing-Chang-O-Wang-Hi-Chung."

"Stop! Stop!" interposed Dick.

"Rodge-Kia-Kwani-Tob-Ran-Pe-San-Win-Toy——"

But Dick could stand no more.

With a cry of pretended horror, he clapped his hands over his ears and backed from the Celestial presence—or, rather, tried to—but, with a perfectly motionless face, Mopsa followed him.

"Stop, outer barbarian!" he said, pinning Dick between the shield of a quick-firing gun and the rail. "That's only my Christian name; my surnames are Mi-Tin-Tol-Al-Yu-Foollee——"

That was the last straw.

With an angry growl, Dick seized the buttoned Mandarin

by the waist, rolled him on to the deck, and sat upon his head, much to the amusement of some sailors polishing the steel-framed opening through which the aft turret guns frowned.

But, though held down, the Chinaman was not subdued, and continued reeling out his names and titles of honour to the bitter end.

"Quite finished?" demanded Dick.

"That's all I can think of at present," confessed Mopsa.

"All right, you can get up. But if ever I hear you inflicting your names upon any other suffering human boy, look out!" laughed Dick, as he pulled the grinning Chinaman to his feet.

"Feel better? It must be a great relief to get that string of names off your chest," he added.

"Me very much better, thank you, sir," replied Mopsa.

"Much better than you'll be when Captain Flame asks why you no obey his summons."

"What summons?" demanded Dick.

"The one I'd have given you if you'd let me have got two words in edgeways," was the dignified retort. "Big-nobbed chief wants you in state-room."

With an exclamation of dismay, Dick shook his fist at the grinning Celestial and hastened below, where he found his father, Captain Flame, Captain Aymes, the colonel, and another officer, seated round a table, on which was spread out map and plan.

Dick would have approached this table, but Captain Flame waved him back.

"You will return with your companions to the castle. Here are the keys of my strong-room. See that all the treasure is conveyed to The Watcher of the Seas without a moment's loss of time," he ordered.

Dick took the keys, and, saluting, left the room.

Jumping into a waiting boat, he was swiftly rowed ashore, and, ordering the boys, who had been wondering spectators of all that had taken place, to follow, led the way along the now open passage leading from the pillared hall to the castle.

All that day, and late into the night, a string of warders were constantly passing and repassing between Captain Flame's strong-room and the cruiser, until the last bag of gems, the last ingot of gold, had been stored away beneath the admiral's cabin.

What the value of the uncounted wealth that was then transferred from the Island of Rest was Dick could not so much as guess; but he knew that it must mount to well over seven figures—enough to furnish the war-chest of a nation.

And yet, he rejoiced to think, it had all been collected without robbing or defrauding a single human being, but gathered from the exhaustless treasure-house of the sea.

That night Dick Dauntless slept for the last time in his bungalow on the shores of the Bay of a Thousand Delights, as the boys had named their playground.

By sunrise he was awake, and, springing from his camp-bedstead, snatched up a towel, intent upon his morning swim.

Beneath the bungalow's verandah he paused and gazed, in consternation, towards the bay.

The Watcher of the Seas had gone—departed during the night as mysteriously as she had come!

He was disappointed at not having been able to bid his father good-bye; but he guessed, from what the admiral had told him, that it would not be long before they met again.

Arousing his comrades with a cheery shout, he rushed over the soft greensward and plunged headlong into the cool, clear water.

A minute later he was joined by his four companions.

Charlie Steel had brought an inflated ball, with which they commenced a game of water-polo.

But they had barely warmed up to the full enjoyment of their game when Tom Allstraw, diving, to avoid Harry Monston's rush, found himself face to face with a huge shark.

As the monster's jaws closed with a click close to his side, Allstraw leapt to the surface.

"To the shore! Quick! A shark!" he gasped.

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OUR NEW WEEKLY FEATURE

Next Week's Story.

Next week's St. Jim's story, by Martin Clifford, is one that I am confident will make a very big hit. It is entitled

"ASHAMED OF HIS SISTER,"

so that the subject of this grand tale needs no explanation. All I need say is that lovers of the splendid school stories of Tom Merry & Co. are quite justified in anticipating that

"ASHAMED OF HIS SISTER"

will prove to be something extra specially good.

Our Companion Paper.

I should like to do all my chums a good turn by reminding them that the Grand All-Story Christmas Double Number of our wonderful companion paper, "The Magnet" Library, is now on sale, and that it contains, in addition to an extra-long tale of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, a Grand Long Complete Story by Martin Clifford, entitled:

"THE STARS OF THE CIRCUS,"

introducing

Tom Merry & Co.

All Gemites should obtain this week's
BUMPER ALL-STORY CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER
of
"THE MAGNET" LIBRARY. On Sale Everywhere.

Here is what two of my chums have to say about THE GEM Library, and its value as a companion in remote country districts:

"Toronto, Canada.

"Dear Editor,—I am writing you a short note to tell you how much I appreciate your fine paper, and the way I first received it. You say in a recent 'Chat,' how THE GEM is read in every part of the globe. You are quite right. I was living in an out-of-the-way place just north of Regina a year ago, when I picked up one on a side road, going for a walk. How, in the name of goodness, it got there, beats me. Literature was a thing you had forgot after you had lived in this place a while. After reading the book, I cut the pictures out and hung them in the horse-stable, and I guess they are still there. Since coming to the city I read THE GEM every week, and it gives me the best three cents' satisfaction I ever had.—Yours sincerely,

"CANADIAN READER."

Good for you, "Canadian Reader"! Now follows an extract from the letter of a friend, "Herbert L.," living in a remote English country village:

"Norfolk.

"Dear Editor,—I have never troubled you with a letter before, although I have been a reader of THE GEM and 'The Magnet' since they started, and since THE GEM halfpenny first came out. And although I am married and have three children, I still enjoy them. I have seven miles to walk for my papers, so I only get them once a month, as I live in a small village in the heart of Norfolk. But they are worth walking seven miles for.—Yours truly,

"HERBERT L."

It is plain that there is something about THE GEM and "Magnet" Libraries attractive out of the common, which gives me such a wonderfully large and enthusiastic circle of reader-chums, from whom I have received literally hundreds of letters similar to those published above.

Something Like a Record.

Here is a letter of the sort which it does my heart good to read:

"Worcester.

"Dear Editor,—May I have the pleasure of writing these few lines to you, telling you how much I appreciate each number of THE GEM. I have read every 2d. and 1d. number,

and I consider that there is no better school-tale book published. I assure you that I do everything I can to extend the sale of THE GEM, and I may well boast that I have got a school of 326 boys to read your paper in one month, giving out all my back numbers. If any reader has done better, I should be pleased to hear of him.—Yours very sincerely,

F. G.

I should think this is a record, indeed, and I need hardly say how much I am obliged to you, F. G. If every one of my chums were to get 326 new readers every month, the circulation of THE GEM would soon satisfy even my highest ambition.

Our Correspondence Exchange.

Sidney S. Sear, of 41, St. Mark's Road, Salisbury, Wilts, wishes to correspond with some foreign readers interested in stamp-collecting.

Would any reader of THE GEM (boy or girl), who is interested in model aviation, care to correspond with George Walpole, Vallance Road, Lewes, Sussex?

Alfred A. Saunders, of 55, Kingston Road, Ilford, Essex, would like to correspond with a girl reader living in Canada.

Miss Cathave Muir would like to correspond with one or two readers (either sex). Her address is 45, King Square, Goswell Road, London, E.C.

Henry Robertson, of Devon Villas, College Road, Ash, Surrey, is eighteen years of age, and would like to correspond with a boy or girl reader of THE GEM.

H. Bassindale, of 162, Osbourne Road, Preston, Brighton, would very much like to correspond with one or two boy readers of THE GEM.

Harry Booth (age 13) would like some Gemite to write to him at Burncross, Chapeltown, Sheffield.

A. Catchpole, of 121, Oval Road, Croydon, wishes to correspond with some other reader of THE GEM and "The Magnet."

H. Ventham, of 72, Brookville Road, Fulham, London, S.W., would like to hear from readers in any part of the world.

W. Garland, care of W. Peck, 21, Cochrane Street, Glasgow, wishes to correspond with any girl reader of THE GEM Library.

Harold Hollier, of 10, Westcroft Square, Hammersmith, W., would like to correspond with any boy reader of THE GEM, age 14, who resides in West London.

F. Guirer, Hanbury Ward, London Hospital, Whitechapel, London, would like to correspond with a reader in British Columbia.

Harry Pollock, 156, Green Street, Richmond, Melbourne, Australia, would like to correspond with some other reader of THE GEM.

C. Simpson, 10, Clinda Street, Quarry Hill, Bendigo, Victoria, Australia, wants to correspond with some London or Dublin lad, age about 18 or 19.

Special Note to Correspondents.

Readers desiring correspondents are asked to note that their requests will not be published on this page, except in conjunction with their names and full addresses. For obvious reasons, no letters can be forwarded to readers through the medium of this office. When requiring correspondents, readers should, therefore, be careful to send their names and full addresses, which will be published, with their requests, in the first available issue of THE GEM Library. I should also like to take this opportunity of reminding my chums that both THE GEM and "The Magnet" go to press several weeks in advance, so that some time must necessarily elapse before readers' letters, etc., can be published. In addition, space is limited, and all my chums alike must wait their turn.

THE EDITOR.